Teachers and intercultural education reform in Bolivia
From discursive imaginaries to educational realities

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ABSTRACT

The recent education reform 'Avelino Siñani Elizardo Pérez' (ASEP) (December 2010) in Bolivia might give secondary schools new opportunities to focus on intercultural education in their policies and practices. The Plurinational Government is striving for a society of 'Vivir Bien' (to Live Well), a paradigm which functions as the organisational framework for the construction of a radically different society, leaving the colonial, republican and neoliberal state behind. School teachers are being envisioned as actors of change in these transformations. Drawing from the strategic-relational approach (Colin Hay; Bob Jessop) and its previous use in relation to Bolivian education (Mieke Lopes Cardozo), this study aims to critically explore secondary school teachers’ agency for critical intercultural education within the context of the 2010 ASEP education reform. Findings are analysed through a critical intercultural education framework based on literature on critical multiculturalism and Latin American debates on modernity/coloniality. Ethnographic methods were used, including semi-structured interviews, (classroom) observations, document study and a qualitative survey within the context of a sample of public secondary schools and education governance actors in the cities La Paz and Trinidad in Bolivia. This research aims to contribute to the wider academic debate on the (potential) role of intercultural education in processes of social transformation. In addition, it shows the importance of focusing on teachers’ agency for understanding how teachers may contribute to educational and social transformation. It is concluded that while at the level of policy discourse the ASEP reform promotes a more critical approach towards intercultural education, research on how these policies work out at the practical level demonstrates a number of challenges for translation of these discursive imaginaries to educational realities. Some of the challenges discussed in this thesis are little support and training for teachers in relation to intercultural education, simplification and reification of identities and disagreement among teachers and other educational actors over various aspects of the law’s content and implementation.
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

It is a pleasure to thank those who made this thesis possible. I would like to thank Mieke Lopes Cardozo, my academic supervisor in the Netherlands, for inspiring me to study the theme of intercultural education in Bolivia and for encouraging me to think in opportunities. I am grateful to my two local supervisors that have guided me in the research process during my stay in Bolivia, María Luisa Talavera and Anke van Dam. I have appreciated the feedback from several colleagues at the Embassy during the research process. I am thankful to Margriet Poppema, second reader of this thesis, for her interest and trust in my academic work. Special thanks to all the teachers and other education actors for taking time to share their views with me. I am grateful to all trainers working for W.H.Y. Bolivia for giving me an insight into their projects on interculturality and leadership. I feel privileged to have been welcomed so warmly in Bolivia. It was not just a very interesting academic experience; I also met inspiring people and found new friends. I felt at home, even far away from my home country. Finally, I wish to thank my friends and family in the Netherlands for their love, understanding and support.
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CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

When I arrived in Bolivia in August 2011 to carry out ethnographic research on Bolivia’s new intercultural education reform, the country had become centre stage of protests, roadblocks and strikes against the government’s announcement to construct a highway. The proposed road would connect the regions of Cochabamba and Beni, crossing the Indigenous Territory and National Park Isiboro Sécure (TIPNIS). In protest against the planned new road, indigenous peoples from the Amazonia united and initiated the so-called ‘march for TIPNIS’, the longest march in Bolivia’s history. The march covered over 600 kilometres, starting in Trinidad in the Eastern Lowlands region in August 2011 and arriving in La Paz about two months later on October 19th, 2011 (Walsh, 2011: 64-65). The plans to build the highway sharply divided opinion in Bolivia1. The marchers were first blocked and later dispersed by a violent police intervention. News footage of the police action provoked a national outcry, with large demonstrations of support for the marchers in La Paz and other cities.

On October 19th, 2011, the marchers arrived in La Paz and were welcomed by over a million supporters. This event was described by many as an “intercultural encounter” between the indigenous groups from the Eastern Lowlands and inhabitants from the Andean Highlands. As one of the respondents of this study commented, that day “we have understood that the essence of interculturality is to see your brother as equal; solidarity; cooperation; see that the indigenous (...) are equal.”

On October 24th, 2011, President Evo Morales signed off on the law that will prohibit the building of the highway, acceding to the

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1 The conflict is complex as it involves groups with different interests. First, the highway is supported by colonos and campesinos, including the coca growers of Chapare for the access it would give them to the La Paz market. Second, it is connected to a national plan of exploration and extraction of hydrocarbons. Third, there are foreign interests as the construction project is funded by Brazil (Miriam García, as cited in Walsh, 2011:64-65).
march’s central demand (Walsh, 2011: 65). However, discussion on the theme continues. The TIPNIS conflict illustrates the complexity of processes of social justice in Bolivia nowadays. As I will argue in this thesis, struggles for social justice, societal tensions and contradictions are also reflected in Bolivia’s education system.

1.1 BACKGROUND, RELEVANCE AND PURPOSE OF THIS RESEARCH

[The objective of education is to] “promote the development of intraculturality, interculturality and plurilingualism in the education of all Bolivians [men and women], for a society of Vivir Bien [Living Well]” (ASEP, 2010, Art. 4.4)

Historically, education in Bolivia aimed at assimilating and civilising the indigenous population into a monolingual, monocultural nation (Drange, 2011). In the 1990s, policies shifted away from this assimilationist notion to policies that recognised the pluriculturality of Bolivia (Howard, 2009). The election of Evo Morales, the first indigenous president in 2005 and his re-election in 2009 offered hope for change to the indigenous peoples supporting him. Morales’ government proposes a radical transformation of Bolivian society, reflected in the National Development Plan (PND) of 2006, the Constitution that passed parliament in 2009 and the 2010 Education Law “Avelino Siñani-Elizardo Pérez” (ASEP; named after two pioneers of indigenous education in Bolivia in the 1930s Pérez, 1992, as cited in Howard, 2009). As stated in the PND (2006), the government envisions a “sovereign, dignified, productive and democratic Bolivia where everyone can Live Well (Vivir Bien).” The paradigm of “Vivir Bien”, or “to live well” as included in the PND aims for a society based on principles and values of equality, solidarity, democracy, reciprocity, respect for differences and harmony with nature (PND, 2006). Education plays a crucial role in this strive for social justice. Key notions in the debate are that of intracultural, intercultural and plurilingual education, together with the concept and ideal of a “decolonising” education. As in wider Latin America, intercultural education in Bolivia can be understood as a response to exploitation, oppression and discrimination of indigenous peoples in society throughout history (Aikman, 1997: 466; López, 2009a: 181-182, 185; Luykx, 2003:1; Moya 2009).

Theoretically, this thesis defines a critical intercultural education (CIE) approach drawing from literature on Critical multiculturalism (e.g. Banks, 1995, 2010; Gorski, 2006; May and Sleeter, 2010) and Modernity/coloniality (e.g. Escobar, 2007; Tubino 2005a, b; Walsh 2010).

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2 Discussions on a possible highway through TIPNIS are still going on. In December 2012, a meeting was held between the government and indigenous groups, discussing options for a highway that would not cross TIPNIS or an ‘ecological highway’. Source: La Razón newspaper 10 December 2012 http://www.larazon.com/nacional/Indigena-VargasConsulta-TIPNIS-desarrollo-carretera_0_1739826082.html

3 See Chapter 3 for a more comprehensive overview of the history of education in Bolivia
A shared objective of this literature is that intercultural education should challenge unequal power relations in education and society, an objective which seems inherently related to the concept of social justice as defined by Fraser (1995, 2003, 2007). It is increasingly recognised that education has a complex and contradictory role in social justice and can work to reproduce or amplify inequality, exclusion and social polarisation or, conversely, contribute to social justice (e.g. Aikman, 2011; Dyer, 2010; Lopes Cardozo, 2011; North, 2008; Walsh, 2010). In this thesis, in agreement with critical pedagogue Paulo Freire, it is argued that, while education alone cannot change society, education can play an important role in social transformation and education should function as a tool to work towards liberation rather than domination (Gutstein, 2010: 3).

The formulation of the ASEP law encouraging intercultural education can be seen as an important first step towards a more just education system and society (Lopes Cardozo, 2011). However, the way teachers understand policy affects the manner in which education policy is (or is not) implemented at schools (Fullan 2001: 29; Smit, 2005). Authors writing on CIE highlight the important role of teachers as actors of intercultural education (e.g. Sleeter, 1996; Walsh, 2010). This research draws from the strategic-relational approach (SRA; Hay, 2002) as applied to Bolivian education by Lopes Cardozo (2009; 2011) and uses it as a heuristic tool to understand teachers’ agency, defined by the dialectic relation between the actor, in this case the secondary school teacher, and the strategic selective context, referring to the intercultural education governance context.

This thesis focuses on the secondary education level. The previous 1994 Bolivian Education Reform, promoting Intercultural Bilingual Education, has been criticised for focusing exclusively on primary education; not reaching secondary education, alternative education or universities (Albó, 2011: 228-229; Contreras & Talavera, 2005: 131). At the secondary education level there might, therefore, be in many cases "no previous experience", as expressed by one of the civil society respondents of this study, making it especially interesting to see if, and how, intercultural education is addressed at this educational level. Moreover, the focus of recent research on the ASEP reform has been on other educational levels, i.e. teacher education (Delany-Barmann, 2009, 2010; Lopes Cardozo, 2009, 2011) and primary education (Schreinemachers master’s thesis, 2010; Strauss master’s thesis, 2010). This study, therefore, focuses on public secondary education where the majority of secondary school students are enrolled4 (Ocampo & Foronda, 2009: 3).

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4 For the year 2006, of the population registered in secondary education, 78% were enrolled in public schools, in comparison with 13% and 9%, respectively, enrolled in schools de convenio (cofounded by the state and, generally religious, private institutions; the funding scheme allows schools to offer free attendance) and private schools (Ocampo & Foronda, 2009: 3).
Furthermore, this research concentrates on urban contexts. As a result of migration from rural to urban areas, Bolivian cities have wide cultural, ethnic and linguistic diversity making it interesting to investigate to what extent education pays attention to this diversity (Albó, 2011: 228; Benito, 2009: 327). More specifically, this study includes research in two cities: La Paz, located in the department of La Paz in the Andean Highlands, and Trinidad in the department of Beni in the Bolivian Lowlands. Trinidad was included as one of the research locations as there is a lack of research on education in relation to the ASEP reform in this area. In addition, it is especially interesting to research the mediating role of teachers taking into account the socioeconomic and political differences in context between the La Paz and Trinidad regions, as it might result in different strategies in relation to the reform. The following chapter aims to give more insight into Bolivia’s socio-economic context.

\[5\] I did not come across any study in relation to the new education reform in the department of Beni (including Trinidad).
1.2 BOLIVIA’S SOCIO-ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL CONTEXT

Bolivia can be divided into three distinct and diverse geographical regions: the Andean highlands (Altiplano) in the West, the valleys in the centre; and the extensive and ecologically diverse eastern lowlands of the tropical Amazonia and Chaco in the North, East and South (Oriente) (Morales, 2003: xxi-xxvi). Bolivia is divided into 9 departments, in turn divided into provinces (Benito, 2009: 326). This research was carried out in the city of La Paz in the department of La Paz (Andean highlands) and in the city of Trinidad, in the department of Beni (Eastern Lowlands).

Bolivia’s population, estimated at 9.9 million people (UNESCO, 2010⁶), is linguistically and culturally diverse with 36 groups and languages (López & Küper, 2002; though not all authors agree, e.g. Albó & Anaya, 2003, as cited in Delany-Barmann, 2010, cite 34 groups). According to the 2001 census, 62% of people over the age of 15 define themselves as belonging to an indigenous group (Benito, 2009: 327). We refer to the linguistic map for further details. The largest indigenous groups are the Quechua and the Aymara, respectively 49% and 41% of the indigenous population, mainly inhabiting the Andean region (Benito, 2009: 328). However, many of Bolivia’s cultural groups live in the Eastern Lowlands, including as largest the Chiquitano (3.6%), Guaraní (2.5%) and Moxeño (1.9%) (Benito, 2009: 328). More than 50% of the indigenous population and the majority 80% of the non-indigenous population inhabit urban areas (Benito 2009: 328). Bolivia’s Human Development Index (HDI) is 0.643 which gives the country a rank of 95 out of 169 countries. The HDI of Latin America and the Caribbean as a region increased from 0.578 in 1980 to 0.706 today, placing Bolivia slightly below the regional average (UNDP, 2010b). In 2007, with a Gini coefficient of 0.56, Bolivia continued to be one of the most unequal countries of Latin America (UNDP, 2010a: 92).

Social and economic inequalities in Bolivia reflect and reproduce forms of stratification of society that produce exclusion and discrimination (UNDP, 2010a: 61). There is material exclusion in terms of income, education and access to work, affecting historically excluded populations.

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⁶ http://stats.uis.unesco.org
⁷ Based on 2001 Census data
groups, mainly women, indigenous peoples and inhabitants of rural areas. In addition, there is ‘symbolic exclusion’, understood as changes in consumption, living styles and identities and social misrecognition of historically discriminated groups, i.e. indigenous peoples, women and the rural population (UNDP, 2010a: 61-62). In line with these findings, scholars writing on education in Bolivia report exclusion and discrimination continue to exist (Canessa, 2004; Lopes Cardozo, 2011: 224; Regalsky and Laurie, 2007: 241; Yapu, 2011: 213-224).

Inequalities are also reflected in regional tensions between the Andean Highlands (including La Paz) and the Eastern Lowlands (including Trinidad) (Albó, 2008: 33; Postero, 2007: 18; Roca, 2008: 67). In class terms, elites in the Eastern Lowlands have control over natural resources (including land and hydrocarbons); in ethnic terms, there is dominance of Hispanic-Criollo culture in the Eastern Lowlands (Albó, 2008: 33-34). The regional divide is expressed most clearly in the autonomy movement put forward by the elite of Santa Cruz, who strive for more control over local revenues and policymaking (Postero, 2007: 18). The reforms proposed by the Morales government are also central in debates. While (richer) elites in the fertile lowlands mostly disagree with redistribution and nationalisation plans, supporters of Morales predominantly live in the poorer and higher regions of the country (Lopes Cardozo, 2009: 410).

According to Postero (2007: 18), the government’s strategic use of Andean culture in Bolivia carries the danger of ‘Andinocentrismo’ or Andean-centrism which might exacerbate regional tensions. The regional divide is also reflected in discrimination, with ‘colla’ as label for all peoples from the west of Bolivia, whether of indigenous origin or not, and with the same racist connotation as ‘camba’ referring to the inhabitants from the Bolivian lowlands (Roca, 2008: 275). This challenging socio-economic and political context constitutes the background of my study on teachers’ agency for critical intercultural education. The following chapter introduces the research questions and structure of this thesis.

Figure 4. Map of Bolivia source: http://www.un.org/Depts/Cartographic/map/profile/bolivia.pdf
1.3 Research Questions and Structure of Thesis

The main research question of this thesis is the following:

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How can we understand the agency of Bolivian secondary school teachers to adopt strategies for intra-/intercultural and plurilingual education, concepts discussed in the education governance context in Bolivia, from a theoretical critical intercultural education perspective?
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To answer this research question, this thesis builds upon Lopes Cardozo’s interpretation (2009, 2011) of the strategic-relational approach (SRA; as proposed by Hay, 2002) in the Bolivian educational context. Accordingly, this research focuses on Bolivian secondary school teachers as strategic actors within a wider multilevel strategically selective context of intercultural education reform in Bolivia. This approach is reflected in the structure of this thesis.

Chapter 2 introduces the theoretical and methodological framework of this thesis to understand teachers’ agency for critical intercultural education. Chapter 3 presents the findings in relation to the education governance framework of intercultural education in Bolivia and answers the sub-question: What are the policy definitions, perceptions and related strategies of education governance actors with regard to intra-/intercultural and plurilingual education? Education governance actor respondents include government authorities at national, regional and local levels, civil society actors including teacher unions, indigenous education councils and non-governmental organisations (NGOs). In addition, the chapter includes perceptions of academics as (critical) reflections on the education reform. Based on the SRA, education policy and education governance actor’s perceptions and strategies are part of the strategically selective context of teachers, and hence influence teachers’ agency and strategies for implementation. Chapter 4 presents the findings on secondary school teachers’ perceptions and strategies of intercultural education at three schools in La Paz and two schools in Trinidad. The guiding sub-question of this chapter is: What are the perceptions and strategies of secondary school teachers of intra-/intercultural and plurilingual education? Drawing from the SRA, this chapter studies the strategic actor, in this case secondary school teachers, within the larger education governance framework. Chapter 5 answers the main research question on agency of teachers to adopt strategies for critical intercultural education, by combining the findings from chapters 3 and 4. The chapter concludes with suggestions for practice and future research.
CHAPTER 2 THEORY AND METHODOLOGY

This chapter discusses the theoretical and methodological framework of this research on teachers' agency for critical intercultural education in Bolivia. The first part presents the metatheoretical basis of the present study and argues for a ‘politics of intercultural education’ perspective. The second part identifies a number of dimensions of a critical approach to intercultural education (CIE) from the literature. The third part conceptualises teachers in dialectic interaction with a larger intercultural education governance context. The theoretical concepts and their interrelations are illustrated in a conceptual scheme. Finally, the chapter discusses the research design, including research methods, units of analysis, limitations and ethical considerations.

2.1 META-THEORETICAL BASIS
The ontological and epistemological base of this research is critical realism. Critical realism postulates that an external reality exists independent of our beliefs and understanding and that this reality is only knowable through the human mind and socially constructed meanings (Ritchie & Lewis, 2003: 16). Ontologically, critical realism distinguishes the real (generative structures or causal mechanisms), the actual (events resulting from various real tendencies and countertendencies in specific initial conditions) and the empirical (observations or measurements of actual events and, in some circumstances, underlying structures and mechanisms) (Bhaskar, 1989, as cited in Jessop, 2005). It encourages us to look beyond the appearance of the empirical and actual and, guided by theory, to “reveal the structured reality beneath the surface” (Hay, 2002:122). Epistemologically, critical realism distinguishes the intransitive and transitive dimensions of scientific enquiry: “Knowledge (transitive) is produced through a continuing process of confrontation between retroductive theoretical hypotheses about intransitive objects and evidential statements generated in and through transitive enquiry” (Archer, Bhaskar, Collier, Lawson & Norrie 1998, as cited in Jessop, 2005: 43). Critical realism embraces epistemological relativism (ibid.).

This thesis draws inspiration from Dale's interpretation of critical realism. Roger Dale distinguishes between research from a notion of ‘education politics’ vs. ‘politics of education’. On the one hand, an ‘education politics’ approach concerns itself with debates of the education system and refers almost completely to other educational research and problem-solving issues, avoiding both other disciplinary fields and the broader socio-economic and political world. On the other hand, a ‘politics of education’ approach seeks to understand educational problems and systems as embedded in a complex local, national and global political economy and rejects the
belief that educational problems can be simply put aside from these broader phenomena (Novelli & Lopes Cardozo, 2008: 483).

