Interculturality and Peace in the Training of English Teachers

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ABSTRACT

Today's society lives daily accelerated changes in all its spheres produced by information and communication technologies in a world characterized by globalization. The speed of change requires education to remain in continuous reflection to rethink and reconsider its educational work in order to respond appropriately to the new challenges and problems that society is experiencing. In coherence with the challenges caused by changes in daily life, teacher training requires internalizing the interrelation between peace and interculturality, to contribute to the search and consolidation of peace. The objective of the research was to identify and analyze research related to the training of English teachers in interculturality and peace. For this, the Scopus research platform and the Vosviewer software were used. It was found that the articles found do not recognize the importance of training teachers in interculturality and peace for the culture of democracy. It was concluded that it is important for teachers to develop professionally not only in English language proficiency but also in interculturality and education for peace. The intercultural and peace perspective is articulated with a vision of language learning that goes beyond the linguistic form and commits teachers and students to language learning committed to society in a culturally diverse world.

Keywords: Professional development; interculturality; teachers; peace.

1. Introduction

The central question of the research is: how at a research level has the role of interculturality and peace been assumed in educational work? Furthermore, the main objective of the research is to identify and analyze research related to the training of English teachers in interculturality and peace. For this reason, three central concepts were delved into, namely: professional development, interculturality and peace.

First, according to the literature, professional development has a positive effect on teacher effectiveness (Chai, 2019). Thurlings et al. (2015) found that teachers' positive attitudes toward the need for continuous learning

and professional development predict greater innovative behavior, while the absence of a learning culture in the work environment is negatively associated with innovative behavior. Teachers who receive learning opportunities in their organization tend to be more willing to innovate than those who do not have these opportunities (Bada & Prasadh, 2019). Various forms of professional development, such as active participation in in-service training and the number of workshops attended, have been found to have positive effects on innovative work behavior. Some studies have indicated that professional development activities require sufficient duration and that meaningful professional learning that results in changes in practice cannot be achieved in one-off workshops. Following this logic, professional development is important because it gives teachers the opportunity to be more effective, well organized, and confident in their pedagogical decisions. Teacher professional development increases their professional and personal self-esteem, which is essential for creating an interdependent learning environment that encourages constant improvements in learning outcomes. When educators investigate and discover teaching strategies they had not previously conceived of, they can return to the classroom and make changes to their styles to better fit the needs of their students.

Secondly, intercultural language teaching, which represents an intercultural approach to language teaching is based on the assumption that language and culture are intricately intertwined; Therefore, its objective is to teach language and culture in an integrated way from the beginning and at all stages to improve intercultural communication skills. Interculturality in language education involves transformative experiences of students' existing values, beliefs, practices, worldviews, and identity. As students interactively engage with another culture, they encounter multiple possibilities for interpretation. As it is, intercultural language learning is the process of exploring the boundaries between self and others, and the complex relationships between perceived realities, language and culture. The main objective of intercultural learning is to develop a third space where ideologies, dualities and identities are negotiated through interactions for the development of skills to mediate cultures.

Thirdly, peace has occupied a central position in the history of humanity, peace is the ideal of the individual, it is related to the well-being of people and, consequently, various cultures have focused on the search and consolidation of peace. Peace is a constitutive part of the human being, it is centered on respect for life and the dignity of the subject, on the observance of human rights, on the axiological foundation and on ethical and moral principles. In general, the individual recognizes that peace is absolutely necessary and essential for integral growth as a person and for the development and well-being of a society in general, therefore, the advantages that peace brings to human beings and society are relevant.

Peace is a priority in the world, in this sense, the UN (2015), includes peace in the 2030 agenda and focuses on promoting peaceful societies, likewise, UNESCO (2022), gives priority to education because it is one of the central elements to help humanity establish peace through education for life, education in human rights and in all the core values for the construction of peace. The global educational pact invites to renew the passion for a more open and inclusive education, capable of patient listening, constructive dialogue and mutual

understanding.

The Colombian State as an active member of the UN, acting in coherence and agreement with the approach of international organizations, has promulgated the Political Constitution (1991), called the Constitution of "concord, coexistence and peace" (Diary of the constitutional assembly , 1991, no. 19, pp. 7-8) and, through the Magna Carta, recognizes peace as a value, a duty and a right and invites "to strive for the achievement and maintenance of peace" (Political constitution, 1991, Art. 22 and 95). The Congress of the Republic, in coherence with the spirit of the political constitution on peace, has responded by promulgating law 1734 of 2014, to establish the chair of peace in the country's educational institutions with the objective of creating a culture of peace.

