

Decolonial approach to the intercultural bilingual curriculum: from theory to practice

Jairo Eduardo Soto-Molina*

Pilar Méndez-Rivera**

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Abstract

The aim of this reflection article is to discuss theoretical and practical elements of a decolonial intercultural approach to re-signify the bilingual curriculum. As part of the documentary analysis 1). We analyze some curricular references for the treatment of interculturality in foreign language teaching in Colombia. 2). We present a distinction between interculturality and multiculturalism in order to identify the dominant tendency that emphasizes interculturality over multiculturalism as a better framework for the interaction between cultures. 3). As a corollary to this discussion, the decolonial critique of interculturality is articulated to warn of the dangers of a curriculum that emphasizes the cultural repertoire of the English language only in the name of bilingualism. The findings of this

* Universidad del Atlántico. Studied Social Research at Newbury College, Massachusetts, USA. Postgraduate. Diploma in Epistemological Paradigms of Qualitative and Quantitative Research at Instituto de Estudios. Avanzados (IAEU). He studied Teaching English to children at the University of California, San Diego, California. Master in Education, University of Antioquia, Medellín, Colombia. PhD in Human Sciences, University of Zulia Maracaibo, Venezuela. Research lines: interculturality, Curriculum and Teacher Education
Correo electrónico: languagecircle.re@hotmail.com
ORCID: <http://orcid.org/0000-0003-3378-0202>

** Doctor in Education from Universidad Santo Tomás, VUAD, Master in Spanish Linguistics from Instituto Caro y Cuervo. She holds a Bachelor Degree in Modern Languages from Universidad del Atlántico, Colombia. She is currently a tenured lecturer at Universidad Distrital Francisco José de Caldas at the Doctorado Interinstitucional en Educación and the Licenciatura program in English Research lines: subject constitution, resistance practices, decoloniality and teacher education.
Correo electrónico: pmendez@udistrital.edu.co
ORCID: <http://orcid.org/0000-0001-9284-4611>

analysis allow us to reflect on the need for a decolonial pedagogy to adopt a critical interculturality in the language teaching curriculum that undermines practices of linguistic and cultural colonialism, while pointing out some attempts to appropriate critical interculturality in the field of English language teaching in Colombia, through the identification of English language teachers in the decolonial turn. The problematization presented to the foreign language curriculum in Colombia, allow us to conclude that a decolonial intercultural approach to the Colombian language curriculum is a call to action against domination and linguistic and cultural domination.

Keywords: intercultural education, cultural diversity, critical interculturality multiculturalism, curriculum, bilingual education, decolonization.

Enfoque decolonial al currículo intercultural bilingüe: De la teoría a la práctica

Resumen

El objetivo de este artículo de reflexión es discutir elementos teórico-prácticos de un enfoque intercultural decolonial para resignificar el currículo bilingüe. Como parte del análisis documental 1). Se analizan algunos referentes curriculares para el tratamiento de la interculturalidad en la enseñanza de lenguas extranjeras en Colombia 2) se presenta una distinción entre interculturalidad y multiculturalidad para identificar la tendencia dominante que destaca a la interculturalidad por encima de la multiculturalidad como un mejor marco de operación para la interacción entre culturas. 3). Como corolario de este análisis se articula la crítica decolonial a la interculturalidad para advertir los peligros de un currículo que enfatice solamente en el repertorio cultural de la lengua inglesa en nombre del bilingüismo. Los resultados de este análisis permiten reflexionar sobre la necesidad de una pedagogía decolonial para adoptar una interculturalidad crítica en el currículo

de enseñanza de lenguas que mine prácticas de colonialismo lingüístico y cultural, al mismo tiempo que señala algunos intentos de apropiación de la interculturalidad crítica en el campo de la enseñanza del Inglés en Colombia a través de la identificación de profesores de inglés en el giro decolonial. Las problematizaciones que se oponen al currículo de lenguas extranjeras en Colombia, permiten concluir que un enfoque intercultural decolonial al currículo de lenguas colombiano es un llamado a la acción en contra de la dominación y el colonialismo lingüístico.

Palabras clave: educación intercultural, diversidad cultural, interculturalidad crítica, multiculturalismo, curriculum, educación bilingüe, descolonización.

