



Training needs of teachers of Tsáchila Intercultural Education

Necesidades formativas de docentes de Educación Intercultural Tsáchila

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Abstract

The current study helps to analyze the training needs and training processes in which the teachers who work in the Bilingual Intercultural Education schools are immersed: Madre Laura, Tsáchila, Tomás Rivadeneira, Conadu, Abraham Calazacón, Enrique Terán, Patricio Romero Barberis. These institutions are located in communities of the Tsáchila ethnic group in Santo Domingo de los Tsáchilas Province, Ecuador. The methodological proposal of the study was based on a non-experimental design based on qualitative and quantitative research to determine the training short comings of bilingual intercultural teachers and how this affects the educational processes and the execution of the Education System Model Guidelines Intercultural Bilingual (MOSEIB). The sample consisted of 19 Tsáchilas teachers and 10 mestizo teachers. The data collection and techniques analysis were the survey and the statistical analysis. The results of the research show that teachers of bilingual intercultural institutions present training and training needs that are affecting the educational process and the correct application

of MOSEIB. In the discussion and conclusions, the importance of the teacher's initial and continuing education is explained and argued. In addition, emphasis is placed on the need to strengthen teaching competencies based on research and educational proposal adjusted to the needs of each educational context. From this, strengthen Intercultural Bilingual Education in Ecuador.

Keywords: Education, intercultural education, culture, teacher, training, vocational training.

Resumen

El presente estudio pretende analizar las necesidades formativas y los procesos de capacitación en los que están inmersos los docentes que laboran en las Unidades Educativas Interculturales Bilingües: Madre Laura, Tsáchila, Tomás Rivadeneira, Conadu, Abraham Calazacón, Enrique Terán, Patricio Romero Barberis. Estas instituciones se encuentran ubicadas en comunidades de la etnia Tsáchila en la provincia de Santo de los Tsáchilas, Ecuador. La propuesta metodológica del estudio se basó en un diseño no experimental apoyado en la investigación cualitativa y cuantitativa para determinar

las falencias formativas de los docentes interculturales bilingües y, cómo esto afecta en los procesos educativos y la ejecución de los lineamientos de Modelo del Sistema de Educación Intercultural Bilingüe (MOSEIB). La muestra estuvo formada por 19 docentes tsáchilas y 10 docentes mestizos. Las técnicas de recolección y análisis de datos fueron la encuesta y el análisis estadístico. Los resultados de la investigación muestran que los docentes de instituciones interculturales bilingües presentan necesidades formativas y de capacitación que están afectando el proceso educativo y la correcta

1. Introduction

Interculturality in a general way concerns itself the synergistic relationship between cultures, which may have common or different aspects to each other. The characteristic elements of each culture are reflected in the individuals that comprise it, but it does not mean that there is a difference between one culture and another, but it is intrinsically related to the social, cognitive, cultural, and historical features of each person. The human being is not distinguished or characterized only by genetic traits, this implies the importance of the cultural baggage that is transmitted from generation to generation, allowing the interrelation between human beings and, of course in a general way, intercultural dialogue.

The relationship between cultures and the dialogue that cultural interaction must assume is a transcendental element in education because, according to Rodríguez & Fernández (2017), schools not only educate an individual but also an entire community. This represents similar, but not the same, cultural traits that allow for socialization among agents of the school community. It also promotes the improvement of coexistence within educational centers and preponderate the improvement of education based on interculturality and social inclusion of the individuals of a community in each school environment.

Education based on interculturality develops social structures and enables the acquisition of cultural tools that allow interaction

aplicación del MOSEIB. En la discusión y conclusiones se explica y argumenta la importancia de la formación inicial y continua del docente, además se enfatiza la necesidad de fortalecer las competencias docentes con base a la investigación y propuestas educativas ajustadas a las necesidades de cada contexto educativo y, a partir de ello, fortalecer la Educación Intercultural Bilingüe en el Ecuador.

