

## Interculturality and language teaching in Colombia: The case of three Teacher Education Programs\*

La interculturalidad y la enseñanza de lenguas en Colombia: Caso de tres programas de formación docente A  
interculturalidade e o ensino de línguas na Colômbia: Caso de três programas de formação docente

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### Abstract:

Research on interculturality and initial foreign language (FL) teacher education has focused mainly on the development of intercultural communicative competence (ICC) and few studies address said topic from a critical standpoint that might allow us to think about other ways of teaching and learning (T&L) a language. This article describes a research that sought to understand what intercultural perspective is included in three initial FL teacher education programs in the city of Bogotá, Colombia. The study is framed within a qualitative research logic, with a mixed focus and a multilevel concurrent nested design, which is characterized by the simultaneous gathering and analysis of qualitative and quantitative information. From the study, it is evident that the three undergraduate programs promote a reflexive and functional model, which establishes teacher education objectives, knowledge, and specific strategies, but also challenges to be undertaken.

**Keywords:** culture, interculturality, teacher education, foreign languages.

### Resumen:

Las investigaciones sobre la perspectiva intercultural en la formación inicial de los profesores de lenguas extranjeras se han centrado en el desarrollo de la competencia comunicativa intercultural y son pocos los estudios que abordan dicha perspectiva desde un enfoque crítico que permita pensar otras formas de enseñar y aprender una lengua. Este artículo describe una investigación que tuvo como propósito comprender qué perspectiva intercultural se incluye en la formación de profesores en tres programas de licenciatura en lenguas extranjeras en la ciudad Bogotá, Colombia. El estudio se enmarca en la lógica de la investigación cualitativa con un enfoque mixto y un diseño anidado concurrente de varios niveles, que se caracteriza por la recolección y análisis simultáneo de información cualitativa y cuantitativa. Como resultado de este estudio se evidencia que los tres programas promueven un modelo de formación intercultural reflexivo y funcional que establece objetivos de formación, saberes y estrategias específicas, pero también retos que asumir.

**Palabras clave:** cultura, interculturalidad, formación de profesores, lenguas extranjeras.

### Resumo:

A pesquisa sobre interculturalidade e formação docente (FD) inicial em línguas estrangeiras tem se focado principalmente no desenvolvimento de Competências comunicativas interculturais (CCI) e poucos estudos abordam tal tema desde um ponto de vista crítico que nos permite pensar em outras maneiras de ensinar e aprender (T&L) uma língua. Este artigo descreve uma pesquisa que visa entender que perspectiva intercultural fica incluída nos três programas de formação docente (FD) inicial em línguas estrangeiras na cidade de Bogotá, Colômbia. O estudo está enquadrado em uma lógica de pesquisa qualitativa, com enfoque misto

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e desenho ancorado concorrente de múltiplos níveis, que se caracteriza pela reunião e análise simultâneas de informação qualitativa e quantitativa. A partir do estudo evidencia-se que os três programas de graduação promovem um modelo reflexivo e funcional que estabelece objetivos de formação docente, conhecimentos e estratégias específicas, e mesmo desafios a serem afrontados.

**Palavras-chave:** cultura, interculturalidade, formacao docente, línguas estrangeiras.

## Introduction

The discussion on interculturality is usually limited to the anthropological treatment of a folklore tradition (Walsh, 2005) and its implementation in the classroom still seems to be marginal. In general, under the pretext of “interculturality”, we tend to undertake an inclusion policy, which, despite incorporating cultural topics in the classroom, it reinforces, stereotypes and colonial processes of rationalization (Walsh, 2010). Thus, thinking about intercultural education as an inter-epistemic process of learning and studying still seems to be far, in most contexts, from a new practice and educational policy (Walsh, 2005). We still do not recognize that disciplines and knowledge are plural and diverse, nor do we achieve identifying *other* knowledge as scientific and technological knowledge, relevant and necessary to all (Walsh, 2010). In the field of language T&L and in teacher education, this seems to be even more remote.

The concept of interculturality, in the field of FL T&L, is generally related to the beliefs about language and culture and about the possibility that these two are taught in an integrated manner (Prosser & Trigwell, 1999). Interest in interculturality has recently grown in this field and it has been established mainly through the concept of ICC as a result of the work of authors such as Byram (1989), Byram and Morgan (1991), Byram and Fleming (1998), Byram, Nichols and Stevens (2001), Corbett (2003), Sercu et al. (2005), Deardorff (2008), and Fantini (2000), among others. The idea of tending toward an interculturally competent speaker is constantly under discussion and study in the field of language teaching; and it seems to be a common objective among FL teachers.

The growth of ICC has forced language teachers to promote it in their classrooms despite the misalignment in their conceptions about interculturality and their pedagogic practices (Prosser & Trigwell, 1999). Generally, teachers want their students to be competent in the language, *in spite of* cultural differences. However, we question whether if what it means to be intercultural for the teachers concurs with what in the Social Sciences has been defined as interculturality or if the concept has established itself and naturalized functionally to maintain hierarchical social structures.

The term culture in language T&L, just as asserted by Cortazzi and Jin (2007), is traditionally used to refer to cultural products (e.g. literature, art, music), and to cultural information (facts on history or geography) of the places where the languages are spoken. The term also includes behaviors and attitudes, and the social knowledge that people possess to interpret experience. The definition of Moerman (as cited in Cortazzi & Jin, 2007, p. 197), for example, states that: “culture is a series –maybe a system– of interpretation principles, together with that system’s products”. The concept of culture posited by Cortazzi and Jin (2007) is understood as a framework of beliefs, ideas, and presuppositions that are used to interpret others’ actions, their words, and thought schemes.

However, culture seems to continue playing a subsidiary role in language teaching (Kramsch, 1998). It is still possible to find ways of teaching culture that are related more to its superficial elements, and on the other hand, teachers without a systematic plan to promote interculturality, or to face stereotypes and prejudices in the classroom. In fact, there can be systematicness and consistency in culture teaching, but they do not necessarily promote interculturality. The will to teach it seems to exist, but we might have been unable to transcend an information transfer pedagogy (Prosser & Trigwell, 1999).