Abordagem descolonial ao currículo bilingue intercultural: da teoria à prática

Resumo

O objectivo deste artigo de reflexão é discutir elementos teóricos e práticos de uma abordagem intercultural descolonial para re-significar o currículo bilingue. Como parte da análise documental 1). São analisadas algumas referências curriculares para o tratamento da interculturalidade no ensino de línguas estrangeiras na Colômbia 2). É apresentada uma distinção entre interculturalidade e multiculturalidade a fim de identificar a tendência dominante que enfatiza a interculturalidade sobre a multiculturalidade como um melhor enquadramento para uma interação entre culturas. 3). Como corolário desta análise, a crítica descolonial da interculturalidade é articulada para alertar para os perigos de um currículo que enfatiza apenas o repertório cultural da língua inglesa, em nome do bilinguismo. Os resultados desta análise permitem-nos reflectir sobre a necessidade de uma pedagogia descolonial para adoptar uma interculturalidade crítica no currículo do ensino das línguas que mina as práticas do colonialismo linguístico e

cultural, ao mesmo tempo que apontam algumas tentativas de apropriação da interculturalidade crítica no campo do ensino do inglês na Colômbia através da identificação de professores de inglês na viragem descolonial. As problematizações apresentadas ao currículo de línguas estrangeiras na Colômbia, permitem-nos concluir que uma abordagem intercultural descolonial ao currículo de línguas colombianas é um apelo à acção contra a dominação e o colonialismo linguístico.

Palavras-chave: educação intercultural, diversidade cultural, interculturalidade crítica, multiculturalismo, currículo, educação bilíngue, descolonização.

Introduction

Inspired by the decolonial turn in educational and social studies, we are right now experiencing a clamor for social, cultural, and political transformation that points out a process of rupture or questioning of the cultural hegemony that has historically dominated the region. Indigenous movements in Latin America and their demands for anti-imperialist and anti-colonial values have made us all think critically about identity issues, difference, equality, and solidarity. Also, about the enormous challenge of building societies and truly plural and diverse nations, based on critical interculturality at all levels.

All the above implies promoting transformations in the same structures and institutions of the State. Education then plays an important role in embracing multiethnic and multicultural treatment of culture. This is particularly relevant for the EFL curriculum in Colombia, whose designs have revolved around the target culture by encouraging institutions to adapt an Only-English curriculum in which the use of Spanish is penalized while its cultural component is ignored or subalternized. Bilingual curriculum in this paper stands for a cultural balance between English-Spanish, where English does

not prevail over Spanish. This reflection discusses the benefits of a decolonial intercultural approach —critical interculturality— to promote a bilingual intercultural curriculum that profits from the decolonial; the decolonial curriculum guarantees that epistemic learning opportunities are much more valued in ELT contexts.

Differences between multiculturality and interculturality. The decolonial critique to interculturality

It is important to distinguish the concepts of multiculturalism and interculturality. Both concepts work with differentiated approaches to manage cultural diversity in which difference and inequality among cultures are at stake (Guilherme & Gunther-Dietz, 2015). Although several authors ensure that interculturalism is a complementary version of multiculturalism (Zapata-Barrero, 2017; Modood, 2017; Joppke, 2018; Meer & Modood, 2012), most of literature around the theme stresses the idea of interculturality as an opposed and a better approach to cultural diversity than multiculturalism (Cantle, 2012) due to its focus on communication, pragmatic and compromise-minded actions (Zapata-Barrero, 2017). In spite of this clear favoritism, recently the decolonial turn has provided a critique that dismantles how interculturality has historically been used to perpetuate hierarchical treatment of cultures, market and capital (Walsh, 2008). The strategies of colonization in the name of interculturality overshadow the extent and scope of complexities facing in diverse countries in Latin America.

Let us start by looking how mainstream concepts of multiculturalism/interculturality have been traditionally portrayed. This conceptual review is required to note those aspects which constitute the basis of decolonial thinkers' critique. And also, it intends to contribute to our reflection upon education and curriculum in foreign language teaching in educational curricula in Colombia.

First, multiculturalism has been defined as the coexistence of different cultures that share the same space and time, in which some manifestations of racism, superiority, and even segregation might occur due to the established superiority of the major culture. As can be inferred, it describes the existence of different cultures in a territory, which means the recognition of cultural diversity without acknowledging the cultural status of the minority cultures as equals (Kymlicka 1995, 2003). In Žižek's (1998) words, traditional criticism to this approach relies on the paradox of colonization since "in multiculturalism there is a condescending and/or respectful Eurocentric distance from local cultures, without taking root in any culture" (p. 150). This comprehension implies that cultures can live side by side preserving their cultural identities and avoiding conflicts (Rovea, 2019). In order to maintain this separation, policies grant coexistence of different cultures in a non-assimilationist view (Benessaieh, 2010).