Descriptor: Educación, educación intercultural, cultura, docente, formación, formación profesional.

between individuals from one culture with another. Daniels (2016) considers that social and cultural structures are fundamental within the school context and with more emphasis on the education of each student in the classrooms. This statement makes it possible to clarify that interculturality within education is a mediator between the student, the teachers, the family and the community; which cannot be kept isolated, but must interrelate to continue social and cultural transmission, through education and coexistence within classrooms.

Based on the perspectives on interculturality and its importance in education, it can be emphasized that interculturality enhances the relationship between cultures within society, also favors the continuity and perpetuity of dialogue without any culture renouncing its original identity (López & Pérez, 2013). Cultural diversity is a main source of integral development of the human being and society, in every possible field and dimension. For this reason, intercultural education is a challenge for schools, high schools and universities.

The cultural exchange between students, teachers, administrators, parents and the educational community is part of education and training in educational institutions, because according to López & Pérez (2013) the pedagogical task of educational centers is to develop an educational proposal that guides the transmission of cultural elements and values that allow social cohesion and intercultural dialogue. It is necessary that



intercultural education proposes a two-way dialogue between the agents of the educational community in order to reach an optimum level of education and training for the students.

Schools must value intercultural education as an effective way for the development of competencies and personal improvement of each student (Tomé & Manzano, 2016), therefore, the training of intercultural teachers should highlight and build a committed praxis with dialogue, cultural diversity, inclusion, the search for values and the transmission of cultural elements from generation to generation (López & Pérez, 2013). Through intercultural education it is possible to enhance and deepen the cultural identity of each individual and community, without losing or forgetting fundamental features when bringing together each culture.

The intercultural teacher assumes a leading role as mediator, enabler and promoter of intercultural dialogue and the teaching of collective rights that allow the understanding and appreciation of each culture to which students belong in the classroom (Walsh & García, 2002). Intercultural education considers the development of knowledge, values and attitudes that teachers promote in classrooms are part of the development of social and cultural competences that each student should acquire as part of their education and training throughout life, both inside and outside the educational institution.

The fundamentals described on the importance of the teacher as a enabler of intercultural education are part of the social process that communities experience when they gather their own and others' elements from each culture. According to Walsh & García (2002), the intercultural teacher must promote forms of social and cultural interaction based on values and respect among human beings, considering that each culture provides an extensive baggage of features that are unified to the social conglomerate and generate a mega culture that welcomes the history, social changes, development and cultural cohesion of the human being. All this

without separation or discrimination, since each individual is an extensive representation of the cultural transmission that is repeated again and again by generation in generation.

Considering the importance of intercultural education, in Ecuador the Intercultural Bilingual Education Model (MOSEIB) was proposed since 2014, beginning its implementation in the Sierra region and later it was applied since 2015 in all bilingual intercultural educational institutions of the Ecuadorian educational system. This model proposes that education is an integral process and must become a harmonious way of life of the human being with himself and with others to recover ancestral education, family and community as fundamental elements in the formation of each person, it must also be a contribution to the recognition and appreciation of the knowledge of each culture for the progress of humanity (Ministry of Education of Ecuador, 2014).

From the pillars of the MOSEIB teacher training must meet certain characteristics, exposed by Moreno (2015), such as: social and communication skills, process-oriented praxis, community work, knowledge in strategies and teaching resources and training in intercultural and inclusive education. The characteristics previously indicated by the author are core elements in the training of a bilingual intercultural teacher, because they gather essential skills to properly guide training processes, and above all, to promote peaceful coexistence in the school community, to put human values into practice and to assess each of the cultural traits that each student has, orienting themselves to the practice of dialogue as a guiding axis in the learning and integral development of each one.

