



Rethinking Initial Teacher Education for Linguistic and Cultural Diversity in the Classroom



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Abstract

In recent decades, European educational systems are facing many challenges related to the treatment of cultural and linguistic diversity. The need to address this diversity requires new approaches to education; this in turn requires changes in the way we prepare teachers for the new reality they face in their classrooms. In this article we highlight some of the major problems that initial teacher training has to address in order to enable teachers to deal effectively, respectfully, and fairly with students whose linguistic and cultural background is different from their own. We also present several models for teacher education from Europe and North America based on clearly identified teacher competences for linguistic and cultural diversity.

Keywords: teacher preparation, teacher competences, linguistic and cultural diversity, intercultural education, inclusive schools

Resumen

Los sistemas educativos europeos están afrontando en las últimas décadas numerosos retos relacionados con el tratamiento de la diversidad cultural y lingüística. La necesidad de afrontar dicha diversidad requiere de planteamientos globales dirigidos al conjunto de la población en aras de construir una sociedad cohesionada lingüística, social y culturalmente. En este artículo exponemos algunos de los principales problemas que afectan a la formación inicial del profesorado por lo que se refiere a la gestión y el tratamiento de la diversidad cultural y lingüística así como diferentes proyectos y enfoques que justamente tienen por objetivo establecer su formación competencial.

Palabras clave: formación inicial del profesorado, competencias docentes, diversidad lingüística y cultural, educación intercultural, escuela inclusiva

Resum

Durant les últimes dècades els sistemes educatius europeus estan fent front a nombrosos reptes relacionats amb el tractament de la diversitat cultural i lingüística de l'alumnat. Per tal de poder afrontar aquesta diversitat es fa necessari impulsar plantejaments globals que s'adrecin al conjunt de la població amb la finalitat de construir una societat cohesionada. A l'article exposem algunes de les principals dificultats relatives a la formació inicial del professorat en quan a la gestió i al tractament de la diversitat lingüística i cultural, així com diferents projectes i enfocaments que pretenen establir noves directrius per a la seva formació competencial.

Paraules clau: formació inicial del professorat, competències docents, diversitat lingüística i cultural, educació intercultural, escola inclusiva



1. Introduction

The arrival of immigrant families in Spain has increased exponentially over the last two decades immigrants now accounts for 12% of the population (INE 2011). This phenomenon has added more complexity to the existing plurality of our country. There has been a corresponding increase in the proportion of students of diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds in the Spanish educational system. For these students and their families their first major contact with the host society takes place in the school, and education may be the most important determinant in the integration of immigrant children. The school is an important locus of socialization and of cultural exchange. Both students of immigrant origin and those belonging to the majority group(s) have to develop good levels of proficiency in the official language(s) of the territory; acquire the basic skills necessary for their development and to promote their active participation in the whole society; and learn how to work together with other students in a diverse and multicultural world. It is important to ensure that all students attain academic success regardless of their origin, language or individual characteristics.

While educational policies in Spain have tried to respond to the challenge of the arrival of immigrant students through the implementation of specific reception classes, the incorporation of second language teachers and specific programs of social and cultural support (mainly in the main reception areas of immigration like Catalonia, Madrid and Andalusia), problems related to the integration and inclusion of immigrant students persist in our educational system (OECD 2006, 2009; Instituto de Evaluación, 2010). In particular, the rates of school failure and dropout of immigrant students in secondary school are still higher among pupils of ethnic and cultural minorities (Ministerio de Educación, 2010).

The overall results of Spanish students in the three general skills assessed by PISA study remain similar throughout the years 2000 and 2009, with an average of 13 points of difference under the mean results of the OECD countries (Table 1). The results of the 15-year-old Spanish students in reading continue to be far behind those obtained by other European countries like Finland (536), Belgium (506) and Holland (508). Only Bulgaria, Lithuania, Luxembourg, the Czech Republic and Romania perform worst than Spain.

PISA 2009 also reported the results of students based on their country of origin¹. Figure 1 shows that the average

outcomes attained by Spanish-born students are significantly higher than those obtained by immigrant students in all the three skills assessed.

Although it appears that the educational system does not guarantee equity of outcome among all groups of students, not all the results from PISA 2009 are bad news for Spain. Data show that in Spain, students from economically disadvantaged social backgrounds attain better results when compared to the results of students of similar background in similar countries of the OECD; this is presumably the result of a more inclusive school system.