On the other hand, interculturality transcends the recognition of difference framed in a colonial, racial, and hierarchical structure toward a tool, a process, and a collective, local project that seeks to

transform structures, institutions, and social relationships to construct different conditions of existence, being, thinking, knowing, learning, feeling, and living (Walsh, 2010). An epistemic and political intercultural proposal in the field of FL teaching would transcend on the one hand the established and naturalized power schemes, and on the other, the monodisciplinary approach of applied linguistics to concur with the Social Sciences.

This article presents an interinstitutional research with the purpose of understanding how FL teachers are taught to promote interculturality in their classroom, in three initial FL teacher education programs in the city of Bogotá, Colombia. The results initially evidence that the three Bachelor's programs promote a reflexive and functional intercultural education model. Thus, they are framed in two approaches that are known in the literature on teacher education: one intended for the education of a reflexive teacher and the other intended for an intercultural teacher. Below we present the study's methodology, described as qualitative with a mixed focus and a multilevel concurrent nested design. The next section presents the study's results from two dimensions: a) document analysis and b) qualitative analysis.

## Methodology

The study is framed within the logic of a qualitative research with a mixed focus and multilevel concurrent nested design, which is characterized by the simultaneous gathering and analysis of qualitative and quantitative information. The methodological process was oriented toward revealing what teacher educators and pre-service teachers state and posit regarding interculturality, explicitly in the pedagogy and didactic components of three FL teacher education programs. The results presented in this document answer one of the research questions, namely:

How are FL teachers trained to promote interculturality in their classroom?

To answer this question, we analyze three initial FL teacher education programs (Bachelor's in Modern Languages, Bachelor's in Spanish and English, and Bachelor's in Spanish and Foreign Languages (English-French)), specifically, we focus on the elements of these programs where subjective and institutional dimensions of education can be seen, namely: policies related to interculturality, teacher educators' and pre-service teachers' experience, and the documents that specify some of the statements or points of view of the language teacher's intercultural education (syllabi or curricula).

## Type of Study

This study is an exploratory one since we sought to identify promissory concepts or variables, establish priorities for future research, suggest actions, and/or identify study contexts or situations on the topic of interculturality (Hernández-Sampieri, Fernández-Collado, & Baptista-Lucio, 2014). We also sought to specify the diverse meanings of a phenomenon (interculturality), and to approach the intercultural teaching strategies in three Bachelor's programs. This research also has the characteristics of a mixed study.

Specifically, this research implemented a multilevel *concurrent nested design* that allows searching for information in different groups or levels of analysis (Hernández-Sampieri et al., 2014) and is characterized by the simultaneous gathering and analysis of qualitative and quantitative information. Three levels of analysis were developed in this study into two phases: one quantitative phase in which we used two instruments: a) a descriptive instrument – a survey (Montero & León, 2002) and, b) a multidimensional descriptive instrument – the Statistical Analysis of Textual Data (SATD) (Peña, 2000). The second phase, of a qualitative nature, was developed from the perspective of content analysis (Barreto, Velandia-Morales, & Rincón-Vásquez, 2011). We present the results of the SATD and content analysis in this article.

## Participants

Thirty-five (35) teacher educators responsible for the seminars of the pedagogic and didactic component and 125 students completing their pedagogic practices participated in the study. These participants correspond to a non-probabilistic sample chosen with an error of 8% and 95% confidence.

Teacher educators are between the ages of 28 and 52 years; 57% are women and 43% are men. Thirty-four percent (34%) of the teachers teach their class in English, 34% in Spanish, 14% in French, and 12% in English and French. Regarding their education, 30 of them have a Master's degree, four a doctorate and one a specialization.

Out of the 125 pre-service teachers, 28 are enrolled in the Bachelor's in Modern Languages, 38 in the Bachelor's in Basic Education with a minor in Humanities: Spanish and English, and 59 in the Bachelor's in Basic Education with a minor in Humanities: Spanish and Foreign Languages. Sixty-five percent (65%) of the students are women and 35% are men. Fifty-four percent (54%) of the participants were completing their eighth semester, 24% their ninth semester, 12% their tenth semester, and 10% their third, sixth, and seventh semester.

Regarding the language in which the students complete their practice, 40% asserts it is in Spanish, 37% in English, and 23% in French. Seventy-eight percent (78%) complete their pedagogic practices in educational institutions of a public nature, while 22% do them in institutions of a private nature; the majority in the grades corresponding to basic primary education (63%), 19% in basic secondary, and 18% in preschool levels, middle and high school.

## Information and Data Gathering

To gather the information, we resorted to three techniques: 1) document analysis of courses' syllabi of the Bachelor's pedagogic and didactic component; 2) surveys (not included in this article); and 3) focus groups. Considering that this study is of a multidimensional descriptive type (Lebart, Salem, & Bécue, 2010) and that it has an SATD approach, we initially present in this article the results of the document analysis (Barreto et al., 2011) of 31 analytical curricula. For this analysis, firstly a lexicometric analysis was performed (list of word frequency and repeated segments) of the information that appears in the objectives, content, methodology, and evaluation of the syllabi of the Bachelor's pedagogic component. Subsequently, a correspondence analysis was conducted, which is a contingency tables description technique that is displayed in a graphical representation of associations (Lebart et al., 2010).

Next, this article presents the results of four focus group sessions; two (2) with teacher educators and two (2) with pre-service teachers. To analyze the information gathered in these focus groups, three levels of analysis were established: a) the level of textual surface that allowed us to describe the information and identify themes and matrixes, b) the analytical level that allowed us to classify, organize the information, and construct codes and categories with the support of the Atlas.Ti 6.0 software, and c) the interpretative level that allowed us to understand and make sense of the information based on the elaboration of inferences. Below we present the results of the SATD.