According to the characteristics that an intercultural teacher must develop, in the educational reality of the bilingual intercultural institutions close to communities of the Tsáchila nationality, it is necessary that there is a constant updating of strategies and models of pedagogical management to adapt to the new ways of teach-



ing and learn, in addition to prioritizing the integral development and intercultural training of Tsáchilas and mestizos students who live in the same classroom. According to Lalangui, Ramón & Espinoza (2017), the teacher who receives initial training to direct and manage an educational process is at the beginning of his continuous process of teacher training, as the educational praxis and work continued in the classroom allows teachers to further develop skills in the exercise of educational work.

The continuous training of the bilingual intercultural teacher can be a positive index in the professional performance in pedagogy, didactics, methodology, curriculum, educational inclusion and intercultural education. The process of initial and ongoing teacher training can reverse some problems in education in general, but also positively affects inclusion, interculturality, dialogue, the peaceful resolution of conflicts and the promotion of a culture of peace. In this sense, the successful performance of intercultural teachers could be the result of models and strategies adapted to the needs of the educational context of the institution and would correspond to innovative teaching and learning processes oriented towards educational quality (Álvarez, 2014). From the perspectives previously written, Ungerfeld & Morón (2016), explain that teachers must possess a minimum of specific knowledge, intellectual and technical skills, as well as a development of social attitudes and behaviors that allow understanding the needs of students and determining the stages of development that the students who have a special educational need must progressively reach or, on the contrary, establish a continuous and inclusive process that responds to the needs of each student, expressly considering diversity as a core axis in the human and educational formation of each.

Teacher training is currently oriented to new educational practices, which are focused on teacher development as a means to respond to the urgent needs of students and the educational

community. In this way, López & Pérez (2013), express that intercultural education is linked to the actuality and reality of the school context. This requires a formative treatment in teachers who work in bilingual intercultural institutions, because interculturality is a competence that first develops in the teacher so that it can be transferred to each classroom, since the Tsáchila's worldview is a value added during the execution of learning experiences in which the teacher and students intervene. The close relationship between teacher training and interculturality is built on educational practice, therefore, it requires an analysis of the different sociocultural contexts to which the students belong and that bilingual intercultural teachers should adapt and propose the best strategies to train and respond to the needs of the students and, in general, of the educational community melded with the cultural features of the Tsáchila ethnic group.

Based on the problems described on the training needs of intercultural teachers, in addition to the discrepancies between the reality and the educational praxis of the application of intercultural bilingual education models, the research process was placed in the context of tsáchila educational units located in the communities: El Búa, Peripa, Otongo Mapalí, Chigüilpe, Cóngoma, Los Naranjos, El Poste. The Tsáchilas are settled in the province of Santo Domingo de los Tsáchilas, they are an endemic ethnic group of the province and represent a cultural and ancestral legacy recognized throughout Ecuador.

In this sense, the study focuses on analyzing the training needs and training processes in which the teachers who work in the following Educational Units are immersed: Madre Laura, Tsáchila, Tomás Rivadeneira, Conadu, Abraham Calazacón, Enrique Terán, Patricio Romero Barberis. The results and conclusions presented in this study will be useful to replant Bilingual Intercultural Education processes, which, to a certain extent, seems to have inconsistencies between theory and practice.



2. Materials and Methods

The work methodology applied in the research considers a non-experimental design to analyze the educational situation of the intercultural teachers that make up the study; without manipulation of variables or random assignments of subjects. In this sense, a descriptive and diagnostic process of the formative characteristics of the teachers is proposed and how they influence the context of bilingual intercultural education of the educational institutions in which they work. The work proposal is systematized through quantitative and qualitative research to analyze the needs in the training of bilingual intercultural education teachers who teach classes in educational institutions located in the communes of the Tsáchila nationality in the city of Santo Domingo. Based on the proposed methodology, the study was conducted by describing and substantiating the needs identified in the teachers considered for the study.