If educational services for immigrant students in multicultural schools have to be improved we should help teachers to address the challenge of managing cultural and linguistic diversity. We need not only to offer specific resources for language support in the school, but also (and essentially) to improve teacher education and professional development for all teachers to enable them to work with more confidence and autonomy. This would help to empower teachers and to revalue the social image of the teaching profession, countering negative attitudes that persist, in the profession and beyond, towards diversity in the classroom.

There is no doubt that initial and continuing preparation for teachers is essential to guarantee the performance of immigrant pupils. The OECD international report written by Deborah Nusche (2009) notes, for example, that the selection of teachers in schools is a key factor to ensure the aca-

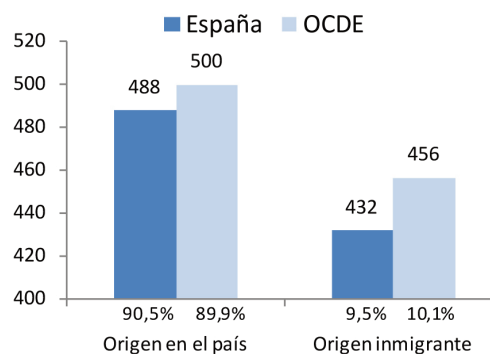


Figure 1. Student performance in PISA 2009 by origin (native vs. immigrant). Original source: Ministry of Education of Spain (Ministerio de Educación, 2010: 109)

PISA competences		2000	2003	2006	2009	Variation OECD/Spain
Reading	OECD	500	494	492	493	
	Spain	493	481	461	481	12 points
Mathematics	OECD		500	498	496	
	Spain		485	480	483	13 points
Science	OECD			500	501	
	Spain			488	488	13 points

Table 1. Evolution of the main results of PISA (years 2000-2009). Source: Compiled from OECD data

¹ The average percentage of immigrant students in OECD countries is over 10%, almost the same as that of Spain.

ademic success of immigrant students. Moreover, other international studies seem to indicate that the quality of teaching is one of the most important school variables to ensure students' academic performance, regardless of the students' socioeconomic and cultural background (OECD, 2005). According to the report: "If migrant students are to succeed in education, their schools must be able to recruit high quality teachers who are effective in the classroom and who stay on the job for several years. There are three policy options that might help improve teaching in schools with high proportions of migrant students: (1) hiring more teachers so that every student receives more individualised pedagogical support, (2) increasing teacher pay to attract and retain high quality teachers, (3) increasing the share of migrant and ethnic minority teachers, who might be more willing and capable in educating migrant students". (Nusche 2009: 22).

However, data reported by the INTER project (*Proyecto INTER: una guía para la aplicación de la educación intercultural en la escuela*)², which analyzed ten institutions of higher education from some European countries, showed that teacher preparation in Spain does not focus on approaches to cultural and linguistic diversity in classrooms (Aguado, 2006). According to the author, "Diversity is not usually considered from a broad perspective in schools, but deficit situations are associated or targeted to specific minority groups. It is believed that ethnicity, language and ethnic origin variables act as "split variables" in the classroom, and are assumed as the only indicators of cultural difference."³ (Aguado, 2006: 72).

If we also consider that the most qualified teachers tend to avoid working in multicultural schools (Karsten et al. 2006), and that there is a higher concentration of immigrant students in the public schools with a high proportion of temporary teachers (who have no fixed position and usually move from one school to another at the end of each year or even during the year), we can understand how social inequalities can be reproduced at school.

To avoid exclusion and marginalization, schools must take an active role in promoting social cohesion and developing democratic values among all students. It is also essential that teachers who work in culturally and linguistically diverse classrooms develop the key competences and attitudes that are necessary to respond to all students' needs (Aguado, 2006; Morales, 2006). If teachers have a responsibility to promote the social and academic development their students, that responsibility is even greater for teachers who work with immigrant students. These students have to overcome cultural and linguistic barriers in the school and also deal with the social, economic, and educational inequalities that result from their migration to another country. Immigrant students have a higher risk of social exclusion, which can have only negative consequences for the society as a whole. Therefore, we believe that schools and the social territory where they are located should jointly play a key role to prevent this exclusion.

Thus, as educational professionals concerned about the high rates of failure and dropout of immigrant students, we think that teacher preparation for diversity in the classroom

is essential to promote academic success and social cohesion among all students. To help identify what such preparation should look like, this paper reviews some aspects of teacher education policies in Spain, and provides an overview of some of the competences required for effective teaching in multicultural and multilingual classrooms. These competences, developed in Europe and North America, can serve as starting points for the development of courses and modules that can be included in teacher education programs in Spain.