Meanwhile, interculturality is understood as the coexistence of two cultures in daily contact and the presence of an exchange of cultural experiences. The sense given to inter-action relies on the assumption that both cultures are equally worthy and valuable. It implies mutual recognition, dialogue, reciprocity, interdependence in an attempt to achieve mutual enrichment. So, assimilation of values and some customs are accepted in a two-way process. Integration between cultures takes into account the disadvantages and inequalities experienced by minority groups in order to take actions against them (Barret, 2013). Interculturality also encompasses the right to difference (Benessaieh, 2010), but in doing so, it works against prejudices and stereotypes, so an emphasis on individuals at the micro and macro levels is promoted to achieve true integration (Contini & Pica-Smith, 2017). Intercultural dialogue is introduced as an option "to help individuals to develop a deeper understanding of beliefs and practices different to their own" (Barret, 2013, p. 26).

Both paradigms have been reviewed for a comparative purpose in different territories of Europe and Australia (see Banting and Kymlicka, 2012). As a result, the characteristics of interculturality have been considered as opportunities of anti-discriminatory,

anti-racist intervention and also socio-economic marginalization as real-life problems of people belonging to a different cultural heritage. That is why the turn to interculturality in education has promoted a “whole school approach that integrates the values for intercultural understanding throughout the school environment” (Leo, 2010 p. 30). In this sense, intercultural competence was an aim of education to promote better understandings of others, cultural knowledge and attitudes among students.

Nevertheless, the mainstream view of interculturality falls short, given the complexity of Latin American territories, in which super power structures inherited from coloniality have widened regional and cultural disparities among indigenous, afro Colombian and mixed-race people. Cultural distinctions based on race, gender, and economy have a strong emphasis on the definition of otherness and relations that operate hierarchically in seemingly incompatible extremes. So, the maintenance of the status quo is in the interest of those who are the most privileged.

Having this in mind, decolonial thinkers have warned us about the use of interculturality for colonization. That is why a call for interculturality from below is at stake to subvert the colonial matrix (coloniality of power, being and knowledge) in the name of a mainstream comprehension of interculturality which has promoted an integration project that neglects internal conflicts, relations of domination and coloniality historically internalized in socio-cultural strata (Maldonado, Reyes and del Valle, 2015). As a result of this, the production of hierarchies that define the other as someone inferior or non-existent in their own territories means that the relational perspective of interculturality is insufficient to overcome deep-seated problematics. According to Walsh (2010), interculturality for colonization can be experienced by minority groups that are forced to assimilate majoritarian customs, values and behaviors as a consequence of a complete system of rules and beliefs functioning in different social apparatuses and institutions. That is to say, individuals belonging to minority groups leave their own set of cultural features to assimilate the new ones justified by modern projects of inclusion from a functional perspective of interculturality.

As can be seen from the above, the use of interculturality in the name of modernity brings to the surface its darkest side in the form of colonialism (Aman, 2014, p. 7). The “appropriation of the other by assimilation”, in Aman’s words, reduces the other to a condition of non-existence, in which other’s subjectivity, knowledges and language are concealed with the promise of a better future. This is the rhetoric manufactured by a project of nation-state modernization disguised as nobility but with overt/covert forms of epistemicide. The hegemonic subject (white, male, heterosexual) installed from this internal colonialism is linked to the civilizing project of the Enlightenment to perpetuate a general culture/race based on the European concept of culture and humanity (Mignolo, 2011; Boaventura-De Sousa, 2014).

As a consequence of this rationale, decolonial thinkers such as Walsh advocate for a critical interculturality from below (Rauber, 2014). In this sense, Aman (2014) explains that interculturality is not “interculturalidad” because of the historical conditions as well as those of politics, cultural and economics served to unpack the colonial racio-structures of power (Quijano, 2007; Walsh, 2009). As a consequence, the decolonial is related to the people’s struggles for liberation and emancipation from the hierarchies imposed by the coloniality of being, power and knowledge in every single aspect of life. In this way, interculturality –a critical perspective– can be negotiated for decolonization.