The sample of teachers who were part of the study was intentional, because it was determined without applying any random selection methods. This was because the subjects were clearly identified as bilingual intercultural teachers by the denomination of the educational insti-

tutions and did not represent an extensive number for the process of data collection. Of the total of 29 teachers who teach classes from the initial to the tenth year of Basic General Education, 19 teachers are of the Tsachila nationality and 10 teachers are ethnic mestizo.

For the data collection a survey was applied with questions related to the initial teacher training and the recent training on intercultural education. The data allowed to determine the needs of these teachers within the context of bilingual intercultural educational institutions in the city of Santo Domingo. Based on the data obtained, it was necessary to apply statistical analysis to systematize and interpret condensed information from the surveys, and a bibliographic analysis was applied to situate and contextualize the theoretical needs of teachers with respect to execution and knowledge of the Bilingual Intercultural Education Model (MOSEIB), in effect in the national education system in Ecuador up to the present. According to the perspectives proposed in the study, it was possible to carry out an analysis of the possible complications and difficulties that occur for the teachers when applying the guidelines of intercultural education in the classroom.

3. Analysis and Results

Chart 1. Academic level of bilingual intercultural teachers

High School	34,48%
Third level degree	58,62%
Fourth level degree	6,90%
Total	100%

Source: Own elaboration, data obtained from the survey of teachers of Intercultural Bilingual Tsáchila Units.

Based on the obtained results, 34.48% of teachers working in bilingual intercultural education units have a high school diploma, and 58.62% of teachers with a third-level degree. In contrast to the percentages described above, only 6.90% of bilingual intercultural teachers have

a fourth-level degree (see chart 1). The results observed in the chart show that more than half of the surveyed teachers have a third level degree, but it is also observed that there is a relevant percentage of teachers with only high school education, which, in a certain way, can affect the



implementation of educational processes and formative in bilingual intercultural institutions. In fact, the imbalance in terms of the academic training of the surveyed teachers explains the low percentage of teachers with fourth level studies, evidencing the need to implement a comprehensive process of teacher training, aimed especially at teachers with a high school diplomas to increase and improve the quality of education within bilingual intercultural institutions located in Tsáchila communities.

Possibly, the representativity of high school teachers is related to the rural context

in which bilingual intercultural institutions are located, but it also has a possible relationship with the command of Tsa'fiki, which is the native language of the Tsáchilas, and which the mestizo teachers probably have not mastered to be able to teach in the Tsáchila mother tongue. This communicative factor may increase the presence of low education level teachers but that are fluent in Tsa'fiki and Spanish, added to the little incentive of educational authorities for third level training or training based on the MOSEIB implies a stagnation or conformism of these teachers as they impart their classes.

Chart 2. Teacher training and training in Intercultural Bilingual Education

Training in Intercultural Bilingual Education	86,21%
Teacher training in Intercultural Bilingual Education	93,10%
Training received in the last 6 months	37,93%
Training received in the last 2 years	17,24%
Knowledge of the Bilingual Intercultural Education System Model (MOSEIB)	37,93%

Source: Own elaboration, data obtained from the survey of teachers of Intercultural Bilingual Tsáchila Units.

According to the results, 86.21% of teachers have bilingual intercultural education, and 93.10% of teachers have been trained in this type of education. Regarding the frequency in which the surveyed teachers receive training, 37.93% state that they have been trained in the last 6 months, and 17.24% of the teachers have been trained in the last 2 years (See chart 2). Unlike the favorable results regarding the bilingual intercultural education training and received training processes, it is contradictory that only 37.93% of teachers know about the Bilingual Intercultural Education System Model (see chart 2).