2. Teacher Preparation for Cultural Diversity in Spain

In the year 2004 several members of the "Red Temática sobre la Educación Lingüística y la Formación de Enseñantes en Contextos Multiculturales y Multilingües"⁴ in Spain issued a manifesto, endorsed by several universities, entitled "Multiculturalismo y plurilingüismo escolar. La formación inicial del profesorado de enseñanza obligatoria"⁵ (AAVV, 2004). This manifesto reflects on the challenges of multiculturalism and multilingualism at school and the role of universities in teacher preparation, and provides a common framework of reference for all universities in Spain that are responsible for the initial training of teachers, especially for those universities in the bilingual communities of the state that have two official languages.

The manifesto includes three different sections: *Society, languages and cultures*, *School, languages and cultures* and *Teacher training in multicultural and multilingual settings*. In the latter section, the manifesto makes the following recommendations (AAVV, 2004: 91-92):

- Teacher education programs and courses be based on scientific knowledge, beliefs and values, and teaching practice.
- Teacher education programs develop among teachers the capacity to transcend ethnocentrism, sociocentrism and egocentrism— whether their own or that reflected in the whole society— in order to promote social cohesion and respect for diversity in the school.
- Teacher educators create opportunities for the development of this capacity within existing areas of the program: for example, within the areas of sociology, psychology, and human development, the content can be expanded in order to develop a deeper understanding of society, languages, and cultures. Also, preparation for teaching practice, and the observation and evaluation of teaching practice, can be redesigned to include criteria related to the student teacher's capacity to address and counter ethnocentrism and sociocentrism, and to demonstrate knowledge and skills related to bilingualism and plurilingualism in education. As well, there can be an overall focus on the development of personal and interpersonal skills that demonstrate a commitment to equal rights and to anti-discrimination.

The manifesto also recommends that all student teachers demonstrate competence in the official language(s) and in at least one additional language, as well as knowledge about language, how it is used and how it can be taught in

² INTER Project: a guide for the implementation of intercultural education in schools.

³ Translated from Spanish.

⁴ Thematic Network on Language Education and Teacher Training in Multicultural and Multilingual Contexts.

⁵ Multiculturalism and multilingualism at school: the initial training of elementary and secondary school teachers

all areas of the curriculum. The manifesto concludes with these words: (...) “We hope that the restructuring of the university degrees which is to begin in the coming months, and the consequent change in the curricula, will provide a good opportunity to step forward along the lines we propose”⁶ (AAVV, 2004: 95.).

A few years later, and before the implementation of the current curriculum that follows the lines of the European Higher Education Standards, the Ministry of Education and Science of Spain published the ECI/3854/2007, ECI/3857/2007 and ECI/3858/2007 Orders of December 27th, which establish the requirements for official qualifications for teaching in Early Childhood Education, Elementary and Secondary Teacher Education, Baccalaureate, professional development, and language teaching. These orders stipulate the required levels of proficiency in Spanish, in the official language of the autonomous community, and in the additional language. They also determine the core content, subject-based competences, and practical teaching skills to be included in the teacher training program. The following relate to linguistic and cultural diversity⁷:

Order ECI/3854/2007 establishes these requirements for the training of teachers for early childhood education:

- Design and manage learning environments in diverse classrooms that address the educational needs of students, gender equality, equity, and respect for human rights.
- Understand the language development of children in early childhood in order to identify any problems and to ensure proper development. Effectively address language-learning situations in multilingual and multicultural contexts. Effectively communicate orally and in writing, and master the use of various techniques of expression.

Order ECI/3857/2007 establishes these requirements for the training of teachers for elementary education:

- Effectively address learning situations in multilingual and multicultural contexts. Encourage reading and critical analysis of texts from scientific and cultural domains included in the school curriculum.
- Design and organize learning environments attending to diversity that address gender equality, equity and respect for human rights, which constitute the values of democratic citizenship education.

Surprisingly, in our review of the Ministry of Education guidelines we found no evidence of the inclusion of contents about how to manage linguistic and cultural diversity in teacher preparation for Secondary Education, Baccalaureate, Professional Development (FP) or Language teachers.