The genesis and consequences of violence in Colombia occupy a relevant position for the multidisciplinary understanding of peace, it is this order, according to Delgado Zárate (2022), first of all, one of the causes of violence in the Colombian state is the difficulty in accessing land, resulting in the violation of the constitutional right to property, the right to work and the basic needs of human beings; secondly, the armed groups destabilize the country through kidnappings, murders and violations of human rights; thirdly, drug trafficking results in regional control, financing of illegal groups, forced displacements and murders; fourthly, the concentration of capital, economic and political powers, resulting in an increase in social gaps, hunger and inequality; fifthly, State corruption results in the deterioration of social programs and consequently the growth of social gaps.

International Organizations and the Colombian State converge in the recognition of education as a fundamental tool for social transformation through cooperative and supportive pedagogies, dialogue and participation, research and innovation and an alliance with all the inhabitants of the earth that brings about welcome, justice and peace. In this order of ideas, according to Amar (2020), to be quality education in the 21st century, it needs the approach of peace education. Peace is a constitutive right of the human being; this being the case, peace is an intrinsic value of the individual that requires being promoted in everyday life.

The definition of peace education is polysemic and depends on the contexts, intentions, approaches and edges that theorists and researchers have followed to understand the nature, objective and scope of peace education. Peace education is understood as education for life and aims to empower people with values, skills and attitudes to live in harmony with themselves and with others. Peace education is characterized because it is focused on the dignity of the person, on respect for life, on the recognition of individual and collective rights, on the recognition of diverse opinions, beliefs and cultures (Ramos Muslera et al., 2022). Education for peace opens the doors to strengthen encounter, dialogue and cooperation. Peace education is characterized by having a humanistic approach, that is, it is focused on all dimensions of the human being. According to Melo de Almeida (2015), peace education is a process that is oriented throughout life, and aims to promote harmonious relationships with oneself, with others, with nature and with the transcendent. These relationships create a climate that facilitates the peaceful resolution of conflicts and the strengthening of justice, freedom, equality,

fraternity and the construction of a culture of peace and for López and Gómez (2020), the peace education increasingly considers the holistic and systemic perspective, where all dimensions of peace and all actors in education are integrated and dialogued.

In short, the liquid society of the 21st century characterized by globalization, technology, information, knowledge, science, artificial intelligence, among others, requires and demands a comprehensive humanistic education that puts the human being at the center and accompanies it. In the search and strengthening of human values, it is crucial the relationship with others, the service and exercise of solidarity, the search for the common good, respect for life, dignity and the rights of every human being, collaborative work and critical thinking, recognition and respect for diversity. In this sense, the comprehensive humanistic training process for the English teacher requires a complex and multidimensional systemic vision to strengthen the development of each and every dimension of the human being, in order to obtain personal fulfillment and contribute to transformation, and social cohesion, the search for the common good, justice, peace and integral human development. Peace education, firstly, aims to enhance life skills, focused on the search and construction of personal peace and with others and, secondly, to internalize the relevant advantages of peace for the fulfillment personal, growth and social development.

This research affirms that it is necessary to generate greater sensitivity about the potential of interculturality for the search and construction of peace. The investigations have indicated that there is a gap in the training of English teachers about interculturality and its link with the construction of peace. In this sense, it is necessary to rethink the teacher training process to empower them in the competencies of interculturality and peace with the purpose of being peace managers in various educational contexts.

Empowering teams of diverse teachers and students to embrace intercultural learning reinforces a spirit of peace, cooperation and harmony within educational environments. The entire educational community is enriched when diverse cultures interact and learn from each other. Finally, community-minded educators often help students leverage what they experience in global classrooms to foster more meaningful connections and collaborations with the broader community where they live. Education must provide the opportunity to understand that everyone is united as citizens of the global community and that challenges are interconnected (Torres, 2022). Therefore, teachers' understanding of interculturality is essential to seek and propose solutions to the problems faced by 21st century society. Thus, the potential of interculturality is essential to advance the construction of peace, which is a desire of the Colombian people.