## Findings

### Document Analysis

The results presented in this section are based on: a) an unidimensional lexicometric analysis (list of word frequencies and repeated segments) of 31 syllabi offered by three Bachelor's in Languages programs from Bogotá, Colombia (this analysis was conducted based on the objectives, methodology, and evaluation specified in said syllabi); and, b) a correspondence analysis of that which is specified in the class curricula; a contingency tables description technique that is shown in a graphic representation of associations between rows and columns (Lebart et al., 2010). This method consists in "determining elements that are characteristic to the text when a comparative study is performed on several of them" (Etxeberria, García, Gil, & Rodríguez, 1995, p. 166). Thus, the results show characteristic elements of the syllabi analyzed in relation to interculturality and teacher education. We begin with glossaries and repeated segments that allow identifying the most used words, segments, or lemmas and identify the linguistic context in which they are used (concurrences) (Barreto et al., 2011). Then, we perform a correspondence analysis. It is noteworthy to mention that we use the SPAD version 7.0 software to achieve this document analysis.

The results obtained through the lexicometric and correspondence analyses evidence particular knowledge that the pre-service language teachers acquire. The word segments "of learning" and "the teaching" are repeated 10 times. These segments can also be found in the following order: "learning of" and "teaching of", and in the form: "the teaching of", with a similar frequency (8, 9, and 8 times, respectively). The word segments "didactic of" is present with a frequency of 6, as well as the segment "applied linguistics". On the other hand, the word "learning" is the one that most frequently appears in the courses' contents (23 times), followed by the words "language", "didactic", and "teaching", with a frequency of 18, 13, and 12, respectively. These words and word segments frame the FL teacher mainly within the discipline of Applied Linguistics. This discipline, according to Luque-Agullo (2004), "currently, (...) is constituted by six theme domains. However, (...) (its) historical origin (...) (and its entity) are based on three fundamental axes: language, (the) teaching and (the) learning, that surround the context" (p. 20). The word "context" emerges among the courses' contents with a frequency of 5.

Regarding the methodology described in the courses analyzed, words and word segments are evidenced that are related to a great variety of forms of work in teacher education. The words "workshops", "investigation", and "activities" each have a frequency of 14. In turn, the words "seminar" and "readings" each have a frequency of 10. The latter is also present in the form: "reading", with a frequency of 5. The segment "the students" has a frequency of 24 and is also present in the form "the student" with a frequency of 8, followed by "of investigation" with a frequency of 10.

In relation to the words and segments of words present in the description of the evaluation of the courses analyzed, segments are evidenced like "the theory" (6), "the readings" (5), which are also present in the form of: "of the readings" (4); and "presentation of" (4). The most frequent words in the evaluation of the courses' syllabi are "work" (10), "workshops" (10), and "reading" (8). The words "writings" (7), with the form "writings" (4) and "texts" (6) are also present.

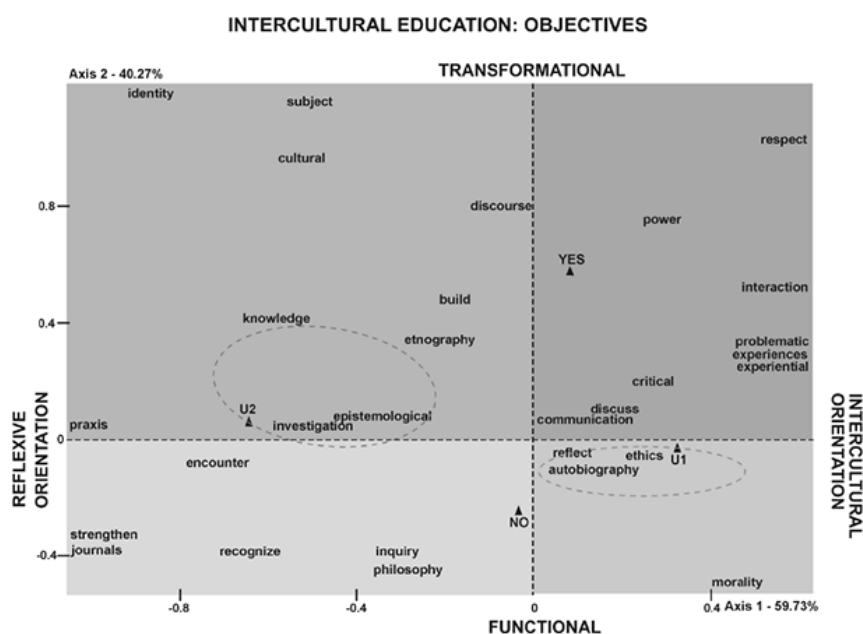
The document analysis allowed identifying tendencies based on lexical groupings that we found in the objectives and contents proposed in the syllabi of the seminars of the pedagogic component. As represented in figure 1, these tendencies overlap in four variables: "intercultural orientation" (right vertical axis with the presence of words like "experiential", "experiences", and "power", among others); "reflexive orientation" (left vertical axis with words like "didactic"); "functional" (inferior horizontal axis with words like "applied linguistics"; and transformational (superior horizontal axis with concepts like "subject", "identity", and "cultural"). These four variables arise from the review of 31 syllabi that correspond to the pedagogic and

didactic component, through SATD and a subsequent treatment of the information at a multidimensional level (Barreto et al., 2011), in the form of a factorial analysis of text and numeric data.

These tendencies allow framing the three Bachelor's programs under two teaching approaches: the model of the reflexive teacher and the model of the intercultural teacher. Teacher education, from a reflexive perspective, has been a source of research of authors like Richards (1990), Segovia and Fernandez (1999), Shon, (1992), among others. They have addressed the concept of reflection as a definitive condition since it contributes to knowledge construction in the educational process. This approach emerged in the decade of the 1970s. It posits a paradigm change in the conception of the teacher as technical toward conceiving him as a reflexive teacher. On the other hand, teacher education from an intercultural perspective has been the topic of study of researchers like Byram and Morgan (1991) Kramsch (1997), Liddicoat (2008), Sercu (2002), among others, who assert that teaching a language should not be disconnected from intercultural education. Liddicoat (2008) states that for the development of an intercultural pedagogy, it is necessary to recognize that the classroom is a cultural context by excellence where students' and teachers' experiences and expectations are delimited by the linguistic and cultural background that each one possesses.