The guidelines we have analyzed set up the pillars on which various Spanish universities have built their curricula for the initial preparation of teachers in elementary and secondary schools. While the existence of those guidelines ensures the consistency and the homogeneity of teacher preparation, there are few opportunities for developing the necessary skills to manage diversity in the classroom. For example, in Elementary Education teacher preparation in

Spain 210 of the total 240 credits are mandatory, leaving little room for additional skills or content related to diversity. If we take a look at the current curriculum of the degrees in Early Childhood Education and Elementary Education offered by three autonomous communities of Spain which have more immigration— in particular the major universities of Madrid (Universidad de Alcalá de Henares- UAH, Universidad Autónoma de Madrid- UAM and Universidad Complutense de Madrid-UCM), Valencia (Universitat de València-UV, Universitat Jaume I- UJI, Universidad de Alicante-UA) and Catalonia (Universitat de Barcelona-UB, Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona-UAB, Universitat de Girona-UdG, Universitat Rovira i Virgili-URV and Universitat de Lleida-UdL)— we can conclude that this initial training is not sufficient or adequate and, in addition, there is a great feeling of having lost a great opportunity to improve the preparation of future teachers.

Although the curricula analyzed have different degrees of implementation, when we review the structure of the curriculum we see that there are subjects or modules linked to the *core curriculum of teacher preparation*, in which there is or could be some content related to the treatment of cultural and linguistic diversity. Translated into English, these are: Society, family and school (UdG, UAB, UDL), Society, family and education (URV), Sociology of education: social, educational and multicultural changes (UB), Theory and practice of inclusive school (UB), Linguistic project of the center and multilingualism (UAB), Education for Diversity (UJI), Education in the modern world (UJI), Sociology of Education (UV, UA, UAH, UCM, UAM), Educating for Equality and Citizenship (UAM), Psycho-educational basis of inclusive education (UAM).

These modules or subjects seem to follow the Ministry of Education guidelines in a rather limited way, without much creativity. If we review the *optional subjects* offered to student teachers in Spain the situation remains the same, with missed opportunities in subjects such as: Catalan as a new language; Common linguistic structures from multilingualism; Aesthetic education and everyday life: postmodern, multicultural, feminist, ecological; Characteristics of foreign languages in the environment; Children’s literature in various languages; Storytelling workshops; Strategies for an inclusive school (UdG), Language reception at school (UAB); Resources for diversity in elementary education (URV), Bilingual and multilingual education (UdL), The Intercultural Dimension in the Curriculum (UCM); Didactic aspects of Inclusive Education (UCM); Teaching Spanish as a Foreign Language (UCM); Training for bilingualism (UCM); Education for building a multicultural citizenship; Citizenship education and communities (UAM), Spanish as a second language (UAM).

And finally, regarding *subject-based options*, we have not found any subject in which cultural and linguistic diversity are the main content.

As Aguado (2006) and Aguado, Gil and Mata (2008) revealed in their initial analysis of teacher preparation in Spain few years ago, it seems that the new curriculum for teacher education still does not explicitly address the development of intercultural competences that are necessary to

⁶ Translated from Spanish.

⁷ Translated from Spanish.

manage diversity in the classroom and with families of diverse backgrounds: “In general, diversity is not addressed from a broad perspective but is associated with what are presumed to be deficits, and/or is addressed with reference to specific groups of minority students. Ethnicity, language and students’ origin are considered as categories of cultural differences and act as variables to be considered in grouping some students in the classroom or in the school. Intercultural education, understood as education for all, is not the main perspective adopted in these programs.”⁸ (Aguado, Gil and Mata, 2008: 277).

3. Educating Teachers for Diversity: what needs to change?

Even in countries like the United States and Canada, with a long history of immigration and diversity, new teachers receive minimal preparation for teaching children whose linguistic, cultural, racial, religious, or social backgrounds are different from their own. Indeed, new teachers often articulate their concerns about their lack of preparation for this reality. A US national survey found that, while more than 40% of teachers have English language learners in their classes, only 12.5% of those teachers had received eight or more hours of training in the previous three years on working with these students (National Center for Education Statistics, 2002). A more recent study in Ontario, Canada, concluded that many recently qualified teachers do not feel prepared for working with students who are learning the language of the school. They feel that the training related to the needs of English language learners (ELLs) that they received in faculties of education was haphazard and superficial, and the study concluded that although new teachers appear to be “moving toward greater ELL awareness and inclusive mindsets, there is evidence that well-intentioned teachers lack the competence necessary for effective classroom practice.” (Webster and Valeo, 2011: 105).