More specifically for the theoretical position of intercultural education, Coulby (2006: 245) argues that the context of intercultural education is “undertheorized and effectively depoliticized.” In line with Dale’s ‘politics of education’ perspective, Coulby (2006) argues that the international political, economic and cultural contextualisation of intercultural education is essential to its understanding. Combining insights from these authors, for this thesis I was inspired by theories that, in line with a ‘politics of intercultural education’ perspective, encourage theorisation and ‘re-politicisation’ of the broader social and political context of intercultural education.

2.2 A SOCIAL JUSTICE PERSPECTIVE ON INTERCULTURAL EDUCATION
Emergent conceptualisations of intercultural education stress that school transformation needs to be understood within the framework of the social and political structures that influence education, and that these two structures are intrinsically linked. More specifically, it is argued that intercultural education, in its purpose to address limitations of the current education system, can be a starting point for the elimination of injustices in society. In order to analyse the findings of this research from a social justice perspective on intercultural education, the background to the concepts of social justice and critical intercultural education will now be briefly outlined.

2.2.1 CONCEPT OF SOCIAL JUSTICE
According to Fraser (2007: 20), the general meaning of social justice is parity of participation. Fraser’s (2007: 20) conceptualisation of social justice encompasses three dimensions: economic, cultural and political. The first dimension of justice identified by Fraser (2007: 20) is ‘distributive injustice’, arising when people are impeded from full participation by economic structures that deny them the resources they need to interact with others as peers. The second dimension identified by Fraser (2007: 20) is cultural recognition which is hindered when people are prevented from interacting on terms of parity by institutionalised hierarchies of cultural value (Fraser, 2007: 20). The third justice dimension, political misrepresentation, occurs when political boundaries and/or decision rules function to deny some people the possibility of participating on a par with others in social interaction – including, but not only, in political arenas (Fraser, 2007: 21). This distinction is analytical as in the real world these dimensions are imbricated with one another: while the ability to make claims for distribution and recognition depends on relations of representation, the ability to exercise one’s political voice depends on relations of class and status (Fraser, 2007: 31).
According to Fraser (1995: 82), injustices may be addressed by affirmative reforms or transformative reforms. While affirmative reforms correct the outcomes without changing the underlying mechanisms, transformative approaches seek to redress injustices by altering the underlying structures that generate them (Fraser, 1995: 82).

2.2.2 CRITICAL INTERCULTURAL EDUCATION

This research defines a critical approach to intercultural education (CIE) based on literature on critical multiculturalism (e.g. Banks, 1995; Gorski, 2006; May and Sleeter, 2010; Sleeter 2012), Latin American modernity/coloniality thinking (e.g. Escobar, 2007; Tubino, 2005a, b; Walsh, 2010) and the work of critical pedagogue Paulo Freire (2000). As Hanley (2010: 192) points out, the term critical implies criticism, an act of analysis used to examine society. This theoretical CIE perspective encourages theorising and re-politicising the wider context of education, in line with the politics of intercultural education approach defined at the beginning of this chapter. In relation to the concept of social justice as defined earlier, CIE is defined as a struggle for transformative justice (Fraser, 1995: 82). As Paulo Freire argued “there is no social practice more political than educational practice. In effect, education can hide the reality of domination and alienation or, contrarily, denounce it, announce another path, becoming an emancipatory tool” (Freire, 2003, as cited in Walsh, 2012). This makes it interesting to study how teachers may support processes of critical intercultural education. This section aims to give more insight into theoretical concepts related to teachers’ roles in such processes. Table 1 presents the dimensions of CIE identified in the literature. These dimensions are explained in text below.

Table 1. Critical Intercultural Education (CIE) dimensions relevant to Bolivian context

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<td>1</td>
<td>Critical reflection &amp; action</td>
<td>Banks, 1995; Bartlett, 2005; Freire, 2000; Hanley, 2010; Kubota, 2010; McShay, 2010; Sleeter, 1996; Sleeter, Torres &amp; Laughlin, 2004; Walsh, 2010</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Challenge hegemony of Western knowledge (including language)</td>
<td>Escobar, 2007; Grosfoguel, 2009; Mignolo, 2007; Quijano, 2000; Walsh, 2007b, 2010a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Intercultural dialogue</td>
<td>Grosfoguel 2009; Speiser, 2000; Walsh, 2007b</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Culture &amp; identity as complex and dynamic - not essentializing culture</td>
<td>Bartlett, 2005; Fraser, 2003; May &amp; Aikman, 2003; May &amp; Sleeter, 2010; Sleeter, 2012; Tubino, 2005b; Van Dam &amp; Salman, 2009; Walsh, 2000; Zembylas, 2012</td>
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Based on literature review, I would say critical reflection and action are an essential part of CIE. Critical pedagogue Paulo Freire underlined that teachers need to encourage students to critically reflect on their own reality in terms of access to socioeconomic resources and opportunities and to engage in transformative actions (Bartlett, 2005: 346; Sleeter, Torres & Laughlin, 2004: 82). Freire further argued that educators should reject a “banking” model of education, in which the teacher “owns” knowledge and “deposits” it into students and postulated that students’ experiences provide important sources of knowledge and valid knowledge emerges in dialogical interaction between teachers and students (Bartlett, 2005: 345, 356; Freire, 2000). According to Freire, a dialogical relation between teacher and student is important as it creates a context for students to critically examine the world starting from their own experience and historical location (May & Sleeter, 2010: 9; McShay, 2010: 143, 146). Similarly, Walsh (2010a: 17), referring to coloniality of knowledge, underlines the need to critically reflect on and challenge discrimination on grounds of race, gender and class. In a similar way, Banks (1995: 392), from a Critical multicultural perspective, refers to ‘the knowledge construction process’ which consists of the methods, activities, and questions used by teachers to help students understand, investigate, and determine how implicit cultural assumptions, frames of reference, perspectives, and biases within a discipline influence the ways in which knowledge is constructed (Banks, 1995: 392, 2010: 23). This suggests that teachers and students need to reflect on their understanding of self and other and negotiate conflicting meanings, acts and identities (Kubota, 2010: 109; McShay, 2010: 146).

Regarding critical action, Sleeter (1996: 246) proposes that teachers need to teach children and youth to act politically, to advocate both individually and collectively for themselves and for marginalised people. Banks (1995: 392-393) and Sleeter (1996: 246) further argue that teachers themselves need to discover the ways in which schools hinder academic
achievement of children from marginalised groups and need to work to change the processes and structures that are serving as barriers.

In my attempt to define CIE for the present study, I believe it is crucial to be sensitive to the local socioeconomic and political context (Coulby, 2006; Sleeter, 2012: 576; Tikly & Barret, 2009: 6 Tikly & Dachi, 2009: 120-121). Bearing in mind Bolivia’s colonial history, coloniality/modernity debates are relevant for understanding teachers’agency within the Bolivian context. In accordance with debates on coloniality, Walsh (2007b) encourages a critical interculturality which should recognise the role that coloniality played in universalising Western knowledge and subalternising indigenous knowledges and challenge the hegemony of Western knowledge. Walsh suggests that teachers have an important role in “encouraging and revitalising ‘other’ political-ethical rationalities that distance themselves from the modern-occidental-colonial reasoning” (Walsh 2010a: 24).
**Box 1. A perspective from Latin America: Modernity/coloniality debates**

**Modernity/coloniality**

The main driving force of the Latin American debates on modernity/coloniality is a continued reflection on Latin American cultural and political reality, including the subaltern knowledge of exploited and oppressed social groups (Escobar, 2007: 180). The coloniality debates intend to make visible and address the colonial framework of power, termed ‘coloniality of power’ by Quijano (2000), by focusing on the historical intertwining between the concept of ‘race’, as instrument of social classification and control, and the development of world capitalism (modern, colonial, Eurocentric), that forms part of the historical constitution of the Americas (Quijano, 2000; Walsh, 2010a: 89-90). Grosfoguel (2009: 23) defines colonial situations as “the cultural, political, sexual and economic oppression/exploitation of subordinate racialized/ethnic groups by dominant racial/ethnic groups with or without the existence of colonial administrations.” Relevant for the field of education, coloniality of power in the economic and political spheres may be linked to coloniality of knowledge, as explained by Quijano (2000: 540): “Europe’s hegemony over the new model of global power concentrated all forms of the control of subjectivity, culture, and especially knowledge and the production of knowledge under its hegemony.”

**Epistemic coloniality**

Since the mid-seventies, the idea that knowledge is colonised was expressed in several ways and in different disciplinary domains (Mignolo, 2007). ‘Coloniality of knowledge’ entails “the hegemony of Eurocentrism as the perspective of knowledge, and an association of intellectual production with ‘civilisation’, the power of the written word, and with the established racial hierarchy” (Quijano, 2000, as cited in Walsh, 2007a). Walsh (2007a), in her discussion on the ‘geopolitics of knowledge’ for the context of Latin America sets out how the production of knowledge has been subject to colonial influences for a long time and how European thought is regarded as the scientific truth whereas other knowledges, such as indigenous and Afro-descendent epistemes, were and still are considered subaltern. As pointed out by Quijano (1992, as cited in Mignolo, 2007: 450), “If knowledge is colonized, one of the tasks ahead is to de-colonize knowledge.” Accordingly, modernity/coloniality theorists, in “refracting modernity through the lens of coloniality engage in a questioning of the spatial and temporal origins of modernity, thus unfreezing the radical potential for thinking from difference and towards the constitution of alternative local and regional worlds” (Escobar, 2007: 183-184).
The third dimension of CIE, as defined in this thesis, is **intercultural dialogue**. From a modernity/coloniality perspective, the idea of critical border thinking, introduced by Mignolo, embraces critical dialogue between diverse epistemic perspectives (Grosfoguel, 2009: 26). Along these lines, Walsh (2007b: 52) argues for intercultural dialogue between different knowledges, including indigenous and occidental knowledges (Walsh, 2007b: 52). To establish such intercultural dialogue, it is important that educators develop “interest, readiness and a capacity to dialogue with those whom they consider to be different. In this manner they can become more open towards the ‘other’ and the ‘different.’” (Speiser 2000: 235) “Equity is the basis of such dialogue. This kind of dialogue is not possible without a reflective relationship about one’s ‘own background.” (Speiser 2000: 235), related to CIE dimension 1 (critical reflection & action). From a modernity/coloniality perspective, Grosfoguel (2009: 27) states: “An intercultural north-south dialogue cannot be achieved without a decolonization of power relations in the modern world”, in line with CIE dimension 2 (challenging the hegemony of Western knowledge).

The literature further emphasises the need to understand culture and identity as **dynamic and complex**. For instance, Fraser (2003: 22) warns for ‘the problem of reification’ which occurs when recognition struggles impose ‘a single, drastically simplified group identity’ and treat ‘cultures as sharply bounded, neatly separated and non-interacting, as if it were obvious where one stops and another interacts’ (Fraser, 2001: 24). Fraser suggests that struggles for recognition risk separatism and group enclaving instead of transgroup interaction (Fraser, 2003: 22). May & Sleeter’s (2010: 10) definition of culture and identity is useful to understand the complexity of the concepts: “Culture and identity are understood here as multilayered, fluid, complex, and encompassing multiple social categories, and at the same time as being continually reconstructed through participation in social situations.” According to Tubino (2005b: 89) and Van Dam & Salman (2009: 79-80) identity is always constructed in relation to the other. Recognition of ‘the original culture’ of students or ‘recuperating the lost’ of the ancestral culture may represent essentialist interpretations of culture (Tubino, 2005b: 88). Along these lines, Walsh (2010a: 12-13) notes it is important not to “include ancestral knowledges as something attached to a locality and temporality of the past, but as knowledges that have contemporary meaning to critically read the world, and to understand and (re)learn and act in the present”.

I would like to highlight **political participation in defining education** as another important element of CIE. Aikman (2011) translates Fraser’s (2007) political justice dimension to education where it may refer to being able to participate in defining what is valid education and setting new educational agendas and ‘frames’. Both in the literature on critical

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8 Bartlett (2005: 363-364) points out that in many realms, the term ‘knowledge’ (like the concept of ‘identity’) is used as a shorthand for culture and is often understood as coherent, static, unchanging and holistic.
multiculturalism and debates on modernity/coloniality, it is underlined that intercultural education requires active participation of the subaltern population in decision making to transform unequal power relations (Aikman, 1997: 463; López 2009a: 185; Sleeter 1996; Walsh, 2010b: 78). Several scholars have critiqued Intercultural Bilingual Education (EIB) initiatives in Latin America that implemented 'transitional bilingualism', using indigenous languages to eventually acculturate students into non-indigenous regimes of knowledge (Luykx, 2003: 1; Walsh, 2010b: 81). Therefore, it is important to examine how cultural domination operates in the realm of language and to cooperate with indigenous sectors to formulate policies that address domination in the school and elsewhere (Luykx 2003: 1).

In addition, Van Dam & Salman (2009: 93) underline the importance of participation of teachers and parents in intercultural education reform. Sleeter (1996: 246) further argues that the teacher may work as an ally with the community, shaping pedagogy on the basis of both professional expertise and on-going dialogue with parents and other community members.

Authors writing about ‘culturally relevant pedagogy’, emphasise the importance of relevant education, or education which builds on students cultural values, experiences and perspectives (Gay, 2002, as cited in Esposito & Swain, 2009: 38; Ladson-Billings, 1995; López, 1996; Milner, 2011; Sleeter, 2012: 563). The notion of ‘cultural relevance’ moves beyond language to include other aspects of student and school culture (Ladson-Billings, 2009: 19). It is argued that education which is rooted in students’ specific sociocultural and linguistic contexts can partly contribute to helping students develop positive social and cultural identities (Esposito & Swain, 2009: 42; García, 2004: 357; López, 1996: 10). In addition, student learning might benefit from basing education on student’s culture (Milner, 2011) and there is support that children learn best in their own language(s) (Hornberger, 2002: 36; López & Sichra 2007: 3-4).

Several publications have appeared in recent years suggesting that social justice is an institutional matter and can be secured only through comprehensive school reform, which implies that each subject and the whole school system need to be restructured to implement CIE reform. However, in practice multicultural or intercultural education is often limited to specific days and holidays, for example to organising a celebration fair (Banks, 1995: 393; Granda, 2009: 90; Sleeter, 2011: 12, 2012: 568). Sleeter (2012: 568) criticises this ‘cultural celebration’ interpretation of multicultural education whereby celebrations are substituted for academic learning, ignoring power relations. In addition, in literature on intercultural education in Latin America it is increasingly recognised that intercultural education should transform the entire education system (López, 2009a: 170). Intercultural education initiatives in Latin America have been criticised for only promoting intercultural and/or bilingual education for indigenous groups (LA: López & Sichra, 2007: 4-5; Tubino, 2005a: 4; 2005b: 94; Bolivia: Albó, 2011: 216; Delany-Barmann, 2010: 192; Speiser, 2000: 227), only in rural areas (LA: García, 2004; Tubino,
The previous conceptualisation of CIE has highlighted the importance of teachers in processes of social justice. A critique expressed regarding social justice approaches to education is that they focus too much on progressive and political ideologies at the cost of teaching content and skills (Cochran Smith et al., 2009). In agreement with Cochran & Smith et al. (2009: 347), I believe teachers can and ideally combine teaching content and skills and a critical perspective, recognising both their important educational and social roles.

Using the strategic-relational approach (SRA; Hay, 2002; Lopes Cardozo, 2009; 2011) as a starting point, the following section conceptualises teachers as strategic actors within a wider education governance framework which may either facilitate or hinder the potential of teachers to act as actors for critical intercultural education.

2.3 TEACHERS IN DIALECTIC INTERACTION WITH THE EDUCATION GOVERNANCE CONTEXT

The present research applies a distinctive critical realist analysis of structure and agency, the strategic-relational approach (SRA) (Hay, 2002; Jessop, 2005) to explain how both structural and agential factors affect teacher’s ‘space for manoeuvre’ or agency to adopt strategies supporting critical intercultural education. This section explains the SRA and relates it to the previous discussion of critical intercultural education.

The SRA aims to transcend the dualism of structure and agency, arguing that the distinction between structure and agency is not ontological but analytical (Hay, 2002). The strategic-relational approach (SRA) assumes dialectic interrelation between actors and their context (Hay, 2002). The concepts “strategically-selective context” and “strategically-selective actors” are central in SRA. The concept of strategically-selective context refers to the idea that “a given structure may privilege some actors, some identities, some strategies, some spatial and temporal horizons, some actions over others” (Jessop, 2005: 48). The concept of strategically-selective actors refers to the idea that actors “orient potential courses of action to perceptions of the relevant strategic context and to use such an exercise as a means to select the particular course of action to be pursued” (Hay, 2002: 132). Actors are thus presumed to be strategic: “to be capable of devising and revising means to realise their intentions” (Hay, 2002: 132). This does not imply that actors are all the time making (self-) reflective strategic choices, but highlights the potential for such strategic reflection and the role of social action in reproducing or transforming social structures and their emergent properties (Jessop, 2005: 48). Within the SRA, the discursive and the material are inherently and dialectically linked (Lopes Cardozo 2011: 38).

Inspired by Lopes Cardozo’s (2009, 2011) work which relates the SRA to education in Bolivia, in my research the teacher can be conceptualised as a “strategic actor” embedded in an
environment which might facilitate or hinder the strategies of teachers. The impact of teachers’ strategies is twofold: there is both partial transformation of the context and strategic learning for the actor, both of which are relevant for future strategy (Hay, 2002).

The SRA as applied to education can be related to discussions in the CIE literature on the relation between structure and agency and the issue of reproduction and transformation in education. Education as political, social and cultural institution is both “a space for construction and reproduction of values, attitudes and identities” (Walsh 2010b: 79). In addition, schools are institutions through which recognition claims are made but which can also support or maintain current injustice (May & Sleeter, 2010: 12; Tikly & Barret, 2009: 16; Vavrus, 2010: 21). Hence, teachers have complex roles in processes of educational and social transformation.

The following two sections discuss the teacher as a strategic actor and the strategically selective education governance context of teachers. While these concepts are dialectically related, for analytical purposes I will discuss the concepts separately.

2.3.1 **Teacher as Strategic Actor**

Teacher’s identity is fluid, situation specific and historically contingent on power relations that constitute a society’s cultural, political, and economic practices (Vavrus, 2010: 28). Based on CIE literature (e.g. Sleeter, 1996) and literature on teacher identity (e.g. Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009), teachers’ identities may influence their strategies. For teachers to act as agents of change it is important they engage in critical self-reflection, as was argued before in the section on CIE. This also seems necessary in the context of Bolivia, where research shows that teachers can also act as agents in the reproduction of a racialised social hierarchy, viewing indigenous knowledge as backward (Canessa, 2004; Regalsky & Laurie, 2007: 240).