Thus, the results evidence that in relation to education objectives, the first tendency is found in the figure's left superior quadrant and refers to reflexive orientation with transformation traits. Explicitly, there is an aim for the pre-service teacher to use didactic and methodological strategies (established by a discipline) in teaching foreign languages, and at the same time, for them to be critically conscientious of the naturalized power relationships (among cultures).

The second grouping is in the figure's inferior right quadrant and refers to a functional tendency with indications of an intercultural orientation since, explicitly, there is an aim to get the pre-service teacher to be reflexive and critical (with words like "autobiography", "to reflect", and "ethics"), but it still seems to promote unique and homogenizing forms of knowledge (objectives are evidenced that are related to the teaching didactic of foreign languages as fixed forms of learning). University 2 (U2) is in the first tendency (reflexive-transformational), while University 1 (U1) is in the second tendency (functional-intercultural).



In relation to the syllabi content, we observe two similar tendencies: the first in the figure's left superior quadrant, which refers to the reflexive orientation; and the second in the right inferior quadrant, which refers to the functional perspective. U2 is in the superior left quadrant and U1 is in the lower right quadrant. Figure 2 shows these tendencies.

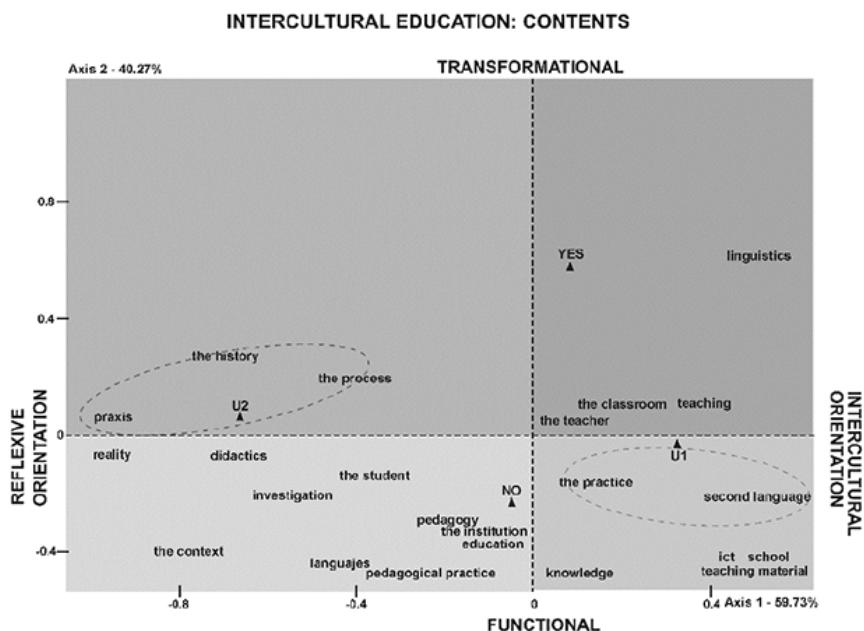


FIGURE 2.  
Intercultural Teaching: Content  
Source: authors' own creation

Intercultural education posits two dimensions: 1) that teachers identify their conception of culture, as well as of T&L; and 2) that they recognize that there are always at least two languages at play: their own language and the language that is taught (Liddicoat, 2008). Similarly, this education assumes that in each language the world is constructed in a unique manner and aims to comprehend the nature of that particularly constructed world. U1 seems to promote this type of training for language teachers in Bogotá,

On the other hand, reflection constitutes a core axis of all reflexive pedagogic process, in so far as it allows conscientiously exploring actions and achieving a new understanding of teaching to get to new ways of doing (Moreno, 2006). For Richards (1990), reflection is a process in which an experience is remembered, examined, and evaluated, generally in relation to a broader purpose. In this sense, some of the strategies proposed by Richards (1990) to carry out the reflexive process are: elaborating daily field journals that record what the teacher does in class; peer observation that allows carrying out a collaborative process in the practice of teaching and recording the classes. These strategies allow the teacher to review their experiences, analyze them, reflect on their actions, and transform their practices. U2 seems to promote this type of teacher education.

The tendencies described in figures 1 and 2 evidence that in the two universities, indications of reflexivity and of interculturality arise; although they are still located in the functional and non-transformational quadrant, which following Liddicoat (2008) would constitute a process that implies thinking about what their own linguistic and cultural existence means: how they react in the face of diversity, what they think about diversity, and how they can constructively collaborate with diversity.

## Qualitative Analysis

The data gathered through four focus groups (two with students or pre-service teachers; and two with teacher educators from the programs) also allowed us to understand the model of reflexive and functional intercultural education of three Bachelor programs in Foreign Languages in the city of Bogotá, Colombia. Thus, a textual qualitative analysis was performed taking elements from the established theory and three levels of analysis were established: i) of textual surface (seeks to describe the information and identify themes and matrixes); ii) analytical (where the information is classified and organized and codes and categories are constructed); and iii) of fragmentation and interpretation (where it is given sense and inferences are made). For this textual qualitative analysis, the software Atlas Ti version 6.0.15 was used.

This section presents the results of these three levels of analysis (textual surface, fragmentation, and interpretation analysis) to describe the aforementioned model.

## Conception of culture and interculture

The results of the qualitative analysis allow initially identifying what conception of culture and interculture supports the model of reflexive and functional intercultural education of the two universities of Bogotá. Thus, a total of 56 codes were obtained related to the conception of culture and interculture. The following table shows a summary of the number of codes broken down by university and participant population.