Faced with the challenge of teaching students who are not proficient in the language of instruction, or whose cultural knowledge does not match that assumed by curriculum developers, textbook writers, or the teachers themselves, it is not unusual for teachers to develop a *what can you expect?* or *what am I supposed to do?* attitude, believing that what they do in the classroom can have little effect on the academic trajectories of these students. However, recent work on teacher effectiveness suggests that the teacher is *the most important factor* in student achievement, transcending factors that are traditionally thought to limit student potential such as poverty, language in the home, recent immigration, and so on. Studies on the relationships between teacher quality and student achievement show that:

- “teacher quality—whether measured by content knowledge, experience, training and credentials, or general intellectual skills—is strongly related to student achievement: Simply, skilled teachers produce better student results. Many researchers and analysts argue that the fact that poor and minority students are the

least likely to have qualified teachers is itself a major contributor to the achievement gap. It follows that assigning experienced, qualified teachers to low-performing schools and students is likely to pay off in better performance and narrowing gaps.” (Center for Public Education, 2005).⁹

- “Significant numbers of teachers who work in low-performing schools fall into the category of teachers least prepared to deal with the students who need the most help... many teachers need professional development to build cultural competencies—the skills and awareness related to issues such as culture, language, race, and ethnicity.” (Trumbull and Pacheco, 2005: 1)¹⁰
- “Regardless of how it’s measured, teacher quality is not distributed equitably across schools and districts. Poor and minority students are much less likely to get well-qualified teachers than students who are better off.” (Center for Public Education: op. cit.)

It is important, then, to ensure that students facing challenges related to language, culture, or socioeconomic status be taught by well-prepared, effective, and committed teachers. The best teachers need to be working with the students who need them most, such as students in poor neighbourhoods, second language learners (L2Ls), and recent immigrants—students whose poor performance may have as much or more to do with the quality of the teaching they receive as with their own life situations.

Teacher education programs must find ways to improve teachers’ sense of efficacy, giving them the tools, the confidence, and the enthusiasm they need to make a real difference in the educational outcomes of vulnerable students. We examine three main strategies for faculties of education and educational policymakers and administrators:

- Use or adapt the key competences for teachers in multi-lingual/multicultural contexts identified by researchers in Europe and North America as a basis for the design or redesign of teacher education programs, and for the evaluation of teacher effectiveness in terms of the competences.
- In selecting teachers or student teachers, place a priority on these competences, and devise ways to increase the numbers of teachers and student teachers who represent the diversity of the community at large.
- Consider the way teacher educators teach, ensuring that we model the same competences and teaching strategies in our own teaching that we expect the student teachers to demonstrate.

3.1. What we teach: Key competences for the teaching profession

Teacher educators redesigning the initial teacher training program in Spain can draw on some competences (British spelling) that have been identified for teachers working in culturally diverse settings in Europe and in North America. These include the knowledge, skills, and attitudes that teachers need in order to be effective in the classroom,

⁸ Translated from Spanish.

⁹ Available online: <http://www.centerforpubliceducation.org/Main-Menu/Staffingstudents/Teacher-quality-and-student-achievement-At-a-glance/Teacher-quality-and-student-achievement-Research-review.html>

¹⁰ Available online: http://www.alliance.brown.edu/pubs/leading_diversity

helping students of diverse backgrounds to achieve academic success, and deriving the job satisfaction that will sustain them in a challenging career that demands caring, commitment, and lifelong learning.

In this section we provide a brief overview of four models for teacher education that are intended to develop the competences required for teaching in linguistically and culturally diverse settings.

3.1.1. The European Union Comenius Project

The *EU-Comenius Project: European Core Curriculum for Mainstreamed Second Language Teacher Education* (EUCIM-TE, 2010) was developed by a consortium of academics from several European nations (not including Spain) in response to widespread concern among European nations about the poor academic performance of immigrant and minority students.

As the authors point out: “European education systems are falling short of reasonable targets with respect to their linguistic minority populations. Even if controlled for the socioeconomic status of the parents, a disproportionately high number of students born outside the country of their residence or whose parents were born abroad do not even reach the lowest levels of reading, mathematical or science literacy in comparison with their native peers. The same shortfall can also effect a second generation of students with a linguistic minority background, often due to inadequate early learning of the first language, or an inadequate coping of early care structures or schools regarding the increasing bi- or multilingual situation in families.” (EUCIM-TE, 2010: 7).

The results of this collaboration include several documents intended to guide educational policy and teacher education. These documents provide a framework for planning teacher education programs, and can guide educators in faculties of education in developing programs that will ensure that new teachers and practicing teachers are prepared for the linguistically diverse classrooms where most of them will work.