2. Method

To answer the question: How at a research level has the role of interculturality and peace been assumed in educational work? and respond to the objective of identifying and analyzing research related to the training of English teachers in interculturality and peace, the research followed the qualitative paradigm with an interpretive approach focused on understanding the meaning of human actions (Hernández Sampieri et al,

2014). Likewise, a bibliographic review was carried out in the Scopus database with the objective of identifying and analyzing research related to teacher training in interculturality and peace.

Interpretive research was developed because it places meaning-making practices at the center of scientific exploration (Arnett, 2007) and relies on inductive reasoning such as patterns and inferences (Lindlof & Taylor, 2011). The research was carried out between May and July 2023. The analysis categories were professional development, interculturality and peace. The sources of information collection were the documents tracked through the Scopus computer program to track research that dealt with interculturality and teacher training and Boolean equations were used to carry out the tracking.

3. Results

Firstly, to know the research advances in the professional development of English teachers, the following Boolean equation was applied in the Scopus database:

TITLE-ABS-KEY (professional AND development AND teachers AND English).

This search returned 3,254 documents. Therefore, the search was refined by delimiting the years in which the publications were made, in this case, a period of 5 years was chosen, from 2019 to 2023. The result was to find 1,522 documents. Then, the search for documents was limited to indexed journals, excluding other types of documents such as conferences and book chapters. Therefore, 1,238 documents were found. Since it was interesting that the articles had interculturality and the training of English teachers as their main topic, the search for keywords was limited only to the title of the article, which resulted in 90 articles. Taking these delimitations into account, the final Boolean equation that was applied was the following:

TITLE (professional AND development AND teachers AND English) AND PUBYEAR > 2018 AND PUBYEAR < 2024 AND (LIMIT-TO (SRCTYPE , "j"))

It was found that the year in which the most publications were made was in 2022 with 29 publications, mostly in China, Turkey, Indonesia and South Korea. Only one article was found in Colombia (Quiroz and González, 2023), which demonstrates a gap in knowledge regarding the professional development of English teachers. So, it is relevant to investigate this.

Furthermore, in a study conducted by Morris and Mo (2023), it was found that English teachers in China participating in their research are largely satisfied with their work, but they also expressed dissatisfaction in certain areas. For example, they appreciated the teaching load and respect given to university professors, but had concerns about their long-term professional development. Also, teachers' dissatisfaction is linked to their perception of lack of recognition for their work, which causes their motivation to decline and, at the same time, slows down their training and professional development, which results in a lack of promotion

opportunities and professional growth.

In this regard, it is necessary for teachers of English and all areas of knowledge to continually train, since this is crucial for them to reflect on their teaching practices, improve their self-esteem and motivation to teach, and be able to guide their students. students more effectively. Teacher professional development conceived as a reflective and research process is part of a comprehensive, deep and rigorous education.

On the other hand, in the same Scopus research tool, the following equation was used to perform the search:

TITLE-ABS-KEY ("continuing education" AND "Interculturality") AND (LIMIT-TO (PUBYEAR, 2017) OR LIMIT-TO (PUBYEAR , 2019) OR LIMIT-TO (PUBYEAR , 2022)) AND (LIMIT-TO (LANGUAGE , "Spanish") OR LIMIT-TO (LANGUAGE , "English") OR LIMIT-TO (LANGUAGE , "Portuguese"))

In the search result in question without time limitation, it was observed that four articles have been published: two in 2017, one in 2019 and one in 2022. It was also observed that the countries with the greatest publications They are: Brazil and Spain with two articles and Mexico with one published article. Thus, it has become evident that continuing education and interculturality have not been a relevant topic of research for the academic community at an international level.

However, to refine the results according to the objective of the investigation, a third keyword called "peace" was introduced without applying any search filter. TITLE-ABS-KEY ("continuing education" AND "Interculturality" AND "peace"). In the search result, it was found that there are no publications to date on continuing education, interculturality and peace.

Recapitulating, the continuous training of teachers in interculturality and peace has not been investigated by the scientific community. In this order of ideas, research is required in these categories to know from a scientific point of view what the training of teachers in interculturality should be like. intercultural and peace competencies.