The implications of this debate for education are inherently associated with teachers’ actions to embrace a decolonial pedagogy, which means to profit from a “decolonialidad crítica” with the potentiality to irradiate their subjects’ contents and their own pedagogical actions. The task would seem easier for social science or Spanish language teachers than for English language teachers. However, the way interculturality has been introduced stresses the idea of only working with the situation of afro Colombian and indigenous peoples as these situations were distant from covert/over colonial situations experienced by children, adolescents and their own school and its curricula, which are merged with race, socio-economic and cultural marginalization and stratification.

Now, it is time to translate this to the bilingual curriculum. The bilingual curriculum in this article is framed within the normative views of bilingualism in our country, views which favor the English-only curriculum as a defense of a mainstream view of interculturality without noticing the dangers of this comprehension that we will discuss in the following section.

The danger of an English-only curriculum in the name of bilingualism

The spread of English due to globalization and neoliberal enterprises has been taken as natural and inevitable. Discourses around its supremacy as the language of science, language of technology, lingua franca, and language of progress, among many others, have served to justify the incorporation of English as a must-be-learned content in education agendas of some countries in which English is taught as a foreign language. This value-laden decision, with the greatest impact on industry, affects the social consideration of English, which becomes an object of desire that justifies its instrumentalization into curricula. This in the words of Giroux can be understood as the dialectical interplay of social interest, political and economic power on the one hand, and school knowledge and practices on the other. That, in other words, can be understood as the way capitalism and colonialism act together (Sousa, 2016).

The introduction of English as a mandatory subject in the majority of schools in some countries unveils how the preference for English language is related to overt forms of domination by the force of law. In this sense, curriculum as a disciplinary technology has power which “directs how [the] individual acts, feels, speaks, and sees himself” (Popkewitz, 2004, p. 149). Through law technologies of governance, a concept such as interculturality might serve to perpetuate dominant discourses and practices of the ??? while decreasing relationalities of the other. A curriculum organizes subjects/contents in a type of rationality that shapes and models the conduct and practices of teachers and students (Popkewitz, 2017). This modeling maintains

the status quo and reproduces dominant and hegemonic views of knowledges (Ortiz y Arias, 2019). For instance, in the following quotes, extracted from official documents that aim at providing curricular guidelines for foreign language learning in Colombia, the scope of interculturality there is limited to intercultural communication and tolerance within contradictory visions of relations between the value of their own world and the need for a common language which emerges from the colonial strategies of education.

The learning of foreign languages involves an intercultural education, that is, the development of understanding, tolerance and appreciation of other cultural identities. Contact with other languages and other cultures reduces ethnocentrism and allows us to contrast and appreciate the worth of the world itself¹ (Ministerio de Educación Nacional (s.f.). Lineamientos Curriculares. Idiomas extranjeros, p. 9).

Why teach English in Colombia? Today's world is characterized by intercultural communication, by the increasing pace of scientific and technological advances, and by internationalization processes. These circumstances raise the need for a common language that allows international society to access this new globalized world² (Ministerio de Educación Nacional (2006). Estándares Básicos de Competencia en Lenguas Extranjeras: Inglés, p. 3)

As can be seen, these definitions clearly bring to the surface the neglect of socio-economic and cultural problems experienced by students (discrimination, marginalization, gender and race issues) while orienting themselves toward the promise of a better world thanks to contact with other languages and identities. These definitions pontificate on the decrease of ethnocentrism, but "other identities" have the preeminence in teaching/learning. According to Andreotti this can be understood as "a pervasive strategy in intercultural education that seek[s] to address domination by promoting deeper understandings of —or patronizing attempts

1. Original in Spanish

2. Original in Spanish

to take care of— the “other” obscure, deeper forces that make up othering. By the same token, curricular guidelines do not reflect issues of diversity, inequality or discrimination, nor do they mention the utility of interculturality to discuss these problems while balancing the treatment of cultures involved with a critical decolonial perspective to unveil this othering making.

Our schools are inhabited by mestizos, mix-race, black and indigenous individuals, coming from different regions (Ecuador, Venezuela) and cultural backgrounds. There are also complex issues of age, gender, functional diversity and socio-economic matters that all together create tensions among students. This means that our classrooms are complexly diverse and that diversity is ignored in curricula contents or treated superficially (Jiménez, 2015; Torres-Hernández & Gamboa-Mora, 2021). Now, to make things more complicated, the contact with a foreign language places a greater pressure on students. In our territory the pact with English teaching has resulted in a set of impositions:

- Curriculum adopts a monolingual view of language. The teaching of English in public schools is mandatory, no matter if there are no English language teachers to cover the subject, so primary schoolteachers are forced to teach the language without the needed preparation. While in the case of English language teachers at secondary school, their struggles are more related to complying with the total English immersion demanded to cover textbook contents.
- As a consequence, the massification of English language teaching in these unequal conditions creates differentiated opportunities for learning, resulting in comparisons between schools with English language teachers e.g., private and public schools as well as elite spaces vs proletarian spaces into a hierarchical matrix of certified and non-certified teaching staff.
- Content selection to teach English is monoculturally oriented. The textbooks and materials privilege English

language cultural repertoires while decreasing teachers' opportunities to work with L1 culture and epistemologies.