The *European Core Curriculum for Inclusive Academic Language Teaching: an instrument for training pre- and in-service teachers and educators* (EUCIM-TE, 2010) states clearly that there is a shared responsibility for supporting second language acquisition, and that academic language skills need to be identified and taught in close connection with knowledge acquisition in subject learning. For these reasons, the focus of the project is not on language teachers or language teaching, but on the role of teachers in “an inclusive learning environment” in mainstream classrooms where some of the students are learning the language of instruction: “... [I]n order fully to benefit from their education, language minority students need to engage with the subject knowledge of the curriculum so that learning a language and learning a subject do not become unhelpfully separated.” (EUCIM-TE, 2010: 9).

The document identifies the underlying competences required for integrated language teaching in mainstream classrooms (referred to as Inclusive Academic Language Learning and Teaching (IALT), and outlines the knowledge, skills, and attitudes that are indicative of these competences. The competences are presented in three modules which constitute the European Core Curriculum:

- *Module 1: Language acquisition in the context of schooling.* This module identifies competences in understanding how children acquire language (first and additional), recognizing how language is used in various subject areas, in terms of genre and register, and identifying each student’s learning needs in relation to his or her language background and the linguistic demands of a subject or academic task. Attitudinally, teachers accept their role in enabling L2Ls to learn the language of instruction through engagement with the curriculum, and recognize the importance of a multilingual additive approach rather than one that fails to exploit the students’ *full linguistic repertoire* for learning.

- *Module 2: Methodology in Inclusive Academic Language Learning and Teaching.* This module identifies the knowledge, attitudes, and skills required for inclusive integrated language teaching in mainstream classrooms. There is an emphasis on the need for a whole-school language policy and a collaborative approach that involves both language and subject teachers. Teachers are reminded that it is not sufficient that students solve a technical problem correctly; it is equally important that “effective and successful linguistic formulations are in place, going beyond narrow task accomplishment and... making a contribution to the student’s linguistic enrichment.” (EUCIM-TE, 2010: 23).

- *Module 3: School organization to facilitate Inclusive Academic Language Teaching.* This module focuses on the communicative and organizational skills and networks necessary to involve students, teachers, and parents in collaborative relationships and activities. There is also a focus on language assessment in order to design appropriate instruction (differentiated instruction) and monitor progress.

Each of the three modules is supported by an additional document that provides, for teacher educators, more detailed information. Some of this material, especially from Module 2, can be used directly with students in teacher education courses. For example, the document provides some frameworks for literacy instruction across the curriculum, and guidelines on how to make group work effective in the classroom. There is a further document describing some examples of programs, strategies or events implemented in consortium partner countries are consistent with *European Core Curriculum for Inclusive Academic Language Teaching*.

The focus of the *European Core Curriculum for Inclusive Academic Language Teaching* is, as the title implies, on language, and equipping teachers with the knowledge, skills, and attitudes they need in order to enable L2Ls and other vulnerable students to acquire the kind of academic language that is required for school success. A great strength of this material is the strong foundation in applied linguistics. However, it does not address culture, or power relationships among different cultural groups. Other models for teacher education, especially from North America, place equal or greater emphasis on cultural issues.

3.1.2. The SIOP model

The Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol (SIOP)¹¹, initially developed at the Center for Applied Lin-

¹¹ Information available online at the Center for Applied Linguistics: www.cal.org

guistics in Washington, D.C., is an approach to adapting instruction and making curriculum accessible for English language learners, either in designated classrooms where all the students are learning English, or in mixed classes alongside native speakers.

SIOP is a research-based tool for evaluating classroom instruction, focusing on the integration of language and content and the infusion of socio-cultural awareness. The support and training materials provide many examples of effective practice, such as making connections with students' prior knowledge and experience, adjusting teacher talk, strategies for vocabulary development, prompting higher-order thinking, grouping students effectively, and providing hands-on activities. There is a lesson plan template that could be very useful in initial teacher education as a framework for lesson planning and observation. The template is based on the eight interrelated components of the model: lesson preparation, building background, providing comprehensible input, using various instructional strategies, promoting interaction, providing opportunities for practice/application, lesson delivery, and review/assessment. The SIOP protocol is intended for use with practicing teachers as well, and would be very useful in school-wide professional development, observation, and evaluation.

A major strength of the SIOP materials is the emphasis on observable classroom behaviours and experiences that are indicative of a learning environment that supports second language learners. As well, the observation protocol is supported by an extensive training program and resources, including videos.

3.1.3. The CREDE Standards

The Center for Research and Excellence Center for Research on Education, Diversity and Excellence (CREDE) conducted a study in the United States which resulted in the identification of best teaching practices for students at risk of educational failure due to cultural, language, racial, geographic, or economic factors. These practices are intended for all teachers, in all classrooms, and are summarized as CREDE's Five Standards for Effective Pedagogy.