Findings from the Scopus search indicated that teachers who have degrees in education and are interested in a career in teaching English as a foreign language are more likely to participate in self-directed professional development. Teachers who are not interested in their professional development skip it due to a lack of ambition and/or ambivalence, a lack of need and a lack of prospects for professional advancement (Binnie and Wedlock, 2022; Sadeghi and Richards, 2021). Furthermore, English teachers also do not participate in professional development training due to a lack of dissemination and awareness about its importance in their professional careers and to benefit the education of their students (Xiong and Peng, 2022). If a teacher does not have a great desire for self-development, she cannot grow professionally, no matter how perfect and supportive the external environment and supervisory measures are. In this sense, self-development is the basic

motive that promotes professional development, and self-assessment opens the way towards it (Warsi and Khurshid, 2022). For this reason, professional development at the institutional level is proposed, which is useful for the development of teacher autonomy, provided that professional development initiatives are aware of the needs of teachers and institutional requirements (Ahmad and Shah, 2022). In fact, to obtain better results in their professional development, this should be done through shared experience, reflective teaching and a sense of community among teachers to stay on par with the global standards of the education system (Vadivel et al., 2021).

Research was found to agree that engaging in effective professional development is beneficial to improving school systems. Effective teacher professional development differs from traditional professional development in that it employs known elements to support changes in teaching practices and student learning. Characteristics of effective professional development include collective participation, sustained duration, active learning, and content-specific focus, all within a coherent development process (Ahn, 2023; Boulay et. al, 2023; Zhou et. al. , 2023). Also, learning is an affirmation in the professional development of teachers. However, there is a paucity of studies that explore experiential learning from integrative perspectives in the context of English as a foreign language (Helate et. al, 2022). However, continuous, effective and experiential training of English teachers is important when planning and carrying out teachers' professional development.

On the other hand, English teachers express that teacher development would help them develop their competence in the English language (Coşgun and Savas, 2023; Ramdani et. al., 2023; Sifakis et. A.l, 2022), from which, they tend to feel insecure (He and Bagwell, 2022), to improve the academic achievements of students (Al-Harbi and Ahmad, 2022) but they do not mention the importance of preparing for interculturality, which leads to the conclusion that they do not consider it important in their professional development and teaching practice. However, interculturality is relevant to form integral, critical and purposeful subjects in their daily development in society. For this reason, it is important to encourage English teachers to play the role of critical reflective professionals, as well as to prepare them as future transformative intellectuals (Al Balushi, 2022). Likewise, it is crucial that, through teacher professional development, teachers learn strategies, conceptual frameworks, and interventions to help their students learn both English literacy and specific content areas (Vera et. al, 2022)

Recently, scholars have begun to discuss interculturality in education and research critically and reflexively with a broader epistemology (Dervin and R'boul 2022). Interculturality is a polysemic, multifaceted, continuous social phenomenon (Holliday, 2017). There is no general consensus regarding the meanings of interculturality, and academics, professionals and students should 'problematize, un- and rethink (Dervin and Jacobsson, 2021) this fluid notion of interculturality with an attitude to be free, develop a critical and reflective posture (Dervin, 2023). According to Dervin and Jacobsson (2021), interculturality refers to any interaction between people who recognize the need to negotiate their identities so that their encounters are comfortable and meaningful, although the question remains of who decides the nuances of comfort and meaning (Dervin

and Jacobsson, 2021).

Interculturality is a process of eternal effort that lasts a lifetime and is comparable and ultimately equal to any interaction between humans (Dervin and Jacobsson, 2021). Central to the discussion of critical interculturality is the awareness that interculturality is permeated by ideologies and possible indoctrination; therefore, politics, economics and power dynamics, including inequality, hegemony and gender, must be at the center of the discussion (Dervin and Jacobsson, 2021, R'boul 2022). In this line, R'boul (2023) promotes intercultivism, which represents the decolonial activism of Eurocentric epistemology in intercultural education to create an alternative epistemology for an equitable and just world for both the global North and the global South, including the Global Souths within the Global Norths. De-westernization, decolonization and decentring of consciousness, and their intersections with interculturality lead to implicit layers of criticality and self-criticism because the epistemic, the personal, the pedagogical and the political are intricately intertwined within oneself (R'boul, 2023). In short, interculturalizing interculturality (Dervin and Jacobsson, 2022) is what is needed to continue advancing the notion of interculturality to diversify and enrich the way interculturality is thought and talked about and to explore one's own ideologies and interculturality through the lens of the interculturality of others (Dervin, 2023).