Based on the results of chart 1, a substantial relationship with the results of chart 2 is determined, since there is a need for academic training of bilingual intercultural teachers, since, apparently, is affecting the application of MOSEIB, which is the core axis of intercultural education in educational units located in communities of the Tsáchila ethnic group. This

doubt about the educational work of bilingual intercultural teachers cannot be generalized for all of Ecuador because in each educational context variations are observed. From the obtained data, it seems that teachers have a misperception about bilingual intercultural education or it is not strong enough, since the application of the MOSEIB starts from the knowledge of its guidelines and, above all, implies a continuous training process to establish educational processes coupled to the Tsáchila worldview. Teaching with the mother tongue does not imply an intercultural education, it is an important part, but it requires a change of perception on the part of these teachers on how to interculturally educate students Tsáchilas and other ethnic.

4. Discussion and Conclusions

Based on the results, it is evident that there is a significant number of teachers with a high



school diploma, unlike teachers who have third and fourth level pedagogical training and qualifications. The previous premise shows a first approximation to the training needs of teachers who work in intercultural educational institutions located in communities of the Tsáchila ethnic group. In this sense, what is happening with these teachers is possibly stagnation in terms of progress in training and updating of knowledge and quality in the professional performance of teachers. According to De los Saltos & Abreu (2013), the continuous training in the teaching career allows, in the first place, to get the teachers titled and secondly, to guarantee the professional development and to gather the competences that allow the exercise of teaching in the educational context. However, this is not evident in the school and professional context of teachers working in bilingual intercultural institutions, therefore, professional development is being affected and, in turn, this may be a turning point in the teaching process and learning that is established in each classroom of the intercultural institutions of the Tsáchila ethnic group.

The training needs of teachers working in intercultural institutions can adversely influence the assessment and orientation of teacher training and career, since teachers who hold a high school diploma do not seem to want to continue with a process of teacher professionalization or, on the contrary, these teachers have not been considered or called in the processes of continuous training and professionalization offered by universities with the endorsement and sponsorship of the Ministry of Education of Ecuador. Inciarte, Camacho & Casillas (2017) mention that the practices that are oriented towards the development of the teaching career start from the reflexive intervention of the actors of the educational field. Therefore, the formative needs of the teachers who work in intercultural institutions of the Tsáchila ethnic group, are a shared result of the little initiative of training in teachers and the inadequate process of insertion into training processes and teacher training offered

by the organization of control and management of education in Ecuador.

Teacher training is and will remain a point of reflection, uncertainties and conflicts in every educational system. Moreover, according to the research conducted by Lozano (2016), the majority of teachers who were surveyed in their study did not have a professional improvement project, since they did not feel prepared for an intellectual challenge or because the social and/or economic environment did not allow it. In some cases, the importance of teacher training for the achievement of educational and social purposes of educational reforms is dismissed. Given the case of the aforementioned study, it seems that bilingual intercultural teachers also lack a teacher professionalization project. In addition, they may have the same training needs and difficulties in accessing training that would allow them to improve their educational work and achieve new professional achievements in their respective school contexts.

Teachers who work in intercultural institutions of the Tsáchila ethnic group require processes of continuous training in intercultural education in a general way and specifically that which is contextualized with the worldview and culture of the Tsáchila ethnic group. Therefore, it seems that the need for professionalization of teachers with a high school diploma is accompanied by the need for continuous training in intercultural education in all teachers participating in the study. In this way, it is necessary to enhance teacher education as a core aspect in education but without underestimating the accumulation of experience and praxis that each teacher has, since Pegalajar (2014) considers that professional development is more than training; it is the product of the pedagogical development, the experience, the knowledge, the understanding, the emotions and the individual feelings of each teacher as influential aspects on the educational processes.

Possibly this problem is affecting the teaching and learning process that takes place in



the classes, because if the bilingual intercultural teachers do not have a minimum profile of training they could be improvising, proposing inappropriate activities or misinterpreting the educational and educational process in which they are immersed students. Iglesias (2014) mentions that it is necessary to educate for human formation with a community vision and promote social change through the participation and proposal of inclusive educational projects for the development of intercultural competences, however the teachers participating in the study do not have a profile of training in intercultural education and most have not yet begun a process of teacher training that allows them to improve the imbalance of regular education with respect to intercultural education.