Educational change literature reports that teachers’ understanding of policy affects the manner in which education policy is (or is not) implemented at schools (Fullan 2001: 29; Smit, 2005). Strategies teachers adopt might be influenced by what teachers believe about their capacity, knowledge and skills to undertake tasks and responsibilities required by educational reform, including subject matter competence, levels of training and preparation and formal qualifications (Altinyelken, 2010: 32; Jansen, 2001). Also, the ways in which teachers understand their capacity to handle the emotional demands of a new policy in the context of existing stress and pressures are important to take into account (Jansen, 2001). The strategies teachers assume might depend on their job commitment (Lopes Cardozo, 2011: 169; Welmond, 2002). Job commitment may be defined as: “the motives or drivers that make people choose to become a teacher, to remain in or to leave the profession” (Kelchtermans, 2005: 1000). Also, characteristics, such as age, gender, ethnic background, languages, socio-economic class and personal experience of teachers might influence the strategies teachers adopt (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2010; Hargreaves, 2005; Lopes Cardozo, 2009, 2011).
Educational change literature suggests that teachers’ – unintended or intended – strategies may include supporting or resisting educational policies (Altinyelken, 2010; Fullan, 2001), such as the intra-/intercultural and plurilingual education initiative in Bolivia (Lopes Cardozo, 2011). This implies that teachers should not be seen as ‘a neutral conduit between policy and the child’ as this ignores teachers’ active and creative selves and the fact that they have an agenda (Schweisfurth, 2002, as cited in Altinyelken, 2010: 31).

2.3.2 Strategicall y selective context of teachers: intercultural education governance

On the other hand, teachers are embedded in a strategically selective context which enables and constraints teachers’ strategies in processes of educational transformation. Dialectic interplay between education and the broader historical, socio-economic and political context is assumed. This implies that at the state level, interculturality needs to be supported by an alternative state model that serves as framework to stimulate a critical form of intercultural education (Tubino 2005b: 95). In the case of Bolivia, this is reflected in the idea of the Pluricultural State of Bolivia.

Educational policies influence teachers’ level of agency defining obligations and authority (Vongalis-Macrow, 2007). The government and other agencies, such as the teachers unions, influence teachers’ agency and strategies in processes of educational change by setting education objectives in policies, allocation of resources and professional development (Fullan, 2001; Rogan & Grayson, 2003; Welmond, 2002). In addition, for teachers to act as agents of change for critical intercultural education, it is important they receive pre-service and in-service training that encourages a process of critical consciousness (Delany-Barmann, 2010: 198; Gay and Kirkland, 2003: 181; Lopes Cardozo, 2011; Vavrus, 2010: 28). Crucial is that theoretical or political concerns of intercultural education are translated into illustrations for pedagogy and practice within educational curriculum, materials and teacher training. However, the concept of intercultural education is often only conceptualised at an abstract theoretical level and not turned into guidelines for practice (May and Sleeter 2010: 12).

The school context, including physical resources, school management, community characteristics and the headteacher may also influence teachers’ agency and strategies in the classroom in general (Fullan, 2001; Rogan & Grayson, 2003). However, schools often resist critical multicultural approaches, “deeming them to be too destabilizing” (May & Sleeter, 2010: 12; Vavrus, 2010: 20), for example by what older teacher colleagues model and promote, the standardisation of school curricula and testing and the institutionalised model of a ‘good student’ (Flores, 2007, as cited in May & Sleeter, 2010: 12).
2.4 CONCEPTUAL SCHEME AND OPERATIONALISATION OF MAIN CONCEPTS

Critical Intercultural Education (CIE) for social transformation

**Dimensions:**
1. Critical reflection & action
2. Challenge hegemony of Western knowledge
3. Intercultural dialogue
4. Culture & identity as complex and dynamic
5. Political participation
6. Relevant education
7. Comprehensive reform school and education system

**Strategically selective context**
- Policy definitions (ASEP)
- Bolivian education governance actors’ perceptions on meaning & need intra-/intercultural and plurilingual education
- Strategies of intra-/intercultural and plurilingual education
- Perceived challenges

**Strategic actor**
- Secondary school teacher
- Personal characteristics & motivation
- Perceptions on meaning & need intra-/intercultural and plurilingual education
- Perceived challenges

**TEACHERS’ AGENCY**
- Effects of strategies: partial transformation of governance context
- Teacher strategies

**Global, Latin American and Bolivian socioeconomic and political context**

*Figure 5. Conceptual scheme, adapted from Lopes Cardozo (2011: 40)*
This conceptual scheme (Figure 5) is an adapted version of the conceptual scheme of the SRA (Hay, 2002) as applied to Bolivian teacher education by Lopes Cardozo (2009, 2011). It illustrates the main concepts of this research and their relations.

The concept of Critical Intercultural Education (CIE) is included in the scheme in the outer square and the dimensions discussed in the first part of this chapter are listed. These dimensions are used in the following chapters to theoretically analyse the education policy, perceptions and strategies of governance actors (government authorities, civil society actors and academics), and secondary school teachers’ perceptions, agency and strategies.

The strategically selective context is defined as a multilevel education governance context. Main focus is on policy definitions of intra-/intercultural and plurilingual education included in the ASEP law, governance actors’ perceptions (meaning and need) and strategies in relation to intra-/intercultural and plurilingual education and the secondary school contexts, as represented by the box on the left side of the conceptual scheme. The small double arrow between the ASEP law and governance actors’ perceptions and strategies means that education governance actors (government authorities and civil society actors) are also strategic actors that may support or resist the policy definitions. Perceptions (of education governance actors and teachers) are defined as “the way in which something is regarded, understood, or interpreted” (Oxford dictionary, 2010). Education governance strategies are defined as the development of policies, programmes and additional resources in relation to intra-/intercultural and plurilingual education. In addition, in line with the ‘politics of intercultural education’ approach discussed before, the conceptual scheme presents a multiscalar context by including different layers representing Bolivian secondary education, the Bolivian education sector and the global, regional and national socioeconomic and political context.

The strategic actor is defined as the secondary school teacher. With regard to agential factors, main focus is on teachers’ perceptions on the meaning and need of intra-/intercultural and plurilingual education. In addition, some attention is paid to other aspects of teachers that might influence their strategies, such as motivation to teach. Teachers’ agency reflects the dialectic interaction between the teacher and the wider intra-/intercultural and plurilingual education governance framework, indicated by the double arrow in the middle of the conceptual scheme. Teachers’ agency is defined as teachers’ space for manoeuvre to develop strategies within a strategically selective context (Lopes Cardozo, 2011: 234). Teachers’ strategies are the result of the dialectic interplay between structural and agential factors, or teachers’ agency. Teachers’ strategies are defined as intuitive and explicit strategic actions (Lopes Cardozo, 2011: 39).

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The dotted arrows and boxes represent the results of teachers’ strategies: partial transformation of the context and strategic learning. Taking into account the fairly short time frame of this study, however, it is not possible to draw conclusions on the effects of teachers’ strategies. Nevertheless, by discussing teachers agency and strategies, attention is paid to prospects for continuity and change within education and society.

The strategically selective context of intra-/intercultural and plurilingual education governance is the main theme in chapter 3 of this thesis. Understanding teachers as strategic actors is the focus of chapter 4. The conclusions chapter answers my main research question on teachers’ agency to adopt strategies for intra-/intercultural and plurilingual education, supporting or hindering processes of critical intercultural education.

2.5 Research Approach
The importance of teachers in processes of educational and social transformation is well established within the previously discussed critical literature on intercultural education. Yet, although teachers play an important role in the education system, more often than not, they are a silent voice during policy formulation, which implies that local knowledge, or teachers’ understandings and experiences of policy in their particular contexts, might be underplayed, discounted or simply ignored (Smit 2005). To obtain insight into ‘local knowledge’ (Smit 2005: 292) on the intercultural education reform in Bolivia, a qualitative research approach was adopted. Ethnographic research methods were used (Bryman, 2012: 432) including document study, over 70 semi-structured interviews, 14 classroom observations, and over 20 surveys with teachers at formal secondary schools in La Paz (urban) and Trinidad (urban) from August 2011 to January 2012.

2.6 Selection of Respondents and Research Methods
As illustrated by the conceptual scheme of this research presented previously, the units of analysis of this research are twofold: the multilevel education governance context and secondary school teachers as strategic actors. Education governance actor respondents were purposively selected (Ritchie & Lewis, 2003: 78) and accessed by phone, email or in person. In addition, I made use of the ‘snowball method’ to select and gain access to actors (Ritchie & Lewis, 2003: 94). One interview, with the director of SEDUCA La Paz, was arranged through the Embassy of the Netherlands where I worked as an intern. The three schools in La Paz and the two schools in Trinidad were purposively selected (Ritchie & Lewis, 2003: 78). All schools were urban, public secondary schools. Access to the schools was obtained through the headteachers who I provided with a leaflet explaining my research, assuring confidentiality and providing my contact details (Appendix 6). All respondents gave verbal consent to participate in the research. Interviews were audio-recorded when permission was given, i.e. in the majority of interviews.
As discussed previously, this research takes a qualitative approach. Different research methods were used to triangulate findings. In this research, triangulation is understood as extending in understanding through the use of multiple perspectives or different types of ‘readings’ (Ritchie & Lewis, 2003: 44). The semi-structured interview method was used mostly and appeared useful for this study as it focuses on how the interviewee frames and understands issues and events (Bryman, 2012: 470-472). Furthermore, this method allowed for some flexibility in how to reply and to raise additional issues which was useful bearing in mind the exploratory nature of the study (Bryman, 2012: 470-472). Other qualitative research methods I used to triangulate the findings from interviews were (participatory) observations, document analysis and a survey. Also, during the entire research process I took field notes, describing my observations and initial reflections on them. These notes were useful for later theoretical elaboration of the data.

Appendix 1 provides an overview of all research activities subdivided into activities at the education governance level and at the school level (categorised per school). In the discussion of findings, research activity numbers from appendix 1 are cited. The following section provides additional information on the respondents and data collection at these two levels.

2.7 COLLECTION OF DATA

2.7.1 EDUCATION GOVERNANCE CONTEXT

Regarding the education governance context, findings were collected through document study, interviews and observations at different levels including the Bolivian national Ministry of Education actors and ASEP education law, local education government authorities, civil society actors, academics and the institutional context of secondary schools. Over 30 education actors were interviewed. These actors are briefly introduced below.

Education governance actors

Government education authorities
At the level of the Ministry of Education (MoE) I interviewed the head of the Unit of Intra-/intercultural and Plurilingual Education Policies, the Vice-minister of Alternative and Special Education and the head of the Plurinational Institute of Educational Investigations. I also attended an official presentation of the basic national curriculum at the MoE. My research also includes views from the educational directions at departmental (Departmental Directions for Education, SEDUCA) and district levels (Educational district).10 I also interviewed coordinators

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10 The different levels of the administrative structure of the education system in Bolivia include the: Ministry of Education and Culture (MoE); General Directions for Pluricultural Education; Departmental Directions for Education (SEDUCA); Zone Directions (Educational district); Nuclear Directions (cluster of
of the Specialised Unit for Continuous Training (UNEFCO) in La Paz and Trinidad, a governmental institution, established in 2009, responsible for providing training to in-service educational personnel, including teachers.\(^{11}\) I attended an in-service teacher training workshop organised by UNEFCO in Trinidad about the main objectives of ASEP. Finally, in Trinidad I interviewed the academic director of the Escuela Superior de Formación del Maestro (ESFM) Clara Parada Pinto, the pre-service teacher training institute in Trinidad.

**Civil society actors**

Interviews were held with various civil society actors in Bolivia; first, the coordinator of the national committee of the Indigenous Education Councils (CEPOs). The CEPOs were established in 1994 to encourage social participation in education of indigenous groups in Bolivia. The CEPOs work under the guidance of the National Coordination Committee. The eight CEPOs\(^{12}\) participate in the development of educational policy, representing the various indigenous groups in Bolivia (http://www.cepos.bo; 3).

This research also includes perceptions of three urban teacher union leaders at the national level and at the level of the federations of La Paz and Trinidad. Two teacher unions are active in Bolivia: the CONMERB a rural teacher union, and CTEUB an urban teacher union (Contreras & Talavera Simoni 2005: 101). All teachers are obliged to join a teacher union and have to donate 0.5% of their salary (Contreras & Talavera 2004b & Regalsky and Laurie 2007 as cited in Lopes Cardozo, 2011: 122). Unions play a powerful role in negotiating (supportively or resistively) government policies (Contreras & Talavera, 2005: 95; Lopes Cardozo, 2009, 2011).

Also, the coordinator of the CEMSE, Centre for Services in Education was interviewed. This centre provides services to public educational units, such as in-service teacher training in relation to cultural diversity and health (http://www.cemse.org.bo; 6). CEMSE receives funding from the Bolivian MoE and from national and international organisations (6).

Additionally, the director of CEBIAE, the Bolivian Centre for Educational Research and Action, was interviewed. This is a non-governmental eucenmical organisation specialised in education and educational research. CEBIAE’s programmes are sponsored by national and international donors (http://www.cebiae.org/14).

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\(^{11}\) At the end of 2009, based on Supreme Decree Nº 0156 the Institute of Permanent Training (INFOPER) was transformed in the Specialised Unit of Continuous Training (UNEFCO) for training of education personnel. UNEFCO has offices in Tarija (national office), Beni, Cochabamba, Oruro, Potosí, Chuquisaca, La Paz, Pando, Santa Cruz. (Website of UNEFCO: http://www.unefco.edu.bo)

\(^{12}\) Consejo Educativo Aymara (CEA), Consejo Educativo Amazonicano Multiétnico (CEAM), Consejo Educativo de la Nación Quechua (CENAQ), Consejo Educativo del Pueblo Indígena Guarany (CEPIG), Consejo Educativo del Pueblo Originario Chiquitano (CEPOCH), Consejo Educativo del Pueblo Originario Guarani (CEPOG), Consejo Educativo del Pueblo Originario Indígena Moxeno (CEPOIM) and the Consejo Educativo del Pueblo Yuracaré (CEPY).
**Academics**

Semi-structured interviews were held with 14 academics, including educational researchers in La Paz; the academic coordinator and a researcher of the Racism Observatory, an initiative of the Universidad de la Cordillera (Bolivia) and *Defensor del Pueblo* (national ombudsman) to promote investigations, developments and actions to fight racism in Bolivia; lecturers at the Universidad Autónoma del Beni in Trinidad and the educational specialist of the Embassy of the Netherlands in La Paz. Mr Felix Patzi, Aymara sociologist and ex-Minister of Education of Bolivia was also among the academics interviewed. Patzi had an important role in drafting the current Law ASEP (Hornberger, 2009; Howard, 2009: 589).

**Secondary school context**

Some characteristics of the secondary schools, located in La Paz and Trinidad, included in the present study are presented in Table 2.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 2. Some characteristics of schools included in this study</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>La Paz</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>School 1</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Region</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Type</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educational levels offered</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time classes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nr. of students&lt;sup&gt;15&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student population</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nr. of teachers&lt;sup&gt;16&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
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<tr>
<td>Male</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**2.7.2 Teachers as strategic actors**

To explore teachers' perceptions and strategies I carried out research at the five schools introduced in the previous section. In total, 51 teachers from five schools participated in this research. I conducted semi-structured interviews with 42 teachers, 23 teachers responded to the

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<sup>13</sup> See also: http://www.ucordillera.edu.bo/documentos/investigaciones/Proceso%20Constituyente.pdf

<sup>14</sup> Interviews and observations were only carried out at the secondary school level

<sup>15</sup> Data received from headteachers

<sup>16</sup> Data obtained from headteacher
survey and 14 classroom observations were carried out. Teacher respondents differ in gender, subjects taught, educational background (ranging from not following pre-service training to having a degree from University), years of teaching (from recently starting to on the point of retirement) and ethnic self-identification. Regarding the latter, in La Paz teacher respondents self-identified as Aymara, Quechua, Tacana and Mestizo in the survey. At schools 4 and 5 in Trinidad, teachers identified themselves as Moxeo, Mestizo and Aymara. Also, the headteachers of the five schools included in this study were interviewed. At schools 4 and 5, the presidents of the Parents Commissions were interviewed. When discussing the findings in the following chapters, teachers’ numbers included in Appendix 1 are indicated.

The interview guide is provided in Appendix 2. Interviews took place during breaks, lesson-free hours or after school hours. Unstructured observations were conducted of infrastructure, resource availability, interactions between actors in schools and school activities, such as teacher meetings, school fairs and graduation ceremonies. Regarding classroom observations, information was recorded with use of an observation guide (Appendix 5). A survey (Appendix 4) provided some additional insights into the background of teachers. In addition, the survey included open questions on intra-/intercultural and plurilingual education that allowed me to triangulate answers with interview data and to reach teachers not participating in an interview.

2.8 ANALYSIS OF DATA
Interviews were held in Spanish. The majority of interviews were audio recorded and transcribed verbatim in Spanish. In case no permission was given to record notes were made during or directly after the interview. Research notes from observations and interviews were worked out on the same day as the observations or interviews. Data analysis has been of qualitative nature. The analysis of written data, collected from interviews, observations, fieldwork notes, policy documents and surveys was conducted using the data analysis software Dedoose®. Data analysis involved organising, coding and categorising main issues and themes. During the writing process, data was translated from Spanish to English. In chapters 3 and 4 of this thesis, the findings are linked to the CIE dimensions defined in the theoretical framework. CIE dimensions were not mentioned in interviews but were used to link data to theory and to explore issues for further research. To guarantee anonymity of my respondents referencing within Dedoose® was done by letters and numbers instead of names.

17 The 1994 Education Reform established that each educational unit needs to have a Junta Escolar made up of teachers, parents and representatives of the community (Galindo Soza, 2011: 19).
18 With the exception of the interview with the educational expert of the Embassy of the Netherlands in La Paz which was held in Dutch.
19 See http://www.dedoose.com
2.9 RESEARCH LIMITATIONS & CHALLENGES
During the research process I faced some limitations and challenges which I will briefly discuss here. First, findings of this research cannot be generalised to Bolivian teachers or education in general as this research is limited in terms of number and type of educational institutions and geographical locations included, not representing the wide diversity of Bolivian education. Note that Bolivian education also includes private institutions, more educational levels, non-formal initiatives and education in rural areas.

Second, in relation to my findings on teachers’ strategies, it is important to point out that, whilst many school observations were made, only a limited number of classroom observations were made in most schools (see Appendix 1), mainly due to limitations in research time and hesitation on behalf of teachers to let me enter their classrooms.

Finally, as Spanish is not my mother tongue this may have somewhat restricted data collection and analysis.