TABLE 1.  
Distribution of codes related to the conception of  
culture and of inter-culture according to the population

	Teachers U1	Students U1	Total U1	Teachers U2	Students U2	Total U2	Total
Definition of culture and inter-culture	11	7	18	1	5	6	24
Definition of interculturality	13	9	22	4	6	10	32

Source: own source

As evidenced in Table 1, the definition of culture appears a total of 24 times in the focus groups with teacher educators and pre-service teachers. The teacher educators from U1 are those who most frequently define culture, in contrast to the teachers from U2, where the conception of culture is made explicit only once (11 and 1, respectively). The results are similar in relation to the definition of interculture; the teacher educators and pre-service teachers from U1 are those who more explicitly define interculture (13 and 9, respectively), in contrast to those from U2 (4 teacher educators and 6 pre-service teachers).

The conception of interculturality for teacher educators is close to the perspective posited by Walsh (2009), denominated relational interculturality, understood as the contact or exchange between cultures that can take place under conditions of equality or inequality. It poses the risk of transformation not occurring and seen as something naturalized instead. In the focus groups, it is possible to observe that the conception of interculturality of the teacher educators is framed in the contact between cultures and groups with the objective of contrasting or comparing them.

In their testimonials, the relational intercultural perspective is evidenced, naturalizing the establishment of the differences between cultures when asserting “sadly or happily [...] we have (cultural) differences”, and naturalizing the comparison between cultures when asserting “in addition to making us different, they also

make us the same”. However, indications of critical interculturality are evidenced when one of the teacher educators asserts that in their courses, culture is approached by taking decoloniality as a central point. This shows that there is also an interest in treating what is cultural and intercultural from a more reflexive perspective and with the purpose of developing critical processes.

We have covered themes all having to do with that which is cultural and in addition, well let us say that the central theme, the central axis is “decolonialization”, and it is in all the areas; then we work on globalization, gender aspects. For example, that there are numerous visions of over there and over here, we are always comparing, when we read an article, we read complex texts like Simone de Beauvoir, “The Second Sex”. (focus group 2 TU2)

This teacher educator highlights the importance of cultural and intercultural and discusses a “decolonial” and “global” theoretical approach, as well as highlight reading and comparing as specific work techniques. On the other hand, it is evidenced that pre-service teachers refer to intercultural education as an important aspect when teaching children a FL and they consider that this component should be transversal in education. A clear concern exists among pre-service teachers regarding how to teach children and how to conduct their practices and their classes. Pre-service teachers also define culture or interculture from a relational or functional perspective.

These data allow us to corroborate a model of intercultural education that is related to that posited by Liddicoat (2008), which proposes five principles that are the starting point to develop an intercultural pedagogy: i) *Active construction*: learning implies the active commitment to interpret and create meaning when interacting with other people; ii) *Connections*: learning is developed in the first place through social interactions, in other words, they are interpersonal, and in the second place in the individual’s mind, in other words, they are intrapersonal; iii) *Interaction*: learning and communication are social and interactive facts. Interacting and communicating interculturality means thus the continuous development of the understanding of existing relationships within the framework of reference of one’s and the other’s own language and culture; iv) *Reflection*; learning implies being aware of how we think, get to know, and learn about language and culture; and v) *Responsibility*: learning depends on the student’s attitudes and dispositions. Specifically, it implies accepting responsibility in communicating and in the way of interacting with others.

Thus, Liddicoat (2008) asserts that the foregoing principles require development in practice and are shaped in the following interrelated processes: to observe, to compare, to reflect, to interact. Observing similarities and differences is essential to the intercultural learning of a language. Comparing allows students to identify similarities and differences constituting itself in a resource for reflection, which is the central element for the development of interculturality. However, for Liddicoat (2008) these processes by themselves do not ensure an intercultural pedagogy and they are not linear.

The model of reflexive and functional intercultural education of the two participant universities in this study has also established principles for the development of interculturality. It does not only have a concept of culture and interculture that frames it in a specific quadrant, but it also posits objectives, know-hows, strategies, and challenges of teacher education. The results obtained in the focus groups show a total of 316 codes that allude to intercultural education of FL teachers. Most of these codes (217) are mentioned by students and teachers from U1. Table 2 shows the codes assigned and their frequency of appearance.

TABLE 2.  
Codes and Frequencies

	Teachers U1	Students U1	Total U1	Teachers U2	Students U2	Total U2	Total
Curricula content	14	3	17	3	5	8	25
Definition of culture and inter-culture	11	7	18	1	5	6	24
Definition interculturality	13	9	22	4	6	10	32
Off-centering	7	3	10	0	2	2	12
Didactic strategies	12	2	14	12	6	18	32
Evaluation Process	1	0	1	1	0	1	2
Attitudinal objective	6	3	9	0	0	0	9
Axiological objective	11	0	11	3	0	3	14
Heuristic objective	12	0	12	3	1	4	16
Teacher training challenges	22	24	46	3	14	17	63
Teacher role	5	2	7	0	0	0	7
Student role	2	0	2	0	0	0	2
Knowing on learning	9	1	10	1	4	5	15
Knowing on teaching	5	24	29	0	20	20	49
Knowing on language and culture	1	8	9	4	1	5	14
Total	131	86	217	35	64	99	316

Source: own source

The set of these codes comprises the particular model of reflexive and intercultural education of these two universities of Bogotá. Our interpretation of the model is represented in figure 3. As mentioned earlier, this model of reflexive and functional intercultural education is corroborated in intercultural teaching and has an intercultural orientation. Additionally, it posits education objectives and it promotes pedagogic know-how and curricula content through strategies like decentering. It also determines new roles in T&L processes, as well as new challenges.