- The cultural repertoires of English are based on World English/North English, focusing on spaces and peoples that represent a modern view of the world with fashionable architecture, technology and fantastic lives. The life experiences from World Englishes/ South are absent. This has an impact on learners that cannot avoid comparison with their own lives and worlds. Colonization operates hand in hand with capitalism in ways that force learners to think that English is their unique option for succeeding in life as the system promotes it.
- Bilingual communication is restricted to code-switching to express an idea when a student does not know/remember a word. The use of Spanish is not well-accepted. So, bilingualism in the sense of balancing the two language contents is not present. There is undeniably an alienating burden on the learner's mind, subjugated to a process of transculturation. All the values, customs and beliefs of their own culture are invisibilized to give place to the culture of domination.
- Pedagogies and their corresponding methodologies to cover cultural contents are based on superficial views of culture, in which linguistic dimensions to learn vocabulary, grammar structures and normalized traditions are overemphasized, so the critical treatment of life is not present.

An English-only approach is a monoculture model that contributes to silence children's voices, bodily experiences, relations, emotions as part of their own epistemologies and differences. This monoculture orientation is cemented by normalization practices based on ideas of power, prestige and progress in English, locating students' own

knowledges and languages in an inferior position, in which there is no place for difference but for practices of alienation and acculturation.

There is an urgent need to decolonize the ELT curriculum and to problematize the role of English as a potential source of injustice that needs to be held about an equalitarian curriculum for all. Which, in other words, means to decolonize the predominant monolingual curriculum to discuss “the intercultural as a field of struggle to question the imperial legacies and hierarchies in order to demand epistemic changes” (Walsh, 2010, p. 220). As English Language teachers we need to be aware of:

Language has been used as tool of domination, conquest and colonization throughout history (...) Divisions of language into those that are said to be “foreign”, “second”, “heritage”, and even “first” are constructions of western powers and specially their schools, to consolidate power and create governable subjects. If language was not seen as [an] autonomous whole, where one whole can be added to another whole, but as a system of complex and dynamic language practices in which speakers engage to make meaning, then named languages, as we know them today, would lose their power (García, 2019, p. 152)

Fortunately, English language teachers who dare to subvert this canonical way to teach languages are moving forward to a critical interculturality, spotting colonial situations and their realizations in daily practices. However, most of these actions are carried out covertly in the hidden curriculum (we do not know officially what teachers do in the autonomy of their lessons). It is presumed that English language teachers’ lack of opportunities to share what they do in their classes is an obstacle to inform the ELT field about decolonial approaches in teaching. Thus, resisting the coloniality of English becomes an extension of the work in the local culture, knowledges and identities, as is well pointed out by Canagarajah:

This is the resistant perspective alluded to in the title of this book... It provides for the possibility that, in everyday

life, the powerless in post-colonial communities may find ways to negotiate, alter, and oppose political structures, cultures, identities to their advantage. The intention is not to reject English, but to reconstitute it in more inclusive, ethical, and democratic terms, and bring about the creative resolutions to their linguistic conflicts (2000, p. 25).

With the awareness that English language has been used for colonization, English language teachers can use it to contest and resist colonial narratives and practices in schooling that take the form of must-be discourses in curricula principles and materials contents. It means that English language teachers have to find the way for an alternative curriculum against domination (De Lissovoy, 2010; Todd and Robert, 2018 in Wane & Todd, 2018).

The quest for a decolonial pedagogy to embrace critical interculturality

The significance of a decolonial pedagogy to work from an “interculturalidad crítica” lay in its potentiality to detach from Western hegemony within the established bilingual curriculum in the country. This attempt opens up opportunities for English Language teachers’ actions to really engage in decolonial treatment of curriculum. In doing so, the classroom will offer real conditions of possibility for the emergence of students’ subjectivities, allowing the interaction between languages and decreasing students’ anxiety for learning.