2.10 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS
During the research process I reflected on ethics of which I outline some major considerations here. The current government promotes intra-/intercultural and plurilingual education from a decolonisation perspective. With this discourse, the government aims to depart intellectually from the hegemony of Western knowledge and to promote recognition of indigenous knowledges. Ethical considerations within this latter context are that my research is partly based upon ‘Western’ academic theories and that I am educated as researcher in ‘Western’ schools and university, representing this Western knowledge hegemony. My research, therefore, risks being constructed and considered in such a way as to legitimate the voices of Western ‘experts’ while undermining those of (indigenous) peoples within Bolivia (Escobar, 1995, as cited in Scheyvens & Leslie, 2000). Still, in my research I aim to privilege the perspectives and experiences of the Bolivian educational actors. In addition, I aimed at using a theoretical framework sensitive to the historical and current Bolivian context. I hope that the outcomes of this research provide useful insights for Bolivian policymakers, teachers and other educational stakeholders. In addition, I hope that my efforts to engage in reflexivity (Bryman 2012: 394) allow me to break with a long standing history of imperialist and exploitative research.

A second important consideration refers to reciprocity and relationship-building (Lan & Jones, 2005: 3; Smith, 1999: 15; Smith, 2008: 97). Research ethics should include establishing, maintaining and nurturing respectful and reciprocal relationships (Lan & Jones, 2005; Smith, 2008), which is also in line with the ethnographic methodology of this thesis. One contribution

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20 Lan and Jones (2005: 3) point out that this notion presents a strong challenge to more positivist notions of ‘objectivity’ and ‘non-intervention’ in research. This dimension of ethics is in line with my choice of a qualitative methodology and methods of semi-structured interviews leaving space for teachers’ own input.
to building relationships of trust was done by being transparent towards respondents about the aim of my research and my own role in the research. 'Reporting back' to the participants and 'sharing knowledge' presumes the principles of reciprocity and feedback (Smith, 1999: 15). By adding a summary of the research outcomes in Spanish and disseminating this summary to my research respondents, I hope that the research findings may reach those who have provided me with assistance. In addition, I have aimed to disseminate the preliminary findings of my research while in Bolivia: by discussing my preliminary findings with students at the University UMSA in La Paz during an anthropology and education course and by presenting the preliminary findings at the Embassy of the Netherlands in La Paz.

A third key dimension of research ethics relevant to my research is ‘uncovering marginalised knowledges’ (Lan & Jones, 2005: 4-5), which is in line with Latin American coloniality debates. In my thesis I try to identify teachers’ unique perspectives and experiences. Uncovering teachers’ voices might contribute to designing policies in a way that is responsive and relevant to their concerns and needs. Qualitative research methods allowed for exploring teachers’ perspectives (see also Smit, 2005).

Finally, confidentiality was assured by keeping the identity of participants private if they so wished, so that they are not personally identifiable within my thesis work (Scheyvens, Nowak & Scheyvens, 2003). In addition, I ensured that any field notes, tapes or transcripts were stored in a safe place and that information contained was used only for the purposes of my research (Scheyvens et al., 2003).

This chapter intended to clarify how I approached my research questions theoretically and methodologically. The next chapter is the first chapter based on data analysis, discussing the intercultural education governance context of Bolivia.
CHAPTER 3 POLICY DEFINITIONS, EDUCATION GOVERNANCE ACTORS’ PERCEPTIONS AND STRATEGIES OF INTRA-/INTERCULTURAL AND PLURILINGUAL EDUCATION

This chapter deals with the Bolivian intercultural education governance framework or the strategically selective context (SRA, Hay 2002) of teachers. The sub-questions that are answered in this chapter are as follows:

Main sub-question of this chapter:

3. What are the policy definitions, perceptions and related strategies of education governance actors with regard to intra-/intercultural and plurilingual education?

Sub-questions per section of chapter:

3.1 What is the historical and current educational context of Bolivia?
3.2 What are the ASEP policy definitions of intra-/intercultural and plurilingual education?
3.3 What are the perceptions of the government, civil society actors and academics on the meaning and need of intra-/intercultural and plurilingual education?
3.4 What are education governance actors’ (government authorities and civil society actors) strategies of intra-/intercultural and plurilingual education, understood as the development and implementation of policies, programmes and additional resources?

The findings in this chapter are directly related to the theoretical CIE dimensions, repeated below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theoretical dimensions Critical Intercultural Education (CIE)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Critical reflection &amp; action</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Challenge the hegemony of Western knowledge (including language)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Intercultural dialogue</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Culture &amp; identity as complex and dynamic – not essentializing culture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Political participation in ‘framing’ education</td>
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<tr>
<td>6. Relevant education</td>
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<tr>
<td>7. Comprehensive reform of school and education system</td>
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</table>

3.1 HISTORICAL AND CURRENT SOCIO-ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL CONTEXT OF EDUCATION IN BOLIVIA
"The current school is not an invention in the present but is product of political, social and economic developments in the past" (Yapu, 2009: 15)

In line with the politics of intercultural education approach introduced in the theoretical chapter, this section discusses the historical and current socioeconomic and political context of education in Bolivia to contextualise the ASEP education reform.

3.1.1 From Assimilation to Decolonising Education

Until the 15th century, the area currently known as Bolivia was dominated by various civilisations; the Tiahuanaco, the Aymara kingdoms and the Inca Empire (Klein, 2011: 11-20). When in 1532 the Inca Empire was weak after civil war, the Spanish coloniser conquered the region and for almost 400 years the Spanish coloniser appropriated resources in the area, such as the mines as source of silver, and exploited the labour force provided by settled Indians (Klein, 2011: 29-31, 34; 40). In 1825 the declaration of independence was signed and the new state, the Republic of Bolivia, was named after freedom fighter Simón Bolívar (Klein, 2011: 100-101).

After independence from Spain in 1825 (Klein, 2011), though colonisation had ended, colonial structures in Bolivian society and education continued. In the early 1900s, Bolivian policy used education to “remake Indians into productive peasants” to contribute to the progress of the Bolivian state on the conditions of the ruling classes (Larson, 2005: 34, as cited in Drange, 2007). This implied erasing indigenous languages, communal memories, traditions, and identities (Larson, 2005: 34, as cited in Drange, 2007). During the 1930s some indigenous educational initiatives, including the Warisata initiative (Talavera Simoni, 2011: 89-98), were developed but the resulting schools were closed down by force soon after 1935, because the state realised that these developments conflicted with its policy of cultural assimilation (Taylor, 2004: 5). After the 1952 Revolution, the Education Act of 1955 was signed into law. For the first time in Bolivian history every inhabitant was granted the right to education (Drange, 2011), in line with international developments in the 1950s and 1960s recognising education as a human right (Yapu, 2009). It is, however, important to note that education at the time aimed at assimilating and civilising the indigenous population into a monolingual and monocultural nation (Canessa, 2004; Drange, 2011). This neglect of indigenous values, principles and knowledge implied that the indigenous peoples were denied their own cultural identity (Drange, 2011). Since the 1970s military governments had tried to change education without success, mostly due to lack of cooperation of teacher associations (Cárdenas, 2006 as cited in Drange, 2011).

In 1982 a democratic government was established, bringing an end to the era of military authoritarian regimes, but with the problem of hyperinflation (Klein, 2011: 239-241). During the
In the 1980s, the Latin American region struggled with a severe economic crisis (Klein, 2011: 241). In the same period the World Bank and International Monetary Fund reinforced Structural Adjustment Programmes in Latin America and other countries in the South, including in Bolivia, aggravating austerity and reduced public education expenditures, also in Bolivia (Klein, 2011: 244, 256; Reimers, 1994: 119, 124-125). Neoliberal policies were extended under the regime of Sánchez de Lozada (1993-1997) by major privatisation of state companies (Howard, 2009: 586; Klein, 2011: 257-259). On the other hand, the 1990s were characterised by a rise of indigenous movements with new indigenous leaders in Bolivia, as in wider Latin America, demanding changes in what they perceived to be their unequal treatment from the state in terms of agricultural prices, provisions for credit, education, health, and respect for their cultures (Klein, 2011: 243).

As a result of external assistance from UNESCO and the World Bank in the form of the structural adjustment policies, it became possible to achieve reform of the education sector (López and Carlos 2006 as cited in Drange, 2011). After Bolivia ratified the ILO Convention No. 169 on Indigenous and Tribal peoples in 1991, the Intercultural Bilingual Education (IBE) programme was introduced in 1992 and was formalised in the Bolivian Educational Act in 1994 (Sichra, Guzmán, Terán & García, 2007: 13). This change in educational policy was in line with global developments during the 1990s directed towards more and better education, such as the 1990 Jomtien and 2000 Dakar Education for All conferences (Lopes Cardozo, 2009; Yapu, 2009). The 1994 Reform was revolutionary as it was the first time in history that the Bolivian government officially recognised Bolivia as a pluricultural and plurilingual country (Drange, 2011; Howard, 2009). The Reform encouraged popular participation and IBE with the financial support of the World Bank and other international donors (Howard, 2009; Taylor, 2004). IBE encouraged education provided in both an indigenous language and Spanish (Howard, 2009; Drange, 2011).

Towards the end of the 1990s, however, a climate of anti-globalisation and anti-neoliberal sentiments grew across the Latin American region, resulting in opposition to the 1994 Education Reform which was part of a set of neoliberal reforms (Howard, 2009; Yapu, 2009). These critiques grew across society at large, coming to a head in 2000 with the popular mobilisations against the government’s water privatisation scheme and protests in October 2003 in reaction to a proposal to export natural gas (Barr, 2005: 73; Laurie et al., 2002, as cited in Howard, 2009: 586; Klein, 2011: 262) and also the left-wing teacher unions strongly opposed the 1994 Education Reform (Howard, 2009: 586-587).

As a result of political parties’ loss of legitimacy and the rise of indigenous social movements, the Movimiento al Socialismo (MAS) led by Evo Morales came into power at the end of 2005 (Klein, 2011: 264). The 1994 Law was annulled shortly after Evo Morales had been
elected (Drange, 2007). The current government and several intellectuals criticise the 1994 Education Law for promoting cultures living together side by side without any real interaction and argue that intercultural education is more than only bilingualism (Drange, 2011). Critique also includes that IBE, as included in the previous reform was regarded as only relevant for the indigenous peoples (Albó, 2011: 216; Delany-Barmann, 2010: 192) and only implemented in rural areas (Albó 2011: 216). In addition, bilingual education was in practice often seen as transitional, with Spanish being the main language upon graduation (Albó 2001, as cited in Howard, 2009; Albó, 2011: 221). Howard (2009) underlines the paradox between, on the one hand, the neoliberal pull towards modernising the state and, on the other hand, recognising and responding to the pluricultural nature of society.

Within the context of anti-globalisation and anti-neoliberal sentiments, since Morales came into office, the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund have been excluded from decision-making and financing mechanisms for the educational sector in Bolivia (Lopes Cardozo, 2009). The government envisages a radical transformation of Bolivian society, and is stimulating increasing participation of sectors that were historically marginalised. After re-election of president Evo Morales, in December 2010 Bolivia passed a new Education Law (ASEP) recognising indigenous knowledges and equality of opportunity (Howard, 2009; Drange, 2011).

3.1.2 Socio-economic and Political Context of Education in Bolivia

In 2008, government expenditure on education as a percentage of GDP was 5%, one of the highest in Latin America and the Caribbean (UNDP, 2010a: 179). Under the new Reform ASEP, public education is free and compulsory until obtaining the diploma of secondary education (ASEP, 2010, Art. 1.8), which increases the years of compulsory education as in the previous reform education was compulsory up until primary (Ley 1565-Reforma Educativa, 1994, Art. 1.2). Whereas under the 1994 Reform primary education consisted of 8 years and secondary 4 years (Ley 1565-Reforma Educativa, 1994, Art. 11 & 12), under the ASEP reform primary and secondary education will both consist of 6 years of education (ASEP, 2010, Art. 14.II). In addition, under ASEP, students at the secondary education level are required to graduate with a combined technical-humanistic degree and need to be prepared to either continue studies at higher education level or to engage in social-productive activities (ASEP, 2010, Art. 14.1). These policy reforms imply a large institutional re-organisation of primary and secondary education.

In 2007 an enrolment rate of 74% (of the population between 14 and 17 years old) was estimated at the secondary education level, which is relatively low, especially in comparison to almost universal enrolment in primary education (Jiménez and Vera, 2010: 6). Limited access to and completion of secondary education for groups with lower incomes continues to be one of the most important threats for the current educational system (UNDP, 2010a: 165). The GMR website of UNESCO further reports that years of schooling in Bolivia are related to factors
including ethnicity, gender, urban/rural origin, geographical location and wealth. In addition, low enrolment and completion rates may be related to the low supply of this educational service, including limited infrastructure and personnel (UDAPE, 2008: 11). In addition, quality and infrastructure is often reported to be better in private than public education (Ocampo & Foronda, 2009).

The main pillars of the ASEP law (December 2010) are decolonisation, intra-, intercultural and plurilingual education, community involvement and productivity (Drange, 2011). Decolonisation can be seen as the main focus (Drange, 2011: 33; Lopes Cardozo, 2011: 105), and refers to the need to encourage all Bolivians, especially the majority indigenous sectors that were and continue to be ‘colonised’ by neo-colonial groups, to liberate themselves from discrimination and oppression (Albó, 2011: 223). Community education refers to involvement of a wider community in education (ASEP, 2010 Art. 1.9; Drange, 2011: 34). Productive education refers to both intellectual and practical production (ASEP, 2010 Art. 3.9). There is, however, still an unclear conceptualisation of these pillars (Lopes Cardozo, 2011: 106). The policy definitions of intra-/intercultural and plurilingual education, central in this thesis, will be elaborated in the next section of this chapter.

For teachers to implement these new concepts of the ASEP law, transformations in teacher training are required. Teacher training under the ASEP reform involves three phases: pre-service teacher training; in-service continuous training; and postgraduate training for in-service teachers. The pre-service teacher training, at the Escuelas Superiores de Formación de Maestros – pre-service teacher training institutes (ESFM) has been extended from 3 to 5 years under the ASEP law. Teachers graduate with a University degree (licenciatura). For in-service teachers ‘continuous training’ is planned to be provided by the institute UNEFCO which was established in 2009. Third, postgraduate training is planned to be offered to teachers that already have a university degree, with support of the Universidad Pedagógica in Sucre (ASEP, 2010, Art. 34-40; 10).

This section examined the historical, socio-economic and political context of education in Bolivia. The following sections analyse policy definitions and education governance actors’ perceptions and strategies of intra-/intercultural and plurilingual education.

3.2 POLICY DEFINITIONS OF INTRA-/INTERCULTURAL AND PLURILINGUAL EDUCATION AND EDUCATION GOVERNANCE ACTORS INTERPRETATIONS

21 http://public.tableausoftware.com/views/PageFourNew/Pg4Dash?:embed=y&:toolbar=no&:tabs=no
“Education is intracultural, intercultural and plurilingual in the entire education system” (ASEP law, 2010, Art. 1.6)

**Education and social transformation**

The Morales government regards the 1994 Education Reform as ‘colonial’ promoting an uncritical form of intercultural education that does not challenge power structures and reduces intercultural education mainly to bilingualism (Drange, 2011; Howard, 2009; Van Dam & Salman, 2009). Accordingly, the current government has re-defined intercultural education.

With the ASEP law the notion of intercultural education has shifted to *decolonial* intercultural education and the concept of intracultural education was introduced (Van Dam & Salman, 2009). The important role of education in social transformation is central in the new education policy. To illustrate, a MoE official explained to me in an interview that “decolonisation postulates that diversity is not an obstacle but our strength (...) we aim for a decolonising education that helps to build a Plurinational State which is more equitable, more socially just. We are, therefore, speaking of Vivir Bien. Vivir Bien means that all will live in equal conditions, but respecting our diversity (...) every Bolivian [men and women], from the West, the East, the indigenous and non-indigenous, we all have the same rights and opportunities” (7). Another official from the MoE further explained to me how developments at society level may foster a critical form of intercultural education:

> *The context is different. It is one thing to practise interculturality in a neoliberal society; it is another in a state which is struggling to become more and more Plurinational (...) It is not the same interculturality (...) there is functional interculturality and critical interculturality; the functional means showing diversity but not addressing inequality, while the critical form recognises and addresses the causes that hinder equal dialogue at the moment (10).*

In other words, structures within Bolivian society need to be changed so that what is learned in school is not negated by society’s structures; development towards a Plurinational State then may encourage a critical form interculturality. As the leader of the national urban teachers’ union, however, critically remarked, it is important to bear in mind that this is a slow process and that we cannot claim that Bolivia is now suddenly ‘plurinational’ (5). The main question is to what extent we can already speak of Bolivia as a Plurinational State.
The education policy introduces the concepts of intraculturality and interculturality. While interculturality focuses on dialogue with the 'other', intraculturality emphasises development within the own culture (see Box 2).

**Intercultural education**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Interculturality</th>
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<tr>
<td>The development of interrelation and interaction of the knowledges, skills, science and technology of each culture with other cultures, which strengthens the own identity and interaction on equal terms between all cultures in Bolivia and with the rest of the world. Interaction between different communities and cultures needs to be encouraged, developing attitudes of valuation, coexistence and dialogue between different world visions to show and universalise the own wisdom (ASEP, 2010, Art. 6.II).</td>
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</tbody>
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The actors who were interviewed for this study generally perceived Interculturality as relations to other cultures or knowledges in equality of conditions, in agreement with the intercultural dialogue as defined in the theoretical framework (dimension 3) and ASEP’s definition of interculturality. A MoE official commented: “we cannot only work from the so-called established scientific knowledges (...) but we combine the knowledge of the population, the people, starting from their identity, with the knowledge of all the other cultures. This encounter is very important” (10). The director of SEDUCA Trinidad explained interculturality as a reality where “we all have the possibility to relate in a horizontal way, without verticality, without the domination of one culture over another” (29).

In agreement with the ASEP law’s notion that interaction between different cultures needs to encourage attitudes of valuation, academic and former Bolivian Minister of Education Felix Patzi explained intercultural education as follows: “you will learn about other cultures in education and in this way you learn to value these cultures and you realise that there are also other cultures different from your own, this is interculturality, learning about their beliefs, institutions, everyday life and languages. The main objective is to encourage the belief that we are all equal, that other people exist just like you and therefore deserve to be respected just as you also deserve to respected” (30).

**Intracultural education**

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Intraculturality</th>
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<tr>
<td>Promotes the restoration, empowerment, development of and cohesion of the cultures of the indigenous peasant nations and peoples, intercultural and Afro-Bolivian populations for the</td>
</tr>
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</table>
consolidation of the Plurinational State, based on equity, solidarity, complementarity, reciprocity and justice. The educational curriculum should incorporate the various knowledges of the worldviews of the indigenous peoples, the intercultural communities and Afro-Bolivians (ASEP, 2010, Art. 6.1).