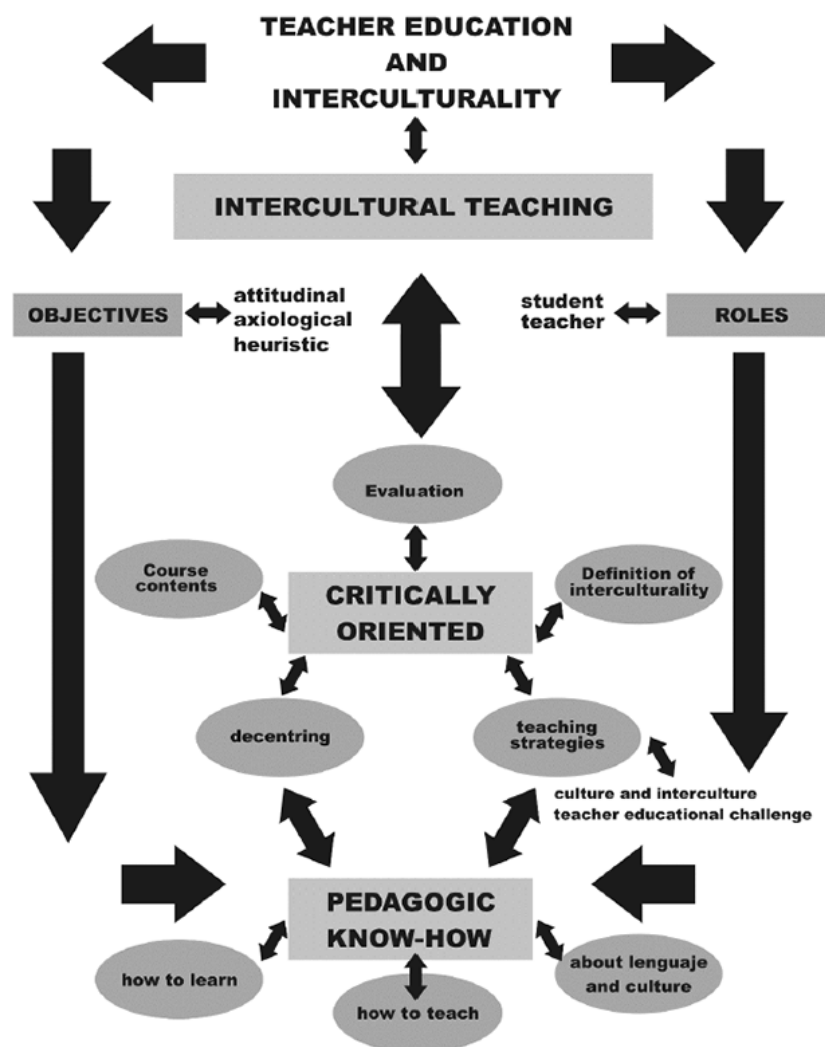


FIGURE 3.  
Teacher Education and Interculturality  
Source: own source

The following sections describe three families of codes that arise more frequently and that constitute indications of the particular model of reflexive and intercultural education of these two universities of Bogotá: i) education objectives, ii) pedagogic know-how and didactic strategies; and iii) teacher education challenges. Those aspects of the model that arise less frequently, but are a part of it, are discussed in the conclusions.

## Education Objectives

The model of teacher education mainly posits three objectives: attitudinal (9), axiological (14), and heuristic (16). The attitudinal objectives established by the teachers seek to explore and possibly transform the view that pre-service teachers have about themselves and about “the other”. The attitudinal seeks to reflect on prejudices and “broaden the view” that pre-service teachers have about culture and about “the other”; it seeks to reflect on the “meeting” with the other.

The axiological objectives posited by the teacher educators seek to promote values like respect for *the other* and their differences. Teachers assert that they promote “ethics”, and believe that in interculturality “many ethical elements are also handled”. Thus, they intend to promote reflection in pre-service teachers on equality and “achieve some degree of valuation of the other”. They promote lemmas like “I am a person with one world and every other person is equal”. They also motivate pre-service teachers to reflect on the role played by the languages they will teach.

It is important to highlight that these axiological objectives are framed in a critical perspective with the assumption of unequal and conflictive human relationships, just as a teacher educator asserts it:

Understanding that there are, let us say, some topics that are also conflictive. Right? Let us say that I want to be able to meet this *other* in a position of respect and horizontality, which let us say it is valid as a political wish, but in reality it operates in different ways and I have discriminated others and I have been discriminated by others because of linguistic reasons and of cultural reasons. (Focus group 1 PU1)

Finally, the heuristic objectives attempt pre-service teachers to mainly develop micro and macro reflection abilities; in other words, about themselves and about their society.

After presenting the three main objectives of the particular model of reflexive and intercultural education of the two universities in Bogotá, we continue with the know-hows it promotes and the strategies that it uses to develop them.

## Pedagogic Know-how and Didactic Strategies

The model of teacher education in the two universities in Bogotá mainly promotes three types of knowing-how: knowing-how to learn (15), knowing-about language and culture (14); and knowing-how to teach (49). These know-hows mainly imply transforming traditional knowledge on methods, didactics, and concepts of language, languages, and language learning. Initially, knowing-how to learn refers to the knowledge that the pre-service teachers construct about what it means to learn. Thus, teacher educators mainly talk about reflection about “the ability to effectively communicate in a communicative situation, ([...] and about) what does communicating effectively mean?”. Among these know-hows are “also inquiring into the concept of competence”; about the “difference in learning processes that lead a child to learn faster, slower”; and “the school environment”. These know-hows to learn seem to be mainly promoted through reflection as mentioned above.

Secondly, teacher educators promote knowing-about language that does not only refer to their system, but also to the role played by that language in history and in current political and social dynamics. They do this by reflecting on “one language that is a colonial heritage, [...] it is an inheritance of a colonization process, even coloniality”. Pre-service teachers also seem to evidence know-hows about communication and interaction in general when referring to “speaking to another person that is clearly from another culture, another region, or another country, [...] I believe that is when one is exposed to being [...] much more careful than in other situations when one is speaking like... with family or life-long friends”. Knowing-about language and culture also seems to relate to what type of language variety is promoted, which variety is more prestigious, and which is preferred.