The quest for a decolonial pedagogy implies the comprehension of pedagogy as care and love, which means placing interest on the students’ subjectivities and their families as valuable knowledge (Mendoza, 2014) instead of focusing it on Eurocentric epistemologies and histories. There should be a teachers’ genuine interest in students’ subjectivities avoiding knowledge extractivism for strategic purposes to force learning. The question is that a critical intercultural curriculum is based on a humanized pedagogy

capable of recognizing ourselves in the other while constructing solidarity in relations.

Thus, that is why there is an urgent need to subvert the normalized pedagogy of detachment (Salinas, 2020) by embracing a pedagogy of attachment, appropriation and connection. And also, there is a need to dismantle the pedagogy of cruelty (Segato, 2018) in order to trace violence against people, animals and nature. Teachers are called to subvert canonical contents, vertical relations and disciplinary practices of schooling. In this respect, we as teachers need to ask ourselves to what extent does the design of our lessons contribute to perpetuate normative reason while detaching students from their own subjectivities and repertoires? What types of violences and epistemicides are involved in The ELT curriculum?

The pluriversality advocated for the decolonial turn is an opportunity to work with a diversity of knowledges coming from different sources and backgrounds. Curriculum opportunities to spot colonial/modern situations are fundamental in diversifying curriculum and understanding difference as “ways others” of being out of right or wrong dualities. The way that difference has been addressed in schools as something strange, —or even wrong— has resulted in practices of exclusion and rarefication. (Lara Guzmán, 2015).

English language teachers as educators who seek to problematize school settings make visible all the efforts made/put forth to include knowledges others beyond curricula and institutional constraints. It is enough to look at the students’ struggles, subjectivities and knowledges to profit from their experiences and differences. Critical interculturality embraces a socio-affective approach through the adoption of conflict resolution as the common thread of pedagogy, the avoidance of culturalism, and the interaction between theory and practice.

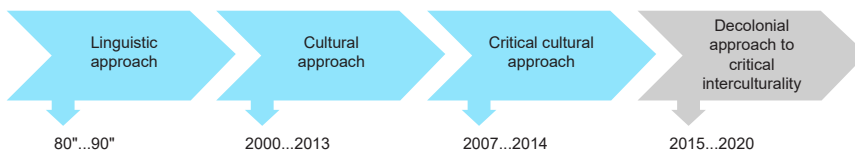
Theory and practice must be a bridging condition to provide learning possibilities for healing and learning from our own school realities and students’ subjectivities. As classrooms have

been ruled to replicate canonical ways of being and doing in ELT, English language teachers need to unlearn these subjugating conditions to transform classrooms into spaces in which to relearn new relationalities with our indigeneity, negritude, emotions, corporalities and knowledges others and ways others of being.

Mapping the decolonial approach to critical interculturality in ELT field in Colombia

The interest for an intercultural approach in English language teaching has been a constant in the field. A review done by Álvarez (2014) in relation to types of articles published and the characteristics of research on culture in six major refereed journals up to 2011, revealed that the cultural approach to teaching has superseded the linguistic approach. Although our own review is not so exhaustive, it is representative of a move from a relational perspective of interculturality to a critical one. This can be explained by the presence of research topics ranging from intercultural competence (Ramos, 2013; 2017) and intercultural communication (Olaya and Gómez, 2013) to critical socio-cultural factors (Bonilla and Cruz, 2014) and critical intercultural awareness (Agudelo, 2007). This criticality draws on the influence of the critical turn in intercultural communication pedagogy and the transnational critical social theory (Giroux, McLaren, Freire, Morell, Liddicoat) allowing scholars and authors to discuss issues of power relations, including: inequality, subordination, identity and diversity.

Figure 1. Time line approach to the teaching of english/culture.



Source: own elaboration.

However, this critical turn is very important to illuminate an ELT socio-cultural interest in education with a concern for the local (knowledges, beings and practices), which has denounced inequality and exclusions in the field. In this section, we are particularly interested in mapping the decolonial turn to critical interculturality/education in ELT in the quest for a decolonial pedagogy capable of spotting colonial situations and mechanisms. This means the appropriation of the decolonial conceptual tools to embrace interculturality for decolonizing English language teaching. This decolonial turn for approaching interculturality offers other senses of criticality beyond the denouncing of power issues by opposing conceptual tools that denaturalize the state of things as a mere product of evolution and proper/appropriate distribution. Also, this decolonial turn provides an understanding of difference as a result of an *ego conquiro* that marked ontological distinctions such as race, gender and work (Dussel, 1974) and that destabilized the naturalization of hierarchies.