Intraculturality was generally understood as taking students’ specific linguistic, cultural and institutional contexts as a starting point for education (30). This may then strengthen the own identity both from an individual and collective perspective (7). It was generally considered important to recognise ourselves, to feel proud of where we are from, of who we are and our history (5). This was particularly seen as important for the various indigenous groups that have suffered a history of cultural and political injustice. For a long time indigenous peoples, in an ‘Occidentalised education system’, learnt to be ashamed of themselves, to negate their origins, their last names, their language and culture, and to only want what is foreign, different (14). Indigenous languages were not seen as languages but as dialects (3). In contrast, the imagined intracultural education should recover and revalue indigenous knowledges and languages (8). An important task for the indigenous peoples, therefore, is to systematise their own knowledges and to develop these into a curriculum (3).

This intracultural process is crucial to eventually achieve interculturality. Intraculturality allows us to relate ourselves to others without fear of acculturation (7). That is to say, to achieve a horizontal dialogue between Indigenous and Western knowledges (3). To put it differently, intercultural dialogue cannot be achieved without decolonisation of power relations (Grosfoguel, 2009: 27).

It was perceived that intraculturality distinguishes the new ASEP reform from its precedent, the 1994 education law. It was generally thought that the 1994 reform worked to assimilate indigenous students into an education system as defined by dominant groups in society. Interculturality was understood as ‘translation’; Spanish or Occidental knowledge was simply translated to indigenous languages but indigenous knowledges were not recognised nor included (8).

**Plurilingual education**

Another important pillar of the education law is plurilingual education: education in the native, Spanish and a foreign language. Depending on where the school is located, the first language of instruction will either be Spanish or an indigenous language. In trilingual or plurilingual populations or communities, a community committee will decide upon the language(s) of instruction. In addition, ASEP aims for all students to learn a foreign language (ASEP, 2010, Art.7). An official of the MoE commented the foreign language in education will in practice be
English, French or Portuguese (7). The Law states that education needs to start in the mother tongue and that its use is a pedagogical need in all aspects of its development, in support of CIE dimension 6 (relevant education for all students). In addition, including indigenous languages within education challenges the hegemony of Western languages (CIE dimension 2). The learning of a second language may then help to communicate with other cultural groups in Bolivia and a foreign language to communicate with knowledges in the world, facilitating CIE dimension 3 (intercultural dialogue).

The head of the unit of intra-/intercultural and plurilingual education of the MoE pointed out that ASEP’s plurilinguism contrasts with “bilinguism from translation” of the 1994 Bolivian education reform; instead of translating educational contents to indigenous languages, indigenous languages should become instruments to develop knowledge to be included within the education system (7). In other words, rather than using indigenous languages only as a way to facilitate the transition to Spanish knowledges and language, ASEP’s plurilingual education is supposed to support the development of indigenous languages and knowledges alongside that of Spanish or Western language and knowledge. This idea is also reflected in the ASEP law which states that languages will become “instruments of communication, development and production of knowledges in the Plurinational Education System” (ASEP, 2010, Art.7).

Although most governance actors agreed plurilinguism is important to support intra- and intercultural education in Bolivia, the majority of respondents highlighted challenges for implementation of plurilingual education in practice, such as teachers’ lack of knowledge of indigenous languages, limited language training opportunities for teachers and a lack of consensus on the alphabet of these languages.

**Participation in defining education**

The ASEP law can be seen as a reflection of the quests of indigenous social movements for education that recognise (Fraser, 2007) their cultures and languages. After many years of political “misframing”, whereby indigenous peoples could not participate in defining education, they now demand active participation in framing relevant education that includes their knowledges and is taught in their languages (see also Aikman, 2011 for similar developments in the African context). In agreement with CIE dimension 5 (political participation), the ASEP law was developed with participation of various educational and indigenous actors and the Law encourages further participation of these actors in the development of the educational curriculum.

**Perceived role of teacher (education)**
The new education policy states as objective of teacher education to educate “professionals who are critical, reflective, innovative, investigators; committed to democracy, social transformations and the full inclusion of all Bolivians” and “teachers with a high academic level in both the area of specialisation and the pedagogical area, on the basis of an understanding of reality, the cultural identity and the socio-historical processes of the country” (ASEP, 2010, Art. 33).

In the new education discourse teachers are envisioned to act as agents of intercultural education. At the same time, civil society actors and academics interviewed highlighted a gap between this discourse and current educational realities in Bolivian schools.

The way teachers interpret interculturality is important for the way they implement it in their schools. The coordinator of CEMSE commented that “When at the beginning Law 1565 spoke of incorporating interculturality, many of the teachers incorporated it starting from folklore, so well we talk about interculturality, we organise a fair, you dance, right” (6). A researcher from the Racism Observatory warned for situations that are “quite artificial, to say, come in a typical dress, but nevertheless the methods of the class and the contents of the classes continue to be the same. It is as if, only the dress, the protocol, is sufficient to be more intercultural” (16). Besides contradicting CIE dimension 4, such interpretations of intercultural education, by relegating culture to extracurricular events, do not encourage comprehensive school reform (CIE dimension 7).

For teachers to become agents of educational and social transformation, teachers need to go through transformation themselves. It is important for teachers to engage in critical reflection on the self and one’s reality, in line with CIE dimension 1 (critical action & reflection). A lecturer at the UAB in Trinidad argued: “The teacher, I believe, also needs to learn to identify oneself first. Recognise who oneself is. So I believe first the teacher needs to learn to identify oneself; who is he? Where am I from? (...) As we are very diverse, so everyone knows his reality, knows his context and within this framework one teaches” (20). Teaching from one’s own reality is in line with CIE dimension 6 (relevant education for all students) and ASEP’s definition of intraculturality. The coordinator of CEMSE, however, pointed out that in practice this is not easy as “teachers have a certain history and during training workshops we have for example asked ‘when do you speak Aymara?’, many of them answered that [they] only [speak it] at home because at other places they feared discrimination” (6).

For teachers to act as agents of intercultural education, teacher education needs to stimulate teachers to critically reflect on their own background and (in)justice in their society (dimension 1). This means transformation of teacher training, as proposed in the new education policy. As one of the academics interviewed commented “The Education Reform [ASEP] encourages critical thinking, but in reality teachers do not have these skills (...) they have been educated in a school of repeating, repeating, repeating, reciting. This is a reality of the community.
They teach students starting from memorisation, but do not teach critical analysis and thinking” (9).

It is clear from the above that the new intercultural education governance discourse in general reflects a more critical approach towards education. Intraculturality means relevant education (dimension 6), starting from students’ specific contexts. Intraculturality implies political participation (dimension 5) of the various indigenous groups in defining their own education, challenging the hegemony of Western knowledge (dimension 2). This process of intraculturality is crucial to achieve intercultural dialogue (3). For teachers to act as agents of a critical intercultural education it is important they reflect on their own backgrounds and (in)justice in their own context (CIE dimension 1). Teacher education has an important role in stimulating critical reflection and action.

3.3 OPPOSING PERCEPTIONS OF EDUCATION GOVERNANCE ACTORS
While the majority of governance actor respondents seem to welcome the Law’s discourse of intercultural education, interviews showed there are also resistant perceptions, supporting the theoretical notion that education governance actors can be seen as strategic political actors that can both support and resist education reform (Hay, 2002; Lopes Cardozo, 2011).

The leader of the national level urban teacher union (CTEUB) explained the union, ideologically supporting the Communist Party of Bolivia, takes a relatively supportive position on the Law ASEP and noted that: “we support this process because we feel part of this process and have struggled for it”, indicating feelings of ownership. On the other hand, there are points of continuous struggle between the union and the MoE, such as on working conditions of teachers.22 In contrast to the relatively supportive position of the national union, an interview with the leader of the urban union of La Paz (FTEULP), that has a Trotskyist perspective, revealed strong opposition to the Law ASEP and intra-/intercultural and plurilingual education.

The leader of the urban union of La Paz (FTEULP) critiqued intraculturality as included in the ASEP law and noted that “imagining a democratic and reciprocal interculturality in such an unequal capitalist system is entirely subjective”. The leader continued to argue that the concept of decolonisation is problematic as it asserts that “there are no economic differences in the world, but only ethnic and cultural differences (...) and that groups that are dominated economically, politically and culturally can be liberated by strengthening their culture (...) that is, decolonisation only needs to take place at a cultural level, without changing the economic structure of society.” (38). The union leader argues for more attention to economic (in)justice (Fraser 2007). In line with this observation, for the context of Bolivia, Postero (2007: 22) highlights that followers of

22 Central demands of this national level of the union concerning ASEP law are included in their proposal of “La escuela para rescatar la Patria” (The school to recover the country).
Morales do not only want to be recognised by the state and Bolivian citizens but also want their president to enact a politics of redistribution: “recognition alone may be meaningful, but because the cultural and economic dimensions are mutually constitutive, true dignity must be tied to significant changes on the material level.” Along these lines, for “interaction on equal terms”, as included in the ASEP’s definition of interculturality (Art. 6.II), redistribution is also necessary. While the leader of the urban teacher union in La Paz in this interview one-sidedly emphasises economic injustice, it seems the government’s notions of intra-/intercultural and plurilingual education focus mainly on cultural and political justice. It is important to make sure that, besides ethnicity/culture, other crucial and interlinked aspects of identity, including gender and class, are not left aside. As was highlighted before when discussing CIE dimension 4, which defines culture and identity as complex and dynamic. Following Fraser (2007: 31), as economic, cultural and political dimensions of justice stand in relations of mutual entwinement and reciprocal influence, changes need to take place at all three levels.

In addition to fierce critiques on ASEP’s intercultural education, the leader of the urban union in La Paz critiqued intraculturality. The union leader was critical of the MoE that aims to “include intuitive knowledges in the curriculum instead of encouraging development towards a scientific education.” In the words of the union leader: “knowledges of the indigenous groups are intuitive, not scientific.” According to the union leader, then, the Reform ASEP encourages “a movement backward to an education without logic” (38). The leader of the urban union in Trinidad presented a more ambiguous view in the interview. On the one hand, she commented intra-/intercultural and plurilingual education are important as “in this way our cultures and languages will not stop existing”. On the other hand, she noted that “If a citizen of Trinidad would go to the interior of the department or go abroad, the [indigenous] language would no longer be useful because no one would understand this language, no one would see us. Why? Because our language is for us, here. So I think this would also be a step backwards” (30). The latter comment reveals resistance towards plurilingual education.

Together, the perceptions of the two union leaders in La Paz and Trinidad highlight that a main challenge for implementation of intra-/intercultural and plurilingual education is continuing coloniality of knowledge within society, as discussed in the theoretical chapter, which is related to distributive and political injustice. These perceptions link to literature on Bolivian education showing resistance from parents to an indigenous language as medium of instruction because Spanish, as hegemonic language, provides better socioeconomic opportunities (Hornberger, 2002: 40; Lopes Cardozo 2011: 95). These findings suggest that education on its own cannot counteract deeply rooted ideologies favouring hegemonic knowledges and languages, or coloniality of knowledge (Walsh, 2007a). Thus, unless the wider societal context can be transformed towards valuing indigenous knowledges and languages, (and distributive
and political injustices are tackled as Fraser, 2007 says), difficulties in implementation will result, in line with findings of other research (e.g. Hornberger, 2002: 41-42).

Civil society actors and many of the academics interviewed, felt that the ASEP law will not translate into reality in the near future. Regarding the TIPNIS conflict, where the government persisted with the construction of a highway through indigenous territory despite strong protests from indigenous groups, an educational researcher expressed that “This governmental action does not reflect interculturality, respect, and implementation of rights of the indigenous peoples that are very wonderfully declared in the Constitution” (4). Respondents questioned the government’s willingness and ability to translate its discourse of ‘Vivir Bien for all’ to practice. Critique also concerned “Andino-centrismo” or Andean-centrism (Postero 2007) in government discourse. For instance, and educational researcher from La Paz argued that the TIPNIS conflict “demonstrates that the government favours the coca farmers, the Aymaras and Quechuas and does not pay attention to the peoples who live in the Amazonia” (4). Moreover, with regard to the education sector, the coordinator of CEMSE argued that “The [education] law speaks of intraculturality by for example referring to la Chacha, which is a very Aymara-centric message and we forget that we are 36 [cultural groups]” (6). A challenge for intercultural education in practice thus is that the diverse indigenous groups with their own values, knowledges and culturales are culturally recognized and politically represented in Bolivian education and society (Fraser, 2003).

In conclusion, teachers face a conflictive context where intercultural education as included in the ASEP law is both celebrated and contested. Also, many respondents show a ‘culture of mistrust’ (Lopes Cardozo 2011: 75-76) or a lack of trust in official institutions, also regarding the implementation of intercultural education. The following section focuses on education governance respondents’ strategies of intercultural education or the material dimension (Hay, 2002) of the education governance context.

3.4 EDUCATION GOVERNANCE ACTORS’ STRATEGIES OF INTERCULTURAL EDUCATION

3.4.1 CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT
The Ministry of Education (MoE) aims to implement intra-/intercultural and plurilingual education in the entire education system including all levels (early childhood, primary, secondary and higher education) and the three sub-systems (Regular Education; Alternative & Special Education; Pre-service teacher training institutes) (ASEP, 2010, Art. 1.6), in agreement with CIE dimension 7 (comprehensive reform). As an official of the MoE and academic Felix Patzi noted, the ASEP reform aims to overcome a limitation of the 1994 Bolivian education reform which restricted Intercultural and Bilingual Education (EIB) to rural areas and indigenous groups (7; 67).
The curriculum is planned to consist of an intercultural basic national curriculum and intracultural regionalized and diversified curricula that in complementarity guarantee the unity and integrity of the Plurinational Education System as well as respect for the cultural and linguistic diversity of Bolivia (ASEP, 2010, Art. 69.II). According to the ASEP law, the curriculum will be developed and implemented with participation of educational actors; and formulated and approved in coordination with the indigenous groups (ASEP, 2010, Art. 69.III), in line with CIE dimension 5 (political participation).

**National basic curriculum**

According to a MoE official, the Ministry initiated the work on the national basic curriculum soon after the new government was installed, in 2006. This process included several consultancies at the start and subsequent reflection at congresses, seminars and workshops at different levels (7; 12). At the end of 2011 a draft of the basic national curriculum was officially presented by the MoE (12). During an official presentation (30 September 2011), the Minister emphasised that this document "is not final, it is a working document. It includes elements that will lead to questions (...) the moment that the society validates the curriculum is the moment that it will be a normative document" (12). The Minister of Education encouraged the national and international actors active in the field of education that were present to assist the Ministry in providing space for participation “to the society, to the teacher and student, so that what the Ministry is doing will be multiplied with your participation (...) we aim to share this task” (12). The Minister highlighted that “the ground-level teacher with its experience and educational practices can contribute to the development of the curriculum.” And also that the MoE aims to “organise events with parents within the departments, and with students, to learn about their views” (12).

Respondents of this study were, however, quite critical regarding the opportunities provided by the Ministry of Education to participate in policy formulation (CIE dimension 5). An educational researcher criticised that the Ministry of Education “do not allow debate of their own ideas (...) while this is important, the key to development” (2). To illustrate, the director of an educational NGO informed me that a book recently developed by this NGO, which critically discusses the ASEP law, was not accepted by the Ministry and was therefore not officially presented to civil society (14).

The leader of the national urban teacher union (CTEUB) noted that the union in the first phase of curriculum development in 2006 and 2007 participated in consultations organised by the MoE. Yet, the leader commented that: “this work has frustrated us and from there until now no serious proposal has been provided by the Ministry. So what we as unions do is improving our proposal La escuela para rescatar la patria.” On the other hand, the union leader also underlined the need for the MoE to present curriculum proposals to the union so that the union can
participate in discussing the proposal to “achieve joint action and not have discrepancy” (5). Leaders of the urban teacher union in La Paz and Trinidad did not comment on any concrete occasions of participation in policy formulation or implementation. The unions have a powerful position and further studies are required to establish how the teacher unions facilitate or hinder teacher participation in policy formulation and implementation.

In terms of teacher participation in curriculum development, the general perception among teachers respondents was that there is a lack of information sharing organised by the Ministry and some, both in La Paz and Trinidad, experienced the Law as imposed. Only at school 2 in La Paz, teachers commented that some teachers of their school had been invited to the MoE to participate in the development of the curriculum for social sciences (20). Yet, a teacher from that school criticised that only a few teachers were invited while the majority of teachers were unaware of what was going on (70). These perceptions question to what extent political participation (dimension 5) in curriculum development is being realised in practice.

Regionalised and diversified curricula
The Minister of Education explained that, to facilitate development of the regionalised curricula, “each of the vice-ministers is organising events in their areas to initiate debate and consolidate the future framework of the curricula” (12). As the ‘regions’ have not been specified in advance, any territorial unit, including for example municipals, regions, and indigenous autonomies can propose to develop a regionalised curriculum (8). A MoE official noted that the process of diversification of the curricula, with participation of educational units, municipals and educational districts, will be further specified in 2012 (7).

Interviews with regional and local government authorities in La Paz and Trinidad, however, suggest that a lack of guidelines and resources provided by the MoE form a serious challenge for development of the regionalised curricula (29; 33; 40). In Trinidad, the director of the district described the current situation as “a transitional phase where everything is uncertain, we do not know in what way it will be implemented”, which supports the findings of Lopes Cardozo (2011: 67) of an ‘impasse in the education sector’ in Bolivia. The director of the Educational District in Trinidad critically noted that: “We need to wait for the Ministry to tell us in what way they want us to elaborate the regionalised curriculum so that we do not have to work in vain, we are waiting for them to guide us, how to organise this and to elaborate this.” The director of the Educational District in Trinidad commented that meetings had been organised for the sector of Alternative and Special Education where actors are “more united”, but not for formal education as “the area of formal education is larger, more comprehensive, there are many more teachers and there are still no reunions.” The director of SEDUCA in Beni commented they had

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23 The Bolivian Ministry of Education consists of three Vice-Ministries: Regular Education, Higher Education and Alternative & Special Education. Each Ministry has its own Minister (10).
hired a native speaker to assist in the recovering of the regional indigenous language Moxeño "until the Ministry of Education provides us with professionals we have demanded, to start the work in a more systematic way" (29). This situation forms a serious challenge for implementation and political participation (CIE dimension 5), as local government authorities, without guidelines and resources provided by the MoE, are hindered in their efforts to facilitate participation of regional actors in curriculum development.

Nevertheless, the director of SEDUCA in Trinidad underlined there is “enthusiasm in the various indigenous groups (...) to stand out because their history, languages and heroes were forgotten, all want to become protagonists of the reconstruction of this forgotten history” (29). In line with this perception, an interview with the coordinator of the national committee of the Indigenous Education Councils (CEPOs) suggests that various CEPOs are actively involved in systematising their own knowledges which may serve as a basis for elaboration of the proposal of the regionalised curriculum for each indigenous group. The coordinator noted that the CEPOs have published several documents in this respect24 (3).