Finally, in our findings it is greatly evidenced an interest in knowing-how to teach, with more than double of appearances than the foregoing types of know-hows (49 quotes). These know-hows refer to what to teach and how to teach culture, or how to approach this concept in the classroom. Teacher educators mention seeking to transform traditional content that is related to culture and interculture, like gastronomy and cultural “artifacts”; to promote the search for “other” content that transcends stereotypes. This construction of “other” know-hows seems to enter the education model of the two universities of Bogotá through reflection and practice mainly in the classroom.

Pre-service teachers, on the other hand, seem to think that what is promoted in their education to teach culture or promote interculturality processes “it is still too little”. Even so, they see some cases that evidence the search for other forms of teaching, for example, from personal experience.

However, most of the pre-service teachers consider that it is based on their own experience in the teacher practice or through peer dialogue that they begin to develop ways of approaching culture and interculture.

I think that, well, personally, throughout my education as such, as a Bachelor’s in Modern Languages, I have not felt someone saying to me something like “you have to be watchful of this” like of the intercultural part or ... “what to do if this situation arises?” or “how to approach it?” I think that each one of us has learned to understand that, but like something autonomous, like “Ah” well what happened to me was this and that” (...) I have not felt that I was educated so that when teaching a language to be prepared for each one of the individuals sitting in front of me, it is a world, a different culture, for example. (Focus group 3 SU1)

Evidently, this discrepancy between what teacher educators believe and what they actually see in practice is related to the idea that will be developed below. Thus, once the three types of know-hows of the particular model of reflexive and intercultural education of the two universities in Bogotá have been presented, we end with the challenges it exhibits.

## Teacher Education Challenges

It is interesting to highlight that this category is the most saturated one of our study’s results, with 63 appearances. It is also noteworthy to mention that U1 has a greater concern for teacher education challenges with a frequency of 46 appearances. Secondly, a concern is evidenced about knowing-how to teach interculturality, being U2 the one with most appearances (20). This evidences that in both universities a concern is mentioned regarding how to transfer that intercultural view or perspective to actual pedagogic practices.

When comparing the results between students (pre-service teachers) and teachers (teacher educators), we evidence that interculturality and knowing-how to teach it become a challenge for the pre-service teachers’ educational process, with a frequency of 38 and 44, respectively. For the teacher educators, the didactic strategies are more frequently mentioned, evidencing this concern for knowing-how to teach interculturality. Figure 4 shows these tendencies.

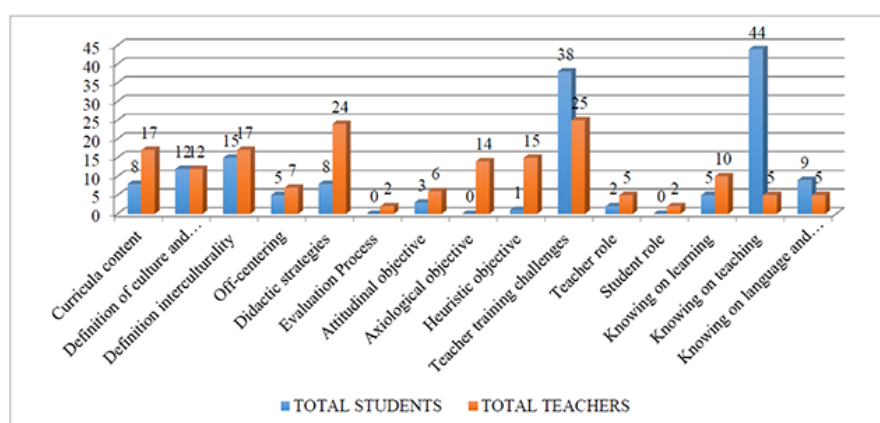


FIGURE 4.  
Comparative students-teachers.  
Source: own source

Thus, among the challenges that are most frequently mentioned in intercultural education we find the possibility of “teaching” or “intervening” interculturality so that the preservice teacher can “manage groups

who (...) have cultural, religious, political differences, (...), knowing how to respond to these types of situations where diversity is an essential part of human beings". Teacher educators see as a main challenge the lack of an intercultural education model that they can follow and they tend to refer to ICC when thinking on how to educate future teachers to promote interculturality.

Teacher educators assert that to confront the challenge of intercultural education, the strategy they have resorted to is generating "intercultural awareness, as well as linguistic and discursive awareness" through reflection. It is interesting to find in the results the reference to the development of a "political position in relation to culture" when asserting that "there is a lot of work to be done in terms of the problem of geopolitical culture (...), because, we would not understand let us say the subjugation processes that some cultures have suffered and that others have perpetuated". This allows us to identify a second challenge related to intercultural education which is facing the concept of power and its relationship with the use and learning a foreign language: "there is also a struggle (...), there is power, but in reality no one has power, so exercising the power means that there are cultures that subjugate others and that there are others that have been subjugated. This concept of power is for participant teachers a challenge insofar as T&L a FL is in itself a struggle and a confrontation with oneself and their own beliefs.

Thus, we identify the third challenge that arises and that is related to the fact that intercultural education "requires the development of certain research skills; being a good observer; and letting ourselves be surprised". They relate this ability of discovery with the need of denaturalizing that which is naturalized since "you live in that reality so much that we do not even dare to think about it, and we simply accept being part of that reality". It is interesting to find that this challenge is related to teacher educators and that they confront themselves with the idea of teaching interculturality: "I think it is not difficult, we would also have to try and teach (interculturality), because if we are also going to promote those types of tasks, how good are we at putting ourselves in someone else's shoes?"

A fourth challenge found that both teacher educators and pre-service teachers mention is the need for intercultural education "to be a motto, the transversal axis that crosses the whole curricula and, I imagine, it should also be part of committee discussions and of all teacher meetings." This also ends up being a recurrent challenge insofar as not all teacher educators participate in processes of curricula construction or transformation, nor do they share the same interests or concerns. Even so, teacher educators assert that although "we have trouble making changes in the curricula (...) we have this curriculum and with this curriculum a thousand things can be achieved, if it is not within the collective arena, then how to do it the best possible way within and in each one of the academic spaces we have?"