*The Five Standards for Effective Pedagogy*¹²

The Standards for Effective Pedagogy and Learning were established through CREDE research, and through an extensive analysis of the research and development literature in education and diversity. The Standards represent recommendations on which the literature is in agreement, across all cultural, racial, and linguistic groups in the United States, all age levels, and all subject matters. Thus, they express the principles of effective pedagogy for all students. Even for mainstream students, the Standards describe the ideal conditions for instruction; but for students at-risk of educational failure, effective classroom implementation of the Standards is vital. The research consensus can be expressed as five standards:

- 1) *Joint Productive Activity*: Teacher and Students Producing Together
- 2) *Language Development*: Developing Language and Literacy Across the Curriculum
- 3) *Contextualization*: Making Meaning: Connecting School to Students' Lives

- 4) *Challenging Activities*: Teaching Complex Thinking
- 5) *Instructional Conversation*: Teaching Through Conversation

The Five Standards articulate both philosophical and pragmatic guidelines for effective education. The standards were distilled from findings by educational researchers working with students at risk of educational failure due to cultural, language, racial, geographic, or economic factors.

The Five Standards do not endorse a specific curriculum but, rather, establish principles for best teaching practices. These practices are effective with both majority and minority students in K-16 classrooms across subject matters, curricula, cultures and language groups.

Each of these five standards is supported by specific indicators of implementation in the classroom. The Self-assessment: The Standards Performance Continuum (SPC) is especially useful, not only for teacher self-assessment but for teacher educators, school administrators, or peer coaches who need a framework for observation and evaluation of teacher performance. There is also a one-page evaluation chart for children to use in evaluating their own classroom as a learning environment according to the Standards, which could be adapted for use with students of all ages.

A strength of the CREDE Standards is that they are indicative of good teaching for all students and can therefore be integrated into all teacher training and development courses.

3.1.4. *Leading with Diversity: Cultural Competencies for Teacher Preparation and Professional Development*

This comprehensive resource outlines three sets of teacher cultural competencies (North American spelling) in the areas of culture, language, and race and ethnicity. The document provides teacher educators with "information that they can adapt to their setting and, importantly, a guiding vision for culturally competent teaching in today's schools." (Trumbull and Pacheco, 2005: 2).

The document is divided into four main parts. Throughout each part are quotes from research literature and examples that illustrate or expand on important points:

- Part I introduces the topic of cultural competence and the relevant literature, as well as some guiding principles on which this document is based. The authors remind us that the content of professional training and development courses will vary according to the cultural backgrounds of both students and teachers; that there will be moments of discomfort as past and present power relationships are analyzed; that learning about cultural diversity requires that one first develop cultural self-awareness, especially for persons of the dominant culture who may never have analyzed their own culturally based assumptions and perspectives before.
- Part II presents four competencies related to culture and cross-cultural awareness: developing an awareness of one's own cultural identity, analyzing the culture of the school, and making adaptations to meet the needs of students; providing curriculum and instruction that are both challenging and culturally relevant; collaborating with parents and families; and using classroom assessment procedures and criteria that are fair and valid for all students.

¹² Available online: <http://crede.berkeley.edu/research/crede/standards.html>

- Part III outlines three competencies in the area of language that are relevant to the teaching of both native English speakers and L2Ls: addressing the needs of native English speakers who speak many varieties of English; creating an oral language environment that supports L2Ls; and developing literacy skills among L2Ls.

- Part IV describes six competencies for addressing issues of race and ethnicity in the classroom and school: maintaining and communicating high expectations for all students; respecting and supporting students' identities; recognizing and challenging institutional racism in the school; recognizing and preventing cultural racism within the school; recognizing and preventing individual racism; and recognizing and addressing unequal power relationships in the school community.

This document is the most comprehensive in scope of all the material reviewed here. Its strong research base draws on the fields of including education, linguistics, anthropology, psychology, and sociology. It is the only one of the four that addresses culture and racism in a systematic way, requiring teachers to reflect on and challenge some of their own beliefs in order to understand deep concepts about culture and ethnicity. However, it is firmly rooted in the U.S. school system and would need considerable adaptation for use in Europe: for example, the material on indigenous people might be replaced by material referring to the educational outcomes and experiences of Roma children in European schools.

3.2. *Whom we teach: Changing the face of the teaching profession*

The major challenge in multilingual, multicultural schools is the mismatch between, on the one hand, the culture of the school and the cultural composition of the teaching staff, and on the other, the cultural composition of the student population and the local community. According to McMurtry and Curling (2008): “[T]he most urgent priority is to bring more teachers who reflect and represent the diversity of the students into schools in priority neighbourhoods. This cannot be left to chance or to the vagaries of the hiring practices of individual schools.” (2008: 244).