Some respondents suggested that balancing intraculturality and interculturality within the curriculum could be quite challenging. An official of the MoE commented that some organisations and groups want to deviate strongly from the national basic curriculum within the their regionalised curriculum or make a separate curriculum. He noted that “harmonisation is not easy and the regionalised curricula may also be used as a strategic exit (...) to deviate from the general structure” (8). Moreover, one of the academics interviewed argued that the national basic curriculum (as officially presented on 30 September 2011) gives “much more attention to intraculturality and much less to dialogue with others” (41). Future research is important to show if and how the curricula can support intracultural and intercultural education in complementarity where intracultural education does not tend to affirm own identity at the cost of intercultural relations (Van Dam & Salman, 2009).

**Plurinational Institutes of Educational Investigation and Study of Languages and Cultures**

To support the implementation of intra-/intercultural and plurilingual education, the ASEP law aims to create two Institutes: the Plurinational Institute of Educational Investigations (ASEP, 2010, Art. 87) and the Plurinational Institute of the Study of Languages and Cultures (ASEP Art. 88). The first aims at "developing strategies in support of the politics of change of the Plurinational Education System" (ASEP, 2010, Art. 87). The latter will develop linguistic and cultural investigation and create institutes of languages and cultures for the different indigenous groups for normalisation, investigation and development of their languages and cultures, financed and sustained by the autonomous territories (ASEP, 2010, Art. 88); which is important,

24 The website CEPOs Bolivia includes several of these documents: http://www.cepos.bo
taking into account there are many small indigenous languages in danger of extinction (18). Yet, an official from the Ministry of Education (18) and the director of SEDUCA in Trinidad (63) commented that the structures of both of these institutes have not been established yet.

3.4.2 IN-SERVICE TEACHER TRAINING

Formal training

In terms of distribution of intercultural education material to schools, the specialist of secondary education at SEDUCA in Trinidad explained that the ASEP law was distributed for free at all educational institutions in the district of Trinidad, through the Educational Districts (28). Findings at the schools involved in this study in La Paz indicated the Law was also distributed there.

The Specialised Unit for Continuous Training (UNEFCO) developed several courses in relation to the ASEP law, consisting of different modules. One module focuses specifically on the principles of intra-/intercultural and plurilingual education. In addition, there are courses in the languages Aymara, Guaraní, Moxeño Trinitario and Quechua (32). The coordinator of the Indigenous Education Councils (CEPOs) critically noted that for many indigenous languages, no training is available yet (3). According to the director of UNEFCO in Trinidad, teachers pay 35% of the costs, the other 65% is covered by the MoE and teachers receive official certificates for completing UNEFCO’s courses (32).

Findings of this research provide some exploratory insights into the pedagogy of the in-service teacher training courses. Directors of UNEFCO in La Paz and Trinidad explained courses consist of three phases: 1) learning contents and theory, 2) applying the learned material at the own school and 3) writing about these experiences and exchanging experiences with the other teachers in the course (32; 42). During a class I observed, various secondary school teachers shared their views on the Law and presented self-made posters (see photo). One of the teachers commented “it is not the same as reading the law article by article at home. Then we do not understand it or we understand very little as compared to sharing experiences with colleagues from different schools.”

Based on classroom observation, I would, however, question if critical reflection & action (CIE dimension 1) was sufficiently stimulated. Teachers copied the objectives of education as stated in the ASEP law in their presentations without critically reflecting on them in relation to
their own situations. Future research on in-service teacher training provided by UNEFCO is needed to understand to what extent critical reflection and action is encouraged, as this is an important element of CIE teacher training (e.g. Gay & Kirkland 2003; Lopes Cardozo 2011).

In terms of implementation of UNEFCO’s courses, the director of UNEFCO in Trinidad observed a number of challenges. She commented there was little response from teachers in Trinidad. She estimated that “only 30% of the entire teacher population in the department has participated in the courses (...) the others have only seen it from a distance” and explained this noting “there is not such culture to participate in training on the part of teachers” and there is “apathy among teachers” (32), suggesting motivation of teachers to participate in training is a problem. Second, the director criticised there are an insufficient number of qualified trainers available to provide training. (32). An additional challenge put forward is insufficient training material available due to a delay in printing of the material. In addition, the director reported difficulties in travelling to remote areas (expensive, takes long time to travel, poorly accessible during the rainy season). The director of UNEFCO La Paz noted there were sufficient trainers. He did, however, comment that about 20% of the teachers had dropped out of UNEFCO’s courses. As possible explanations he mentioned the distance to travel, lack of time and economic resources (42).

An official at the MoE commented that teacher training by UNEFCO should also teach teachers to develop didactic materials. He noted: “We will give the methodological orientation of how to make school material for example a teaching guide. And we will motivate and train them [teachers], so that they themselves will look for these elements.” (10). In this way, UNEFCO’s courses could stimulate teacher participation in (CIE dimension 5). However, this ideal was discussed in future terms. Moreover, perceptions of many education governance actors questioned if the Ministry would be able to provide sufficient guidelines for teachers to participate in such a development process.

Many education governance respondents perceived there are insufficient guidelines or training from the part of the MoE explaining how to implement intra-/interculturality and plurilinguism in the classroom. To illustrate, a critical MoE official complained that at present “teachers only receive information on the general conceptualisation of intra-/interculturality (...) but there is no pedagogical technique or theory that informs, for instance, how to teach a student from the Zona Sur Aymara indigenous spirituality in combination with Catholic religion” (8). An educational researcher underlined no didactic guides have been provided but are necessary for teachers to adopt strategies for intra-/intercultural and plurilingual education (41). It was generally believed that the MoE must have an important role in providing support for teachers to be able to participate in the development of material supporting intra-/intercultural and plurilingual education.


Teacher training by other organisations

In addition to formal teacher training, several other educational organisations are involved in the provision of teacher training, such as NGOs and some private companies. Programmes from the Centre for Services in Education (CEMSE) and the Bolivian Centre for Educational Research and Action (CEBIAE) provided training in relation to intra-/and interculturality, following the ASEP law; while at the same time giving attention to other themes, such as equity of gender (6; 14) which is interesting bearing in mind the lack of attention to these other aspects of identity (CIE dimension 4, complexity of identity) in the ASEP law. Such initiatives may provide relevant additional training opportunities for in-service teachers. Interviews at the school level indeed revealed that teachers were making use of programmes provided by NGOs and private institutions.

The findings presented in this chapter reveal that teachers, as essential actors in both the education system and in social life (Lopes Cardozo, 2009), face a complex and contradictory strategically selective context. The following chapter explores teachers’ perceptions and strategies and addresses the secondary school context, the remaining level of the strategically selective context to be discussed.
CHAPTER 4 SECONDARY SCHOOL TEACHERS’ PERCEPTIONS AND STRATEGIES OF INTRA-/INTERCULTURAL AND PLURILINGUAL EDUCATION

This chapter focuses on secondary school teachers’ perceptions and strategies. Teachers play an important role in implementation of educational policies and can act as agents of intercultural education as was discussed in the theoretical chapter. Moreover, teachers can provide us with insights into current challenges and opportunities for intercultural education faced in practice as teachers are directly experiencing these (Smit, 2005). This research, therefore, aims to give teachers a voice in the discussion on intercultural education. The sub-questions answered in the different sections of this chapter are the following:

Main sub-question:

4. What are teachers’ perceptions and strategies of intra-/intercultural and plurilingual education?

Sub-questions per section:

4.1 What training and materials in relation to intra-/intercultural and plurilingual education did teachers receive?
4.2 What are teachers’ perceptions of the meaning and need of intra-/intercultural and plurilingual education?
4.3 What are teachers’ strategies of intra-/intercultural and plurilingual education?
4.4 What are perceived challenges for intra-/intercultural and plurilingual education according to teachers, education governance actors and academics?

The findings in this chapter are directly related to the theoretical CIE dimensions:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theoretical dimensions Critical Intercultural Education (CIE)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Critical reflection &amp; action</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Challenge the hegemony of Western knowledge (including language)</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. Intercultural dialogue</td>
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<tr>
<td>4. Culture &amp; identity as complex and dynamic – not essentializing culture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Political participation in ‘framing’ education</td>
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<tr>
<td>6. Relevant education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Comprehensive reform of school and education system</td>
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</table>
4.1 Teacher Training and Intercultural Education Materials

Regarding intercultural education materials, schools had not yet received a curriculum or other supporting material in relation to ASEP’s intra-/interculturality or plurilingualism. Most teachers said they had a copy of the Law, which had been distributed through SEDUCA and the Educational District, as discussed in relation to the governance level (Chapter 3). Only a few teachers from the schools in Trinidad mentioned they had received training from UNEFCO in relation to the Law. They referred to a module on the indigenous language Moxéño, and an introductory course on main concepts included in the ASEP law. These teachers, however, underlined that short modules on indigenous language were not sufficient to learn (to teach) in that language (99; 115).

The great majority of teacher respondents did not feel prepared to implement intra-/intercultural and plurilingual education. In addition, teachers in Trinidad and La Paz underlined teachers’ lack of indigenous language skills. For instance, one of the teachers (school 2) noted that “Many of us, the great majority of the teachers, only speak Spanish. Only few speak, for example, Quechua or Aymara.” (64). These findings are in line with concerns expressed at the education governance level and findings of other studies (Delany-Barmann, 2010: 195-196; Lopes Cardozo, 2011: 225). Teachers expressed feelings of uncertainty and frustration, as can be illustrated by the following account of a teacher from school 2 (63):

First, they need (...) guidelines (...) to be able to implement it. (...) This aspect, that still nothing has been organised, that there is no teacher training, is a negative point. Because in fact it is as if we are walking in darkness; while a small light is present and we want to go there, we don’t know how to get there and how we are going to do it because we do not have many lights, so to say.

The majority of teachers and headteachers underlined the need for (more) in-service training. To illustrate, the headteacher of school 1 underlined “there is a lack of training provided by the Ministry of Education for teachers. There are many teachers, the majority, that do not have much knowledge of the new education reform” (47). A teacher from school 2 (65) commented “there is a lack of means, strategies on how to implement. For example, how can I teach intraculturality? How can I do it technically, methodologically?” Teachers requested training of the MoE provided to all teachers to overcome the current situation where “some of us know the theme, others don’t” (English, school 2; 63). A teacher expressed her concerns in relation to ‘not speaking the same language’:

It seems to me that this educational reform, every educational reform, will be successful only if the people who implement it understand it in the same way. But unfortunately every educational reform tends to fail. Why? Because many of us understand it differently, everyone uses it according to one’s own criteria, own way of seeing things. But if the
government or institutions provided courses where 100% of the teachers attended, maybe we could speak the same language. (70)

In addition, teachers underlined the need for research into the cultures and languages of Bolivia. For instance, a teacher from school 4 emphasised that “there needs to be a more in-depth study concerning the different cultures of the region here in the region of Beni, there is a diversity of languages (...) we do not have many investigators.” (100).

Taking into account a lack of teacher training and materials on intercultural education, teachers’ understanding and practice of intercultural education might considerably diverge and depend on their own possibilities and motivation to obtain knowledge on the subject. The next two sections explore teachers’ perceptions on the meaning and need of intercultural education and their strategies for implementation. The final section of this chapter summarises and discusses challenges for intercultural education in practice.

4.2 Teachers’ Perceptions on Meaning & Need of Intercultural Education

4.2.1 Welcoming Perceptions

Intercultural education

Interviews in the five schools showed a variety of interpretations and emphases of teachers regarding intercultural education. Consistent with ASEP’s definition of interculturality, perceptions at the governance level and CIE dimension 3 (intercultural dialogue), several teachers from all five schools interpreted interculturality as relations between different cultures. To illustrate, a teacher (school 4, 100) defined interculturality as “diversity in culture but exchanging ideas, exchanging cultures.” Another teacher (school 4, 98) mentioned interculturality is about “learning about the other cultures.” In addition, in line with ASEP’s reference to ‘valuing attitudes’ and ‘coexistence’ in its definition of interculturality and perceptions at the education governance level, teachers respondents in each of the schools interpreted interculturality as tolerance, acceptance or valuing of other cultures. For instance, a teacher from school 5 (128) indicated in the survey that “interculturality is about tolerance between everybody.” This dimension was an important part of the definition of Intercultural Bilingual Education (EIB) as included in the 1994 reform (Law 1565-Reforma Educativa, 1994). Also in line with the ASEP law, and CIE dimension 5 (political participation), a teacher (64, school 2) perceived that participation of various actors, including indigenous groups, is an important aspect of intercultural education, as he commented: “the municipals, the autonomous territories, the indigenous and peasants, the communities will be able to participate in the development of the curricular design (...) so here we can see the intercultural.”
In contrast to the ASEP law and CIE definitions, some teachers uncritically described interculturality as the existence of different cultures or languages. For instance, a teacher (school 2; 65) commented that “what I have as cultural value, what the other has as cultural value make one reality.” Notably, the definition of the former 1994 Bolivian education reform does refer to cultural diversity as dimension of interculturality, stating that “[education] is intercultural and bilingual because it assumes the socio-cultural heterogeneity of the country in an environment of respect between all Bolivians, men and women.” (Law 1565-Reforma Educativa, 1994, Art. 1.5). However, only defining interculturality as the presence of different cultures does not represent a critical approach towards interculturality.

**Intracultural education**

Consistent with ASEP’s definition of intraculturality and perceptions of governance actors, teachers underlined the importance of education which is responsive to the cultures of students, in line with CIE dimension 6 (relevant education). To illustrate, a teacher noted that education needs to “start from our reality, from our roots (...) the fundamental aim is to raise the self-esteem of the student. (...) education needs to start here, value what you have so that when you meet the other, you can say ‘this is my culture and it is fundamental in my life’” (65, school 2). In line with CIE dimension 6 (relevant education) and dimension 5 (political participation), a teacher from school 5 (133) commented that the “Law offers a panorama to work on a regional education, to teach ours, starting from our knowledges that our culture has developed.”

In line with debates on coloniality of knowledge and perceptions at the education governance level, teachers discussed historical and continuing undervaluation of indigenous cultures and languages. For instance, a teacher from school 1 noticed that: “In the student’s understanding here at school it is bad to speak Aymara (...) there is a barrier, they do not want to keep their indigenous culture, they do not identify; they tend to adopt cultures as those from the United States or countries from Europe” (49). A teacher from school 2 further explained indigenous names such as “Mamani or Quispe” continue to be undervalued and are a ground of discrimination and are substituted by 'Western' names, so that “students at school do not call themselves Panki but for example Mike” (70). In relation to indigenous languages, a teacher from school 2 (70) commented “There were years in which students knew how to speak Aymara but felt embarrassed to tell. Why? Because the others would discriminate, insult him.” These perceptions are in line with the link made in coloniality debates between coloniality of knowledge and racism. This perception was also expressed in Trinidad. To elucidate, a teacher from school 4 noticed that:

The majority, of about 95% speaks Spanish in Beni. Only few, only 5-6% speak [an indigenous language] in Trinidad, and they cannot write it, only speak it. (...) here it was imposed to speak Spanish and English. Therefore we the subject English is compulsory here
at school. It was also considered to introduce French but they reconsidered it because English is more universal. So these students were educated with this mentality, to say my language is Spanish and I can learn English. There is reluctance to speak the local language, they feel embarrassed. (104)

Teachers from all five schools underlined the important role of education in recovering and revaluing cultures and languages of Bolivia, focusing on indigenous cultures, in support of CIE dimension 2 (challenging the hegemony of Western knowledge) and in line with perceptions at the governance level and ASEP’s intraculturality and plurilinguism. To illustrate, a teacher (school 2; 70) expressed that “The main idea of intraculturality is valuing, recuperating, revaluing the cultures in our country. Starting from this recognition of what is our essence, we will understand the other cultures, interculturality.” Concerning indigenous languages, a teacher from school 5 perceived that: “Plurilinguism is good because it allows us to restore the languages of our ancestors that we lost due to colonisation” (133). Intracultural and plurilingual education thus were perceived to have an important role in revaluing the knowledges and languages.

Complexity of culture and identity

Interestingly, in line with CIE dimension 4 (culture & identity as complex and dynamic) a teacher from school 2 stressed it is important to not focus on indigenous knowledges as (only) something from the past:

I understand intraculturality as analysing oneself and returning to one’s roots. But that these roots and this culture strengthen the contemporary presence. If I would look for the Aymara or Quechua identity or whichever would be mine, I would be capable of analysing all the values that have been elaborated, and practising these at the present moment, at this juncture. (74)

In practice, however, governance actors and teachers often spoke of recuperating the cultures of our ancestors, grandparents and parents, focusing on these knowledges as static and from the past. It must also be noted that, also at the level of teachers, focus was on being indigenous or not and not so much on class and gender aspects of identity, in contrast to CIE dimension 4 (culture and identity as complex and dynamic), an issue discussed before in relation to the education governance level. Interestingly, in explaining strategies some teachers referred to class differences, suggesting this is an important aspect to focus on. Teachers’ strategies will be discussed later in this chapter.

Intra and inter

A teacher (school 2, 63) perceived that: “To come to that [interculturality] we first need to accept ourselves as we are, have our own identity, accept ourselves first. For example, in this region as Aymaras. We first need to develop our own identity to be able to express and accept other
cultures.” Or as two teachers expressed: “If I do not love myself, I will not be able to love the other [and thus] we first need to love our culture and later love the other cultures” (117). One cannot exist without the other. A challenge for implementation might be to encourage both intra-/and interculturality and to not exclusively focus on intra (Van Dam & Salman, 2009) or reserve interculturality for a later point in time.

4.2.2 OPPOSING PERCEPTIONS
Not all teacher respondents agreed with the proposal of intercultural education. Resistant responses of teachers are often stereotyped in practice, but can offer interesting insights into education policy and reform processes (Altinyelken, 2010: 195). This section, therefore, discusses various themes of resistance that came to the fore in interviews at the schools included in this study.

Some teachers believed teaching or learning indigenous languages is only important for rural areas and not needed in the cities, contradicting CIE dimension 7 (comprehensive reform). The argument brought up is that teachers and students in cities speak Spanish and, therefore, education in an indigenous language is not necessary. To elucidate this, a teacher from school 2 noted that: “I do not get involved with bilinguism because I work with people who speak Spanish (...) if I go to a rural area to work maybe I would have to take this into account, but my students speak Spanish, so I do not have a reason to think about it” (50).