Finally, pre-service teachers posit that intercultural education requires breaking away with homogenizing education schemes that are common in the university. They assert that generally "we see Colombia as something homogenous"; therefore, there is a lack of "that idea of interculturality in classrooms (...) because of the conception that we are homogenous and do not think about the differences each one has". In the field of Applied Linguistics, the discussion of uniquely applicable T&L models to different contexts is common. Therefore, it is interesting to find that in these three teacher education programs the pre-service teachers identify as a challenge the search for "other" possibilities of T&L; and to value the difference and complexity of each context.

With a discussion of the main challenges posited by participant teachers (teacher educators and pre-service teachers) in this study, we end the description of the particular reflexive and intercultural education model of two universities of Bogotá. In this section, we discussed three main challenges: i) the lack of a model to follow; ii) the concept of power; iii) the development of research abilities, iv) the need to make interculturality a transversal process in the curriculum; and v) the need to break with homogenizing models and schemes in T&L languages.

## Conclusions

This article presented two universities and three Bachelor's programs in Foreign Languages that posit a reflexive and intercultural teacher education model. This model is based on intercultural teaching and has an intercultural orientation. In addition, it posits educational objectives; it promotes pedagogic know-hows and curricula contents through strategies like reflection; and it defines new roles in the T&L processes, as well as new challenges. It is worth mentioning that the three programs evidence indications of transformation and criticality. However, U2 shows a tendency toward reflexive orientation, while U1 has a more functional tendency. This demonstrates that the programs of the two universities can complement themselves and achieve, through interdisciplinary work, program proposals with a more critical and transformative orientation that allow confronting the challenges found in their education programs and processes.

Another important aspect is the fact that initial FL teacher education in these universities in Colombia presents an orientation toward what Walsh (2009) defines as relational interculturality. In other words, the contact and exchange between cultures that can take place under conditions of equality or inequality, and which poses the risks of naturalizing that inequality and lacking transformation. In this sense, FL teacher education thought of from a critical and reflexive perspective that allows the transformation of naturalized schemes is one of the main challenges faced by teacher educators and pre-service teachers of these programs in Bogotá.

In addition, teacher education from an intercultural perspective requires the classroom to be considered as a cultural context. This implies that both the teacher and student assume new roles and primarily procure a decentering of the pre-service teacher. Thus, education seen from a transformational perspective encourages a break in the conception of the teacher and of the learner and of the vision about the classroom. These aspects are evidenced in this study's results in an incipient manner since the codes related to the teacher's and student's roles account for only 9 appearances, and the code for decentering has 12. Nonetheless, it is important to highlight their presence to constitute an intercultural education model.

The intercultural orientation evidenced in the teacher education model requires a transformation of cultural content, an "other" definition of culture and interculture, "other" strategies and teacher practices, and of course a collective construction to assume teacher education challenges experienced in each local context. This transformational process does not have a single exit, nor is it fixed. Although teacher educators consider this lack of a fixed model to follow as a challenge, we believe that intercultural education is an epistemic and ethical commitment and therefore it must be constructed based on each local context.

We have evidenced through this study specific forms of intercultural education: with specific objectives, with education strategies, and defined content. This demonstrates that intercultural education is possible and that it begins by ensuring the necessary conditions for its development. In these three language teacher education programs in Bogotá, the initial conditions were generated by allowing teacher educators to construct their own syllabi and participate in curricula construction. However, as they themselves mention, there is still a lack of collective work and the participation of pre-service teachers in this curricula construction to identify their specific needs and interests. There are other initial conditions in these programs when promoting reflection on power, difference, and inequality in language learning. Nonetheless, still missing are the conditions that allow the transformation, search, and putting into practice of other forms of T&L. Researching in the classroom could be a first way of generating these conditions, which in turn would imply more planning, research, and teamwork paid time for teachers. Without these administrative conditions, intercultural education will remain in its current state of reflection, which does not ensure the implementation, experience, and therefore transformation of current schemes.

The pre-service teachers participating in this study evidence the need to broaden their practicum opportunities to construct knowledge from experience. This fact would constitute another necessary

condition for intercultural education: Enabling diverse practicum spaces that represent the complexity of the classrooms in the Colombian context.

The discussion posited by the participating teachers regarding the language learner's homogenous vision that is promoted in these programs in Bogotá is also related to this need. Both children and school age youth, as well as young adults, and adults in general of different socioeconomic levels and from diverse regions and social and/or ethnic groups in Colombia want or need to learn a foreign language. This makes the population the language teacher faces to be as ample as diverse. It is also necessary to add to the foregoing the fact that in cities like Bogotá, a diversity of ethnic groups displaced by violence coalesce and therefore classrooms are becoming more and more multicultural and multilingual spaces.

Finally, throughout this article we have mentioned reflection on the need to invert imposed and inherited concepts and practices (generally foreign, white, male, hegemonic) in language teacher education. Teacher educators and pre-service teachers mention those variations in English and French absent in the know-hows that are promoted in the model. The results show that in these education programs there is a tendency to promote a unique vision of the language and of the speaker as a monolithic entity and a unique subject, respectively. The conditions necessary to transform these visions can be generated by broadening the discipline in which FL teaching is framed and dialoguing with other disciplines, for example World Englishes, Rethoric and Composition Studies<sup>[1]</sup>, Anthropology and Sociology. These disciplines have vindicated "other" generally stigmatized linguistic varieties and have proposed decolonial processes and local construction of knowledge. Looking toward other disciplines may favor the discovery of new learning practices and educational experiences. Future research on this subject matter must focus then on the classroom to identify "other" possible ways that promote transformation and that move these intercultural education programs toward the desired superior quadrant.

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## Notes

- [1] We are referring herein to the perspective posited mainly by Kachru and his followers and Canagarajah.  
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