However, with some changes in approach to the recruitment of student teachers and the hiring of teachers, teacher educators and school administrators can draw on the diversity of the local community to increase the diversity of the teaching profession, thus reducing the cultural distance between home and school, and providing teachers with colleagues who can act as cultural and linguistic resources.

Unfortunately, many young people from minority backgrounds have seen few role models of people from their own background among the teachers in their schools, and therefore do not aspire to the profession. Various initiatives can be undertaken to increase the representation of student teachers in the initial teacher education program. For example:

1. Faculties of education can reach out to secondary school students, providing them with role models who can encourage them to consider teaching as a career. For example, at the University of Toronto, student teachers from diverse backgrounds visit local secondary

schools, especially those with diverse student populations, to give workshops and organize other activities that promote teaching as an attractive and attainable career option.

2. The admissions criteria can be expanded to make knowledge of a community language an asset in the selection of teacher candidates or new teachers (without discarding any of the other criteria for selection). For example, the application form could ask candidates to indicate languages and cultures with which they are familiar and which could be an asset in their teaching. Also, students from the majority culture can be asked to describe the experiences they have had with languages and cultures other than their own, or to demonstrate their awareness of social identity and how it relates to education. The University of Toronto requires applicants to identify themselves socially, in terms of gender, race, socio-economic status, sexuality, religion, geographic region, ethnicity, age, dis/ability, and other characteristics, and asks, “How and why do you think your social identity will influence your work as a teacher with groups of students who are diverse in their social identities?” (Childs et al., 2010: 25).

3. Student teachers whose educational experience, either as students or as teachers, has been in other countries, can be encouraged to apply for admission and receive the support they need to make the adjustment to teaching in a new cultural environment. The University of Toronto reserves a number of places in the program for *Internationally Educated Teacher Candidates* and provides a support program that includes cultural orientation, language training, and additional support in field practice assignments, to enable this group of student teachers to adjust to the culture of teaching in Ontario (Gagné, 2009).

How we teach: Modelling effective practice

In addition to considering *who* is admitted to teacher education programs, and *what* is taught, it is important to consider *how* teacher educators teach. A report by the National Center for Culturally Responsive Educational Systems (NCREST), funded by the U.S. Department of Education, is addressed specifically to teacher educators. The authors offer practical advice on how to include relevant material and activities into initial teacher education courses and field experience, because “learning effective cultural pedagogy is not just course or curriculum development, but rather a change in students' thinking, behavior, and ultimately teaching.” (Kea, Campbell-Whately and Richards, 2006: 9).

If it is important for new teachers to use a variety of instructional approaches and techniques in order to engage all learners, it is essential that their instructors in faculties of education model these approaches and techniques in their own teaching. For some faculty members, this may involve a radical shift in the way they plan and present their lessons (not lectures) and involve their students in the teaching and learning process through individual reflection, group discussion, and problem-solving tasks such as the adaptation of curriculum content or materials from an inclusive or antiracist perspective. As well, teacher educators need to develop additional criteria for the observation and evaluation of student teachers in their teaching practice assignments.

4. Conclusions

In recent decades European educational systems have been facing the challenge of responding effectively and equitably to the dramatic increase in linguistic and cultural diversity in schools and classrooms. A more comprehensive approach to diversity is needed, not only for the sake of newcomer students or minority students, but for all students, because diversity will be a feature of their school lives, communities, and future workplaces.

In this article we have presented some of the major gaps that exist in the initial training of teachers—gaps that leave them unprepared for the cultural and linguistic diversity that many of them will face on a daily basis in their future schools. We have briefly described several models for a teacher education curriculum based on some key competences for teachers in a globalized world. Although there are differences of focus or emphasis in these models, there is a general agreement among educators and academics that a different approach to the initial training of teachers is a key to the development of educational systems and experiences that promote equitable educational outcomes for all groups of students.

Fortunately, teacher educators in Spain and elsewhere do not need to start from zero. The models of teacher competences outlined in this article can serve as a springboard or foundation for a revised teacher education curriculum in Spain—always adapted to local contexts and needs, of course. We hope that this article can promote reflection and collective debate about the necessary competences, beliefs and attitudes that teachers need in order to work effectively in multilingual and multicultural schools, and provide some practical examples of the kind of transformation that is required in teacher education in order to develop these competences, skills, and attitudes in all teachers.

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