For the sake of the review, although we found works embracing the decolonial turn in order to spot colonial situations experienced in the ELT field in other issues, in the following Table 1, we just paid attention to the works explicitly related to critical interculturality in relation to decolonial key aspects, written by scholars in Colombia. It is also worth mentioning that the decolonial studies with involvement of Colombian philosophers date from the final third of the 90s (Santiago Castro-Gómez y Ramón Grosfoguel), which means that its ratio of influence is via taking into account that the first study in critical interculturality from a decolonial perspective is just beginning to blossom in the ELT field in the country. Based on Table 1, it might be argued that the decolonial turn in ELT is still in an early stage of development. Granados-Beltrán (2015) is the first author who has benefited from critical interculturality as a tool for decolonial pedagogy to make pre-service ELT teachers' subjectivities visible in initial teacher education programs. In this respect, the author problematizes the hegemony of native-speakerism and its impact on disqualifying "licenciatura" programs and colonizing student-teachers' beliefs to focus more on proficiency than inequalities. The review of a path to adopt

a decolonial pedagogy takes the author to profiting/benefiting from critical interculturality and transgressive pedagogies to subverting initial teacher education and professional development programs.

Table 1. Calls for transformation in ELT/Teacher Education.

Year	Author	Title	Scope	Key aspects	Curricula
2015	Carlo Granados-Beltrán	Critical Interculturality. A path for pre-service ELT Teachers	Critical interculturality as a tool for decolonial pedagogy.	The text concludes by explaining the potential of critical interculturality as a point of intersection for transgressive pedagogies, whose main feature is recognizing and making subjectivities visible.	Initial language Teacher education programs Professional development
2018	Deyanira Sindy Moya-Chaves Nohora Patricia Moreno-García Vladimir Núñez-Camacho	Interculturality and language teaching in Colombia: The case of three Teacher Education Programs	Verificationist view of critical interculturality in which decoloniality is mentioned.	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.	Three initial FL teacher education programs in the city of Bogotá
2020	Núñez-Pardo, A.	Inquiring into the Coloniality of Knowledge, Power, and Being in EFL Textbooks.	Critical interculturality as a decolonial alternative	This study calls for students' and teachers' resistance to hegemony, a search for their critical socio-political awareness, a committed agency, and generation of local knowledge, so that subaltern communities are considered as the locus for other epistemologies (p. 123)	Not specified

Source: own elaboration.

Another study, conducted by Moya-Chaves et al. (2018), validates how three Foreign Language Teacher education programs deal with interculturality. Results suggest that although there are elements of criticality and transformation in all three universities, only one

university embraces critical interculturality with decolonial elements. This is very informative about changes in the aspirations and actions of education programs. Finally, Núñez-Pardo (2020) is interested in tracing coloniality in English language textbooks. The author recalls critical interculturality as being an alternative to challenge materials and other resources in order to resist the coloniality of being, knowledge and power embedded in English language textbooks. It is interesting to notice the author's claims for local knowledge in order to generate spaces for other epistemologies (Guilherme, 2019).

These works are inspirational to English Language Teachers who want to decolonize their teaching practices and the ELT curriculum. However, there is not a recipe to know how to put this into practice as the decolonial option is against any attempt to encapsulate it. Precisely, this is a real opportunity for creatively seeking different possibilities to transform the curriculum because the decolonial option is not a process but an attitude. In the case of the ELT curriculum, a decolonial pedagogy will inform the field with more humanized practices of teaching.

Decolonial approach to the EFL curriculum: from theory to practice

The action decolonial-interculturality aims to dismantle coloniality in all its expressions (patriarchy, capitalism and coloniality of being, knowledge and power). Curriculum as an organizational device prescribes the ways disciplines, contents and actors must relate, which might represent a technology of subjection to obey to restrictive and monolithic views of interculturality. As a response, educators who resist curricular coercive measures are able to transgress curricula. Which in practical terms can be understood as the "balancing act exercise regarding national origin, age, race and ethnicity, religion and/or belief, gender, and socio-economic status of students" (Nyoni, 2019, p. 8) to render cultural diversity more coherent in educational settings.

The decolonial option entails the recognition of both teachers and students' loci of enunciation as a constituent part of their vital existence in a geo-political and body-political location (Grosfoguel 2007, p. 213). A decolonial bilingual curriculum that favors the balance among cultures allows teachers and students to speak (in English or Spanish or any other mother language) from their own knowledges and experiences thus avoiding cultural alienation and feelings of inferiority. Which, in words of Andreotti (2014), could be translated into "curriculum as the practice of expansion of possibilities for signification" (p. 8).