Second, some teachers at schools in La Paz and Trinidad expressed they preferred the teaching of Spanish and/or English to indigenous knowledges and languages, in contrast to CIE dimension 2 (challenging the hegemony of Western knowledge). The following account of a teacher from school 2 illustrates this:

We need to try to be able to understand, maybe a bit of, [an indigenous language] (...) We will always communicate in Spanish and it is also necessary to learn English, this is very important, I find it more important because this is a language spoken in the whole world and it allows us to communicate, to know, also on the internet, many of us do not know English and we have difficulties. I think it is positive plurilinguism implemented in education, it is also a national reality, we cannot say that in Bolivia we only speak Spanish. No, we speak 36 indigenous languages. (64)

As this comment reveals, the implementation of indigenous languages as a medium of instruction in the schools was not happily received by all teachers. Spanish was often seen as the language which provides access to socioeconomic mobility and power. This finding is in line with studies in Bolivia that show resistance of parents for similar reasons (Hornberger, 2002: 40; Lopes Cardozo, 2011: 95). This point was also raised by an educational researcher who commented that “there is resistance from parents because they do not want that classes are taught in their own [indigenous] language; they respond to processes of discrimination and racism they suffered for not understanding the other language [Spanish]” (9). Teachers also explained they
encouraged their students to learn English to have better prospects. To illustrate (teacher, school 2, 63):

Sometimes students ask me what they can do to have more opportunities: learn a foreign language, learn how to drive a car and if you can leave the country, travel, go with a scholarship because our country does not offer a lot, it is very difficult. So one has to consider other options.

It could be said that unless the wider societal context can be transformed towards valuing indigenous languages on a par with Spanish and English, difficulties in implementation will result. Moreover, distributive and political injustices need to be addressed at the same time (Fraser, 2007), not only at an educational level but also on a societal and global level. Schools on their own cannot counteract deeply rooted ideologies favouring Spanish and English (Hornberger, 2002: 41-42). The following conversation with three teachers at school 4 in Trinidad (79) shows such ideologies:

Teacher A: Why am I going to learn a regional dialect if I aspire to go somewhere else. [I’d rather] learn English.

Teacher B: Learn English, to leave, to go over there.

Teacher C: (...).What for? Why are you going to learn it? [an indigenous language] It is of no use.

These comments reveal that indigenous languages are still undervalued in comparison to ‘Western’ languages, representing ‘coloniality of knowledge’ as discussed in the theoretical chapter. The use of the word ‘dialect’ by the first teacher further illustrates this. This ‘coloniality of knowledge’ was further shown by the following quote of a teacher who resists intracultural education as included in ASEP:

This is what he [president Evo Morales] wants with this new educational reform, that we revalue what we had before. But to me this would be a step backwards because large countries have their culture, but they keep it, they only show it at the time of a celebration, but they do not live with it, they do not live of this. They live of progress, which is the 21st century. They advance more and more. On the other hand, we want to stagnate here. Why, if we have mechanisation lately for agriculture, why would we continue with the time of our ancestors, with the Aymaras? (86; social sciences, school 3)

The critique of the latter teacher is in line with the critique of the La Paz urban teachers’ union leader that including indigenous knowledges within the educational curriculum would mean ‘a step backwards’, as discussed in the previous chapter 3. In line with CIE theory, to achieve intracultural and plurilingual education ways need to be found to challenge coloniality of knowledge within education and society.
Third, in Trinidad quite a few teachers argued that education needs to pay more attention to the Lowland cultures. To elucidate, a teacher from school 4 in Trinidad (in the Eastern Lowlands) (99) criticised that education material is paying insufficient attention to the cultures of the Lowlands:

What they, the government, did not take into account is that the Lowlands are completely different from the Highlands, our habits, our way of talking. So this makes our situation a bit difficult because more and more they have created an education of the Highlands. The books, the texts do not come, they say 'a mine', whereas here we do not have mines. So, in that respect also, the books contain mistakes, they are not regionalised as they should be.

In a similar way, a teacher from school 4 (98) underlined that "getting to know each of our cultures more in-depth, should be done regionalised. Why? Because each of us can respect the culture from the Occident [of Bolivia] but they do not have the same culture. We need to specify the Oriental cultures."

The TIPNIS conflict reflected tensions between the Andean Highlands and the Eastern lowlands, exacerbating mistrust and critique towards the government and the ASEP reform. To illustrate, a teacher from Trinidad (133) expressed:

The concepts [of intra-/interculturality and plurilinguism] are good because supposedly at a theoretical level the different nations that exist are accepted, the indigenous nations. But in the reality of life (...) the racism that precisely Evo Morales practised against the marchers means that it is only in words, interculturality.

Based on these findings, a challenge for implementing intra-/intercultural and plurilingual education is that it might become dominated by indigenous groups that are bigger, excluding others. The indigenous people in Bolivia do not form a homogeneous group and indigenous knowledges vary according to village and region (Van Dam & Salman, 2009). It is important that different indigenous groups with their own values, knowledges and cultures are recognised (Fraser, 2007) in education. In addition, in relation to Fraser's (2007) political participation dimension of justice, it is it is important that the different groups of indigenous peoples can participate in defining what relevant education is and not only the bigger groups.

It must also be remembered that, in line with CIE dimension 3 (intercultural dialogue), it is important that teachers develop an interest, readiness and capacity to dialogue with those whom they consider to be different and become more open towards the 'other' (Speiser, 2000: 235). For all teachers it is important to have an accepting and open attitude towards the other cultures (in this case Highland vs. Lowland cultures) and to not emphasise only intraculturality.
To achieve such dialogue, it is important that teachers critically reflect about one’s own background, in line with CIE dimension 1 (critical reflection & action).

Fourth, one of the teacher respondents from school 2 (La Paz; 67) and one from school 4 (Trinidad; 101) strongly resisted the ASEP law based on the argument that it is discriminatory towards non-indigenous citizens in Bolivia. This perception can be illustrated by the following statement of a teacher from La Paz:

*The current government is a provisional government and extremely racist. They want to have a race struggle (...). What is the purpose? I have no idea. They want to totally indigenise the country and we are going to repeat the history (...) we cannot destroy the country through pluriculturality. There is no plurality, there is no pluriculturality. (...) [we need] just one Western culture as in Argentina, Chile etc. (History, School 2; 67)*

A similar point was made by a teacher at school 4 in Trinidad:

*First of all, it is a discriminatory law, because it does not speak of us, it does not speak of society as a whole, of its different levels, it only speaks of the indigenisation and Bolivia is not indigenous. It has many indigenous peoples but this does not mean that we are indigenous. I am not indigenous. (Literature, School 4; 101)*

These findings are in line with findings from Lopes Cardozo (2011: 133) that some might fear a ‘reverse form of discrimination’ and Postero (2007: 20) on ‘reverse racism’ towards people that do not identify as indigenous, as illustrated by the comment of the first teacher on ‘repeating the history’. Findings of my research also suggest that at least some teachers who do not identify themselves as indigenous do not feel recognised and represented (Fraser, 2007) by the reform. As Postero (2007: 20) argues, a risk for ‘reverse racism’ might be a result of government’s simplification of cultural and ethnic complexity, risking to promote idealised versions of Andean culture, demonising all things white, in contrast to CIE dimension 4. It can thus be questioned if the ASEP law is including all different groups of Bolivia in practice.

Finally, in line with a ‘culture of mistrust’ in Bolivian society as defined by Lopes Cardozo (2011: 75) and governance actor’s perspectives as discussed earlier, some teachers expressed a lack of trust in the government and its institutions. For instance, some teachers complained that each government created its own law without building upon reform efforts of earlier governments. To illustrate, a teacher at school 4 expressed “When the political comes in it does not work (...). The regime falls and they annul the reform. This is the problem in education in Bolivia. They make new laws and in reality we cannot have a well-consolidated process. For the 1565 law we have made some steps. They annul it. New law.” Interviews with other teachers also revealed lack of trust that the government, or Ministry of Education, would succeed in encouraging transformation of education with the new reform.
While this discussion focused on perceptions on the meaning and need for intercultural education, the following section explores teachers’ strategies which are the result of the dialectic interaction between structural and agential factors (Hay, 2002; Lopes Cardozo, 2011).

4.3 TEACHERS’ STRATEGIES OF INTERCULTURAL EDUCATION

In congruence with the diverse perceptions on ASEP’s intra-/intercultural and plurilingual education discussed in the previous section, teachers adopted different strategies for or against intercultural education.

Uncertainty about how to implement

As was discussed at the beginning of this chapter, the strategically selective context (Hay, 2002) of teachers provides little resources or training in relation to intercultural education. Within this context, quite some teachers openly expressed uncertainty on how to implement intra-/intercultural and plurilingual education in surveys or interviews. To illustrate, a teacher from school 3 commented “I still do not have a clear idea how to implement these concepts” (95). A music teacher (school 3) commented “I don’t know how they will implement this [plurilingual education]. Will there be classes in Aymara? Or half of the classes in Aymara and half in Spanish. Or will classes be in English? I don’t know” (90). These expressions reveal that, even though many teachers support the ideas of intra-/intercultural and plurilingual education in ASEP, teachers’ agency to transform education is limited by a context which provides insufficient guidelines for teachers to implement.

Intracultural education

Despite this context, at all five schools included in this study, some motivated teachers tried to implement intercultural education. First, it is noteworthy that some teachers tried to adapt educational contents and teaching methods to better fit their regional cultural and/or linguistic context, in line with CIE dimension 6 (relevant education). The findings support the notion that the education reform creates space for teachers to include indigenous knowledges and languages in education, contributing to CIE dimension 2 (challenging the hegemony of Western knowledge). To illustrate, at school 2 I observed a literature class. Students gave a presentation about a book on Quechua perspectives on natural medicine. In a later interview, the literature teacher explained:

_The students were reading the work of Jesús Lara, a Bolivian author from Cochabamba that focuses on the Quechuan cultural traditions (...) what we prioritised is culture, our culture._

The teacher commented that while foreign books are relatively easy to get access to, books of Bolivian authors are very difficult to find in book shops. To overcome this problem, she adopted the following strategy which is in line with CIE dimensions 1 (critical reflection & action), 2
(challenging the hegemony of Western knowledge) and 6 (relevant education): “In my class, I have them [students] recover the tales, oral legends from their parents and grandparents that have not been written down. But it is necessary that the students carry out this oral recovery themselves.” (70). At school 5 in Trinidad, I met another teacher who was motivated to implement intracultural education. In line with CIE dimensions 6 (relevant education) and ASEP’s definition of intraculturality, a teacher from school 5 in Trinidad developed a proposal with curricular contents about regional history of the Moxeño indigenous peoples knowledge on preventing floods and droughts, as part of a degree in Interculturality at a University in Beni (UAB) (112; 133).

**Plurilingual education**

While the main language of instruction at all five schools continues to be Spanish, some teachers tried to include indigenous languages in their classes. For instance, a teacher of school 2 explained:

> [we need to] gradually make the students aware and to say to the students ‘this is ours’ (...) we need to value ours (...) So generally in my classes I speak to students in Aymara or Quechua, but more in Aymara. So I tell them basic things or greet them, ‘how are you students’, things like this. Gradually they will learn. (72)

Such strategies represent an important first step towards greater recognition (Fraser, 2007) of these languages, supporting CIE dimension 2 (challenging the hegemony of Western knowledge) and 6 (relevant education).

A teacher from school 2 pointed out the important but difficult role for teachers to act as agents of intra-/intercultural and plurilingual education in the current context. She underlines the importance for teachers to critically reflect on their own background, in line with CIE dimension 1:

> I think we should be trained first, at all schools to be able to socialise and later we all have another vision. Unfortunately we come from years of colonisation which makes it difficult. (...) So we first need to self-identify. If you would for example enter one of the classes of the teachers and would ask ‘How do you identify?’ ‘What is your culture?’ they will not tell you I’m Aymara, they will not tell you. So, from here we have to start. First us and later we will be able to realise this. If we do not identify, we will not be able to make sure our students change their attitude and idea. (63)

**Intra and inter**

As pointed out before, it is important that intra-/and interculturality are promoted together. Yet, two teachers explained they only focused on intraculturality in their classes and reserved interculturality for a later moment in time. To illustrate, a teacher commented that “the part of
interculturality we left for later because our intraculturality, or our essence, our origin also relates to the beliefs of other cultures (...) but we still miss a bit investigating other types of beliefs that other cultures have. We will get into that later” (70). Drawing from CIE theory, however, it is important that educators do not only focus on the own culture, but also encourage intercultural dialogue (CIE dimension 3).

**Intercultural education**

In line with CIE dimension 3 (intercultural dialogue) and ASEP’s definition of interculturality, some teachers explained they combine knowledges of different cultures in their classes. For instance, a teacher commented that she “first work[s] with intraculturality and then inter. (...) First I teach regional history, then in the second trimester I work with history of Latin America and America and in the third trimester I get into universal history.” Another example comes from a religion teacher from school 4 who explained: “I include interculturality and freedom of religion (...) that not the Catholic religion dominates all (...) I also try to teach about beliefs of before the bible, the sun, the earth, the air” (104).

Three teachers encouraged group work with students of different cultural and socio-economic backgrounds to encourage positive relations between them and overcome discrimination, in support of CIE dimension 3 (intercultural dialogue). To illustrate, a teacher from school 3 (87) explained:

> in our course we have students from different backgrounds, economic, social, family etc. (...) I work with socialisation in my classes to prevent discrimination, (...) Generally there are 5 students per group; each student contributes one’s own idea and (...) makes a presentation, based on a theme. So, they integrate. Regularly when these students, when there was school break they looked for their friend (...) to walk to the classes together after the break.

Similarly, a teacher from school 5 (111) suggested to “make groups and show that all people are equal, without looking down upon the other race, sex or sexual orientation of a person.” Interestingly, these teachers focus on multiple aspects of identity, including culture, socio-economic background, gender and sexual orientation, in line with CIE dimension 4 (culture & identity as complex and dynamic) which is interesting when taking into account the main focus on ethnicity/culture within current Bolivian education policy's definition of interculturality.

Based on CIE theory, it is important that, in addition to stimulation of intercultural dialogue (CIE dimension 3), critical reflection & action (CIE dimension 1) are encouraged, as only encouraging contact between students is not sufficient to challenge underlying unequal power structures that hinder dialogue on equal terms. Classroom observations, however, showed in about half of the cases continuation of teacher-centred ‘banking’ teaching methods where students had to copy texts from the blackboard or from the teacher reading out loud, not encouraging CIE dimensions 1 (critical reflection & action).
Two teachers underlined as strategy to tell students off in case they show discriminatory attitudes. For instance, a teacher at school 2 noted that “I never hear at this school "you are from the rural area, you are indian, you are peasant" (...) if I hear this, I will tell that student off, this can’t happen here” (72). While well intentioned and possibly effective in reducing overt discrimination, drawing from CIE, this strategy can be characterised as a rather uncritical ‘problem-solving’ approach rather than transforming structures underlying racism (May and Sleeter, 2010: 4).

Teachers as agents of continuation

It was found that discrimination and racism continue to be a problem in secondary schools. Teachers and education governance actors shared that they see discrimination against indigenous students, against students from rural areas, discrimination between inhabitants of the Andean Highlands and Eastern Lowlands (16, 22, 104). Moreover, some of the teachers I interviewed expressed discriminatory and racist attitudes. To illustrate, a teacher from school 4 noted: “They [indigenous peoples] need to stop complaining about what happened in the past, it is history and it will not happen again. We need to make progress. But the indian is like that, they like complaining. That is why I can’t live with them” (101) and other teachers commented that “the peasants are lazy because they do not work (...) do not have aspirations to change” (97).

In relation to teacher strategies, in school 2 I observed that students were sent away from arts class by a teacher because they did not have the required materials for class (60). This teacher explained after class that many students lack economic resources to buy brushes and paint required for the arts class exercises. While one can understand that it is challenging to teach arts class without sufficient materials, this strategy might exclude students lacking economic resources from the Arts class.

These findings show that teachers can play a role in reproduction of discrimination and racism in schools. In relation to CIE dimension 3 (intercultural dialogue) it is important that teachers engage in dialogue with those whom they consider to be different and become more open towards the ‘other’ and the ‘different’ (Speiser, 2000: 235) and in line with CIE dimension 1 (critical reflection & action) critically reflect on one’s own background in relation to the other.

Teachers as agents of change

On the other hand, I spoke to teachers who critically reflected on their role as agents of change towards social justice (CIE dimension 1). A number of teachers emphasised the importance of being responsive to the socioeconomic situations of students and to work to change the processes and structures that are serving as barriers for learning opportunities for students, in
line with CIE dimension 1 (critical reflection & action). To illustrate, a teacher in Trinidad (school 4, 104) commented:

As a teacher sometimes I feel sorry when I say ‘student, your work book, I would like to revise it.’ If the student brings his material in pieces, I accept it. But other teachers say ‘what is this?’ (…) they forget where students are from, don’t know if they eat or not, how they live, it is very difficult (…) sometimes we have good students but without sufficient materials. (104)

These findings demonstrate class differences play a significant role within Bolivian education which makes it important for education policy and practice to not only deal with diversity in terms of ethnicity/culture but also in terms of class.

Another concern of teachers, both in La Paz and Trinidad, is migration of parents abroad, for example to the United States, Spain, Italy, Argentina or Brazil, for work, resulting in ‘broken families’ (88, 74) where secondary school students have to look after their younger brothers and sisters. These teachers were committed to help their students. For instance, a teacher from school 5 (116) noted “The young people are forgotten by their parents, no-one looks after them. Teachers act as fathers, mothers, uncles and aunts or grandparents and we need to solve their problems.” A teacher from school 4 commented that teachers need to “in case of problems of the adolescent I try to solve it in the psychological realm (…) know their reality. Sometimes the child comes [to school] with many problems.” Some teachers recommended psychologists or social workers assist teachers in this task. It is clear from the above that teachers have a difficult role as critical agents for social justice.

Folkloristic interpretations

Quite a few teachers mentioned cultural fairs, festivals and ‘hora cívica’ as a strategy for implementation of intercultural education. Unfortunately, such ‘additive approaches’ don’t encourage comprehensive school reform (CIE dimension 7). What is more, culture in these events is often interpreted in ‘folkloristic’ ways, in contrast to CIE dimension 4 (culture & identity as complex and dynamic). To illustrate, the headteacher of school 4 noted:

We will organise a cultural fair so we are working on this [interculturality] (…) at our festivals we take into account diversity of cultures. We had a festival of dances. So here students got to know the other cultures, learned about typical dishes, touristic places that every department has. This happens with fairs and festivals. (105)

A teacher from school 5, however, criticized such ‘folkloristic’ interpretations of interculturality, in line with the findings discussed in relation to the education governance context. In this teacher’s words:

my origin is not getting dressed and declaring that I’m from here. Important is that I declare from the inside (…) for me culture is not putting on my traditional clothes and give
Unequal power relations, including the undervaluing of indigenous knowledges and languages, are not addressed by folkloristic and additive approaches, as illustrated by the following account of a teacher from school 4:

*There is some rejection of the local language or, in other words, there is embarrassment. So therefore you will see that they use it [the local language] more as a protocol, an activity, for example talking about an object, show it, but here it stops. In everyday life it is not used. People wear trousers and shirt, but the traditional is only for special occasions.* (104)

In line with CIE dimension 7 (comprehensive school reform), two teachers emphasised intra-/intercultural and plurilingual education needs to be included “in every subject area” (63), or “in the general focus” (44). The key aspect of this argument is that a comprehensive school approach is required to contribute to challenging unequal power relations.