The possible stagnation of intercultural education contextualized with the Tsáchila ethnic group does not occur in isolation, because this is related to the educational system, teacher training, access to education, innovation and curricular proposals; and in the case of teacher training it seems that it is not being considered as a transformative aspect of education. In this sense, Vizcarra, Tirado & Triviño (2016) mention that educational transformations must be accompanied by training and professionalization of teachers to achieve the goals and commitments established in the educational proposal and, in this way, to think about transforming and Improving intercultural education without proper training and teacher training would be a total incongruence between educational legislation and the reality of the school context.

Based on the previous explanations about the inconsistencies with regard to training as a transformative aspect of education, Villagómez (2017) warns that a critical look must be taken of the educational experience of teachers, since their training must be parallel to their experience in educational processes to understand the educational, didactic, pedagogical, social and procedural requirements of the agents that make up the educational community, as well as promot-

ing social practices of tolerance, dialogue, attention to diversity and the generation of spaces that facilitate interculturality and complex thinking.

The importance of training teachers who work in Tsáchila bilingual intercultural institutions is and will continue to be a fundamental aspect in the improvement of education and diversification of the educational system, for this reason, Andino (2018) mentions that teacher training and education from any perspective or point of analysis is a positive aspect in the improvement of educational processes, since the teaching career is an unfinished process that must be adapted to changes in the education system or updates of educational work. The improvement of intercultural education is transcendental, but with training and training of bilingual intercultural teachers, because otherwise, the gaps and procedural gaps in educational institutions located in Tsáchilas communities would continue to be fed.

The superficial approach of teacher training and the consideration of training as a secondary element in the processes of teacher development in a certain way causes a limited conception of the complexity of the teaching career. Being located in the analysis of teacher training in intercultural education, Tipa (2017) mentions that this must be linked to research, but also poses the following issues for an adequate intercultural teacher training: (a) Access of young people from ethnic groups to higher education, (b) greater geographical access of universities, (c) integration of ancestral knowledge with professional knowledge, (d) valorization of the language and worldview of ethnic groups, (e) teacher development and strengthening in Intercultural Education and (f) promotion and integration of teachers to ethnic groups and communities.

The explanations given on the inconsistencies of teacher training in intercultural education are complemented by what seems to be an inadequate or low frequency of training in interculturality, diversity, ethnic worldview as part



of the training of students. The reason for the study of interculturality and diversity is based on the importance that people know how to coexist with their cultural and ethnic differences, but also the worldview is part of the transversality of the class, since the cultural transmission from the ancestors represents everyday life of people from generation to generation.

The solution to the shortcomings in the training of bilingual intercultural teachers is not isolated because training is not the only way to propose an intercultural education system. The answer to this need is explained by Fabara (2016), which proposes teaching research as part of the improvement of the quality of education. In this way, the undertaking of research projects is an incentive for the improvement of educational processes, in addition to the teachers who research can be those who strengthen the skills of their work teams (Castro & Castillo, 2016). Based on the above, to refer to teacher training is to talk about the preparation of teachers to produce knowledge, in addition to the competence to propose research proposals that allow the resolution of problems in the classroom (Faria, Reis & Peralta, 2016).

Finally, the training of bilingual intercultural teachers has a close relationship between the training they receive and the research competence that each one acquires during their initial training and that is carried out in the educational work; therefore, Paz (2017) emphasizes that it is vital for education to strengthen competencies that motivate both teachers and students to develop intellectually, since the transformation of the educational system itself depends on coherent proposals that lie in the questioning and solution of practices that on the one hand may not be effective and on the other hand they are not being executed correctly (Díez Gutiérrez, 2013) and, from this, substantial changes can be proposed in the educational processes that, as in the case of intercultural education for ethnic groups Tsáchila, remains a chimera within the educational proposals of the country.

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