If we as educators are seduced by the decolonial option, and wish to enact a decolonial pedagogy, we need to learn to really listen to our students in order to reflect upon what they signify in the world and then be able to understand how colonialism, capitalism and patriarchy have affected their lives inside and outside the schools. In doing so, we need to acknowledge how the ELT curriculum –and even the ELT-- and our own practices are also affected by colonial mechanisms that work to keep the status quo, the supremacy of Western knowledges.

Although some English language teachers in some private sectors have limited opportunities to openly change some institutional rules in relation to the treatment of diversity and the contents of syllabuses, we strongly believe that little actions can promote changes to problematize the field and the treatment of diversity in schools.

As it is clear that the concept of interculturality within the decolonial turn challenges the idea of a universal knowledge without space and temporality (Patarroyo, 2017), it is time to oppose this *universal knowledge/imperial language* of other knowledges and languages to feel the taste of difference and give new senses to the learning of imperial languages. This does not mean that Western knowledge and its methods must be rejected or ignored as the decolonial option is about an ecology of knowledges in which multiple and diverse knowledges can coexist (Medina-Flores & Huáman-Rojas, (2019) to achieve cognitive justice.

We wonder to what extent the subversion of some “must-have” discourses and practices may contribute to the decolonization of ELT Curriculum. For instance, think of those English Language Teachers that in the name of professionalism were forced to silence their cultural backgrounds and personal information to neutralize their own persona in teaching. What would happen if we dared to bring to the classroom our personal backgrounds to relate with our students? We might find that our own history of redemption through education might be inspirational for our students’ personal stories to emerge in our classrooms.

What would happen if we dared to subvert the canonical way to teach that historically have forced teachers to follow a format (presentation, practice, production) and curriculum contents focusing on grammar and cultural repertoires of the target language? Perhaps the disruption of these patterns will give teachers more control of their teaching practices and to students more opportunities to include their own repertoires and interests.

What if we as teachers dare to show the greys and dark side rather than only the prosperous situations depicted in English language textbooks? If we do so, maybe students themselves will understand how the machinery of poverty is present everywhere and is not a result of natural consequences. What if we as educators dare to work with those topics that are forbidden in some institutions? That is, if we have the freedom to do it, topics as racism, sexism, violence, and class divisions, among others. Perhaps the learning of English can be topicalized to show students how to use this language to communicate, denounce injustices and discrimination and construct solidarity.

The coloniality of power (Quijano, 2007) has dominated the arrangement of the L2 curriculum as a bilingual curriculum, but the bilingual curriculum as the use of two languages separately with a superficial treatment of culture is not seducing students to learn. This situation demands more profound changes. What if we promote a curriculum that gives more options to students to learn languages (not only English)?

A critical intercultural approach to the curriculum is a turn that teachers need to examine to review “the actual varied language experiences and practices of the students and the ways they “do” languages” (García, 2019, p.160). Realistic and experiential goals in accordance with students’ needs and expectations of languages should be considered.

In this sense, the decolonial option as a political project creates the conditions for engaging students in decolonial thinking to spot colonial practices and see how these practices are experienced in their own lived situations in the form of oppression, stereotyping, racism, etc. Students’ participation would increase awareness as to the way schooling and curricula perpetuate the transmission of an acritical teaching of interculturality (Aparicio, 2018). As teachers we need to be aware of that in order to intervene and resist the coloniality of English in the neutral sense that has been introduced.

Conclusions

Teachers as educators have knowledges quite valid to problematize the L1 curriculum and theorize it differently. Any attempt to promote the learning of languages needs to uncover the colonial mechanisms and practices present and promoted within the curriculum. English language teachers as educators have been subjected to a prescriptive EFL curriculum in the name of bilingualism that neutralizes a more critical treatment of knowledges, subjectivities and practices promoted within. In this sense, an intercultural approach to the Colombian EFL curriculum is a call to action against domination and colonization.

If we spot where the curriculum has a device that legitimates the status quo in favor of colonization through education, we need to pay attention to its coercive and subjugating forces and the ways these have been manufactured to decrease teachers’ will to power and actions. In doing so, we need to take actions to decolonize the ELT curriculum to dismantle its lack of neutrality and open spaces for educators’ epistemic freedom.

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