The research found research that pointed out the importance of preparing English teachers to meet the learning needs of students in general education classrooms and to respond culturally to this growing population (Hinojosa, 2023). Likewise, emphasis is placed on helping teachers develop their awareness of the emotional, pedagogical and interpersonal dimensions of teaching students (Quiroz and González, 2023). This is fundamental, since learning a second language has to be combined with the student's being and with the local and global context in which he lives, since the language is used in society. There is increasing recognition of the importance of professional development in ensuring good teaching and learning outcomes and in promoting and maintaining teacher quality (Padwad, 2022).

The diversity present in the current open, multicultural and constantly changing society requires the qualification of teachers through the intercultural approach in order to train them with the competencies demanded by education and human development of the 21st century (Cerdas Ríos et al., 2019).). According to the voices of the theorists, there is a relevant number of authors who have presented in detail the arguments in favor of the need for a relevant broad and rigorous preparation of teachers due to the demands of their performance and the intensification and complexity of the tasks you perform. The intercultural approach must be incorporated into the initial and ongoing training of teachers so that they can act relevantly in an intercultural society.

The perceptions, policies and practices in professional development of English teachers are still very underexplored and do not seem to indicate a locally relevant and culturally appropriate understanding (Padwad, 2022). It is seen in the small number of investigations that initial and continuing teacher training is characterized by not having an intercultural approach, that is, there is a scarce presence of intercultural training

that is reflected in educational action due to the lack of empowerment of intercultural competencies to understand the student and act accordingly. This training gap in intercultural and peace competencies does not allow teachers to characterize themselves as peacemakers because they have not received epistemological support in the initial training process.

Teachers aim to foster in students, values that facilitate understanding of the process that leads to the full realization of peace. In this sense, it is relevant to train English teachers with epistemological rigor in the categories of Interculturality and peace. Competencies, that is, the knowledge, abilities, skills and values of teachers, occupy a central position in the educational field to accompany the development of the scientific potential of students in order to promote the essential values for the construction of a culture of peace such as: cooperation, respect for the life and dignity of every human being, solidarity, democracy, cooperative work, peaceful resolution of conflicts, critical thinking, recognition and respect for diversity , among others. According to research, there is a gap in the training of English teachers in interculturality and peace. This relevant fact requires rethinking and reimagining the training process of the aforementioned teachers with a new intercultural and peace approach.

Comprehensive training is relevant to strengthen the educational process of teachers in relation to interculturality, the search and construction of peace. Questioning, rethinking and reimagining is the key to training teachers who are peace managers in a society that is characterized by lacking peace. Advocating for the achievement and maintenance of peace is complex, in coherence with this complexity, the English teacher requires a comprehensive training process with a systemic-complex and multidimensional vision to respond pertinently to the cry of the Colombian people to live in peace. In addition to professionalization, the teacher requires transcending cognitive, communicative, emotional, democratic and intercultural competencies in order to recognize and value peace as a constitutive right of the human being. To achieve this objective, it is necessary for the teacher to continue investigating his or her pedagogical work and the ethical commitment to being a peacemaker.

4. Conclusion

Being able to address the constantly evolving needs of students and society requires that teachers continue to expand their knowledge in their respective fields and actively participate in professional development practices. Successful professional development that recognizes teachers as key agents in the process should provide space to contextualize theory and combine it with practice and application in class and in the students' immediate contexts. Effective professional development also requires recognizing teachers' personal practical knowledge. Professional development based on varied and differentiated activities and taking into account the particularities of the various teaching contexts would contribute to the growth of teachers whenever particular conditions are met with a clear emphasis on practice, the needs of teachers, students and society, collaboration and sustainability. The society of the 21st century questions the educational process of teachers and requires research and reimagining the training process of teachers to act with relevance and coherence in today's society

that is characterized by being multicultural and intercultural. In this sense, education must distinguish, by having an intercultural approach that empowers the teacher with the intercultural competencies to know, understand and value the contribution of multiculturalism and interculturality to comprehensive training and the development and growth of society. Interculturality is a potential for the construction of peace due to the richness that comes with the encounter with the "other" and, secondly, failure to address interculturality can cause subjects to tend towards cultural shocks; teacher empowerment in intercultural competencies to recognize and accept diverse cultures as a social reality, and to be able to contribute to the cohesion and establishment of social justice, core elements for the search and construction of peace. The training of intercultural teachers and peacemakers requires a solid epistemological foundation with an intercultural and peace education approach to strengthen intercultural and peace competencies.

4.1 Acknowledgments

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