**Cooperation with parents**

Finally, teachers related intercultural education to involving parents in the education of their children (125). Cooperation between teachers and parents was thought to be an important aspect of interculturality. But teachers from schools in La Paz and Trinidad criticised there is currently insufficient cooperation and that there are tensions between school teachers & headteachers and parents of students. For instance, a history-civic education teacher from school 3 (88) underlined “I think there should be more interaction with parents (...) but maybe because of a lack of time, the parents that have to work, due to this situation.” Others were more critical and complained for instance "When does the father or mother come [to school]? Only if it is in their interest, when Juancito Pinto is paid.” (104, school 4). In addition, interviews revealed tensions between school actors and the Parents Commissions, as reported in other research on Bolivian education (van Dam, 2007: 6, as cited in Lopes Cardozo, 2011: 120). To elucidate, the headteacher of school 2 explained “there were a lot of problems with the Parents Commission at this school (...) they said ‘teacher you will no longer work here, only this year, and there were two teachers that have been sent away like this” (73).

Regarding the tasks of the Parents Commissions, the headteacher of school 2 and the president of the Parents Commission at school 4 explained a main function is social control such

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*a performance, but demonstrating that I am from here and struggle with my homeland, with who I am, and with what I have.* (117)
as checking if teachers arrive on time (73; 106). The president of the Parents Commission at School 5 also explained social control was a main function of the Commission, but, interestingly, also referred to other roles of the Commission: “central themes for the Junta are: a lack of work for the students that graduate as in our environment there or not many sources of income and another central problem is the changes that are occurring with the new reform” (121). In addition, the president commented the Parents Commission would like to organise lectures, seminars and workshops for teachers in relation to discrimination (121). This latter perception is interesting as it extends the role of parents to educational matters and social justice issues, supporting CIE dimension 5 (political participation).

This section already gave some insight into opportunities and challenges for teachers to act as agents of change for critical intercultural education. The next section presents an overview of the challenges for intercultural education perceived by teachers and education governance actors. These challenges might limit teachers’ agency to adopt strategies for critical intercultural education and can, therefore, be seen as a bridge to the final chapter of this thesis which answers the main research question on teachers’ agency.
4.4 Teachers’ and Governance Actors’ Perceived Challenges for Intercultural Education in Bolivia

The following table summarises the challenges according to the different actors involved in this study.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Perceived challenges</th>
<th>Education governance context</th>
<th>Teachers (strategic actor)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Government</td>
<td>Civil society</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lack of guidelines and resources for regional and local education government levels</td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>Coloniality of knowledge: undervaluing of indigenous knowledges and languages and racism</td>
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<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>Discrimination</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>Insufficient training opportunities and materials for teachers to implement</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lack of indigenous language skills teachers</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>At in-service teacher training institute UNEFCO Trinidad: lack of qualified trainers; lack of teacher motivation to participate; delay in printing of material; accessibility remote areas and during rainy season</td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>Insufficient space provided by MoE to participate in policy development political participation of civil society and teachers in practice</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>Strong deviation from national basic curriculum in development of regionalised curricula</td>
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<tr>
<td>Insufficient attention for interculturality (dialogue with the other) in basic national educational curriculum</td>
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<tr>
<td>Folkloristic interpretation intercultural education in practice</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>Risk of Andean-centrism government discourse &amp; practice</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
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The following table summarises the challenges according to the different actors involved in this study.
The first 15 challenges have been discussed in the former and current chapter. The final 8 challenges listed in the table have not yet been discussed and are included here.

Headteachers and several teachers in Trinidad underlined the problem that some teachers had **not been trained to teach at the secondary education level** and there were teachers **not teaching in the subject area they specialised in** during their pre-service training (65; 75; 120). Headteachers of schools 4 and 5 expressed concerns about the quality of education provided to students due to insufficient academic skills of some teachers that had not followed adequate pre-service teacher training in their subject area. Natural sciences teacher school 5 (graduated in mathematics; now teaches physics, chemistry and biology): “in the Normal they taught us to work in our specialisation (...) but I did not attend biology or chemistry classes.”

Low salaries, little incentives for teachers and having multiple jobs to earn sufficient for a living were also raised as a concern by teachers and education governance actors. For example, the coordinator at CEMSE pointed out that it is difficult for teachers to implement if “teachers have much work to do and receive little incentives” (6). As Contreras and Talavera (2005: 99-101) report, the general opinion, and a continuous struggle for the urban Bolivian teacher’s union, is that Bolivian teachers are poorly paid. Studies, however, also report that Bolivian

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<th>Challenges</th>
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<tr>
<td>Mistrust in government institutions</td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>Resistance from parents to teaching in indigenous languages</td>
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<td>Insufficient cooperation and tensions teachers – parents/parental commissions</td>
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<tr>
<td>Socio-psychological problems students</td>
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<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>Some teachers have not been trained to teach at secondary education level and in subject area they teach</td>
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<td>X</td>
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<td>Poor salaries, little incentives and multiple jobs teachers</td>
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<tr>
<td>Insufficient sharing of knowledge and support between teachers within a school</td>
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<tr>
<td>Poor educational infrastructure schools</td>
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<tr>
<td>Institutional inertia at schools</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lack of teacher vocation</td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>Resistant attitude La Paz urban teachers’ union</td>
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<tr>
<td>Corruption</td>
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</table>

The table above lists the 23 challenges that have been discussed in the previous sections.
teachers’ salaries have increased in the 1990s (Contreras, 1999a & Urquiolo et al., 2000, as cited in Contreras & Talavera, 2005) and since Morales entered into government (Lopes Cardozo, 2011: 244). The findings of my study are also in line with the work of Contreras and Talavera (2005: 94) showing that many Bolivian teachers have extra jobs inside or outside of public and private schools. Teachers also reported limited possibilities to participate in training due to a lack of time and financial resources (for training with costs) as a result of their low salaries and busy working schedules. For instance, a teacher from school (school2, 74) commented that “teachers’ salary is very low so this does not permit to continue studying and working (...) [the teacher] needs to have extra jobs to cover its minimum living costs.” Similarly, another teacher (school2; 59) noted that: “The great majority of teachers work in the morning in a public school, in the afternoon in a private school and do something else at night. (...) Therefore, we cannot give a lot to the students, because our time is limited. In contrast, if we only worked in one school, but with good salary, (...) we would care a lot more, prepare ourselves and teach better classes to our students.”

Another concern brought up in interviews is that there is insufficient sharing of information and knowledge between teachers within schools. For instance, a philosophy-psychology teacher from school 3 (87) explained: “We hardly discuss our role as teachers. For example, who can help me to improve my planning, my course contents, (...), tasks or methodologies we use in our work.” A literature teacher from school 2 (59) also noted that “in the majority of schools teachers are not (...) having meetings to analyse [the Law] chapter by chapter, article by article” as “this is impossible due to other duties such as ‘my son’, ‘my husband’, ‘I live far away’, ‘there is no time’, ‘I have other work’.” Also at school 5, a history teacher (133) criticised that:

> If we worked in teams, for instance, in all the branches of social sciences, so say “I teach this, this and this”, in geography say, “well I teach this in relation to what you have taught. That geography, history, civic education work together. (...) There is no team work (...) in any school.

Educational change literature points out that at the teacher level the degree of change is strongly related to the extent to which teachers interact and support each other (Fullan, 2001: 83). Encouraging school-based knowledge sharing and support between teachers and other educational actors in schools might contribute to more agreement on the meaning and implementation of the concepts of intra-/intercultural and plurilingual education.

Another challenge for implementation of intra-/intercultural and plurilingual education brought forward by teachers at schools 1, 2, 4 and 5 is “institutional inertia” at the secondary schools, similar to findings of Lopes Cardozo (2011: 151-152) regarding “apathy and institutional inertia” at two teacher training institutes in Bolivia. Teachers criticised passive and
resistant attitudes of a number of teachers and the resulting continuation of old and ineffective teaching practices. To illustrate, a teacher from school 4 (98) noted “The [didactic] material for this year, we keep it, change the date and next year we present it again to the students. We do not change, we do not innovate, the only thing we change is the date. This is bad, very bad.” A teacher from school 1 criticised: “it becomes routine work here (...) teachers do not like to innovate (...) there are many that maintain this traditional education, the same way of teaching in the classroom in front of the class, where the student is only receiver” (52). In a similar way, a teacher from school 5 (133) commented: “They do not want to change. They just want to be traditional teachers, copying texts.” These two latter comments are in line with my findings from observations of teacher-centred methods and only have students copy texts, in contrast with CIE dimensions 1 (critical reflection & action) and 3 (dialogue).

Teachers related this problem of institutional inaction to a lack of vocation for teaching and underlined this as a problem nowadays in education in Bolivia. Teachers shared that many teachers are motivated only by financial and material rewards and avoid making an effort to provide quality education or develop themselves by participating in teacher training (104, 59, 65). The teaching profession is often seen as a way to obtain a secure job position, income and welfare arrangements (52, 59, Lopes Cardozo, 2011: 179; Contreras & Talavera, 2005: 94).

One of the issues most often mentioned by teachers and headteachers and observed in schools is insufficient school infrastructure, including insufficient number of classrooms, climate control (too low temperature at the schools in La Paz and too high temperatures at the schools in Trinidad), no or incomplete libraries, little or no computer facilities and poor sanitary facilities. In addition, observations revealed there was often a lot of noise of traffic in classrooms near roads at schools 4 and 5 in Trinidad. The following account of a teacher illustrates the perceived need for better educational infrastructure:

First, in what conditions do we work, very bad [conditions]. I think that this Law will not advance in these bad conditions. If you went up to the second floor, very hot classrooms, in this classroom it is almost 50 degrees, and this is a problem. I think for this Law to work the educational infrastructure also needs to be taken into account. That [the classroom] are well [air] conditioned, with good blackboards, good seats, with a library. We do not have a library. (116)

The headteacher of school 2 pointed out there is divergence in quality of infrastructure between private and public schools and between different public schools, with private
and some public schools having better infrastructure than others (73). In line with Fraser’s (2007) conceptualisation of social justice, economic redistribution is an important dimension of justice and is related to the other two dimensions of cultural recognition and political representation.

Another challenge brought up at the school level is the **resistant attitude of the urban teachers’ union in La Paz**. An English teacher from school 2 explained:

*The government puts forward a proposal ASEP. Then, the union puts forward another proposal, because they do not agree (...) each school has a representative that can enter the meetings of the union where the needs and requests of all schools are communicated to the union (...) what the union decides is as if it was a law for all teachers. So, all teachers do what the union indicates because it has been a decision taken by the base, by all schools. So, if the union decides there will be a strike, there will be a strike.*

This account reveals the powerful position of the union. A teacher from school 2 pointed out that in the previous Education Reform the teacher’s union had a powerful role resisting the reform, hindering implementation (62). Strong opposition of the teachers’ union may bring teachers in a difficult position where teachers need to negotiate between union leaders obligating teachers into opposing marches and strikes and, on the other hand, pedagogical responsibilities (Luykx, 1999: 340 & Talavera 1999, as cited in Contreras & Talavera Simoni, 2005: 95).

**Corruption** came to the fore as a challenge for intra-/intercultural and plurilingual education at schools 1 and 5. A teacher from school 5 was critical of the way in which staff obtained a position at secondary schools. To illustrate, she (133, school 5) noted: “*that I have to be in favour of the government to be able to hold a higher hierarchical position. Nowadays the teacher is not valued for one's knowledge, but because one is in favour of [the government].*” In addition, when I was at the graduation ceremony of school 1, teachers were planning a meeting to discuss corruption by the school management. As Lopes Cardozo (2011: 76) argues, forms of corruption seem to persevere at different levels (national and local/institutional), creating deeper mistrust in state actions and official institutions in Bolivia, including pre-service teacher training institutes; “*which will make it difficult to forecast whether teachers can really become actors for – or against – change*” (Lopes Cardozo 2011: 229).

This chapter focused on teachers as strategic actors and summarised and discussed challenges posed by the multilevel strategically selective context. The next chapter draws conclusions on the agency of teachers to adopt strategies for CIE, combining the findings of the two data chapters. In addition, suggestions for practice and future research are provided based on the findings of this research.
CHAPTER 5 CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS FOR PRACTICE AND FUTURE RESEARCH

The TIPNIS conflict, described at the beginning of this thesis, is illustrative of the complexity of struggles for social justice in Bolivian society. This research on intercultural education in Bolivia has shown that tensions and contradictions are also very much reflected in education. Critiques on a gap between government discourse and educational realities, tensions between groups in the Andean Highlands and Eastern Lowlands and tensions between development towards Vivir Bien or ‘modernity’, were reflected in both the TIPNIS conflict and in Bolivia’s education sector. This lends support for understanding education within broader social and political structures in society.

In 2010 the Bolivian government adopted a decolonising educational law promoting intra-/intercultural and plurilingual education for a society of Vivir Bien. This study focused on the agency of secondary school teachers in the context of this education reform.

The main research question of this thesis was:

How can we understand the agency of Bolivian secondary school teachers to adopt strategies for intra-/intercultural and plurilingual education, concepts discussed in the education governance context in Bolivia, from a theoretical critical intercultural education perspective?

Building upon the work of Lopes Cardozo (2009, 2011) who applied the strategic-relational approach (SRA; Hay 2002) to educational transformation in Bolivia, teachers’ agency was defined by the dialectic interaction between the context (Bolivia’s intercultural education governance) and the strategic actor (secondary school teachers). Structural and agential factors were analysed from a theoretical critical intercultural education (CIE) perspective.

This chapter brings together the findings of the previous chapters to answer the main research question on teachers’ agency. In addition, I provide suggestions for practice and future research.

TRANSFORMATIVE VISION IN EDUCATION GOVERNANCE DISCOURSE

The recent Bolivian education governance discourse focuses on transformation of unequal power structures within Bolivian society, representing a transformative approach rather than an affirmative approach (Fraser 2003) to intercultural education. The ASEP reform understands education as a tool to achieve decolonisation and a society of Vivir Bien and sees teachers as...
agents of this transformative education. Bolivian education is imagined to challenge the over-
emphasis on Western knowledges and languages by making it more relevant to local
knowledges and languages and at the same time stimulate interactions between these different
cultural groups. To achieve such education it is important that different groups in Bolivian
society can participate in ‘framing’ their education and that educational actors stimulate critical
reflection and action in relation to structures of injustice in Bolivian education and society. Only
by encouraging such comprehensive reform of schools and education unequal power relations in
society can be challenged. This discourse is in line with critical literature on intercultural
education as presented in the theoretical chapter and it was argued that the focus on
transformation of unequal power structures in current Bolivian education governance context
may encourage teachers to act as agents of change for critical intercultural education. On the
other hand, some teacher respondents perceived intercultural education as only relevant for
rural areas not for urban and some teacher respondents only focused on liberal practice of
intercultural education that can be seen as an affirmative approach rather than an
transformative approach (Fraser 2003) to intercultural education, such as organising a fair
presenting traditional indigenous dances. An important focus for future research and
implementation attention therefore is the translation of the discourse to actual practices.

SIMPLIFIED/REFIFIED VISION IN EDUCATION GOVERNANCE DISCOURSE
While the education governance discourse encourages transformation of unequal power
structures, I argue that a main threat for critical intercultural education in Bolivia in practice is
simplification and reification (Fraser 2003) in current education discourse. This simplification
and reification presents itself in different ways. First, with the new ASEP law the focus shifted to
ethnicity/culture, paying less attention to other crucial and interrelated aspects of identity
including class and gender. While inclusion of indigenous groups in education is vital taking into
account Bolivia’s educational history of cultural assimilation, a simple focus on this identity
aspect does not provide an answer to the more complex reality of identities in Bolivia (and
elsewhere). Moreover, it is important to recognise relations between ‘indigenous’ and ‘Western’
aspects of identity and knowledge and not see these as dichotomous categories (see e.g. Bartlett
2005). Second, findings suggest that balancing intraculturality and interculturality forms a
challenge and that the introduction of intraculturality risk supporting an inward focus, not
paying due attention to the interrelation and interaction between different groups and
knowledges. Attention needs to be paid to the development of regionalised and diversified
curriculums and how these relate to the national curriculum and the extent to which the
national basic curriculum pays attention to dialogue between different cultural groups. Future
research might help to understand how intracultural and intercultural education can
complement each other and do not tend to affirm own culture at the cost of intercultural relations (Van Dam & Salman, 2009). Third, while the government/governance aims to address historical misrecognition of indigenous groups in Bolivian society it does so by the use of mainly Andean visions (Postero 2007) risking a lack of attention for smaller indigenous groups, including those from the Amazonian Lowlands, the Afro-Bolivians and mestizo/white citizens of Bolivia. Some teacher respondents that do not identify as indigenous or Andean feel excluded from the current ASEP education reform. To encourage relevant education for smaller cultural and linguistic groups it is important that research efforts are made to develop different local languages and knowledges into teacher training and educational materials, ideally with support of the planned Plurinational Institute for the Study of Languages and Cultures. This simplification/reification within education governance discourse might encourage a simplistic understanding of intercultural education by education actors and the implementation of more liberal forms (e.g. May & Sleeter 2010: 3) of intercultural education, not supporting transformation of structures of injustice. In addition, it may in practice lead to the exclusion of certain cultural, gender or socioeconomic groups in Bolivian society which is clearly contrary to the aims of critical approaches to intercultural education.

A CELEBRATED AND CONTESTED EDUCATION REFORM

The ASEP reform and its proposal of intercultural education is both celebrated and contested by Bolivian education actors, including teachers. Teachers can thus theoretically be understood as strategic actors within a strategically selective context of intercultural education reform. Rather than passively receiving education policy teachers perceive and adapt it in different ways (Smit 2005). As Vongalis-Macrow (2007: 436) underlines: “What teachers do and how they react to educational change is significant in determining the outcomes of change.” What the ‘outcomes of change’ in Bolivia will be is difficult to predict because of the range of perceptions regarding the decolonising education law among education actors. Teachers’ perceptions are important to study and may inform policy formulation and implementation as ‘local knowledge’ (Smit 2005). This finding illustrates that teachers implement or teach according to their own ideas of the reform which are both supportive and resistive, as is increasingly recognised in other educational research (for example Smit 2005). Future research into teachers’ agency, illuminating what teachers do in relation to reform, is thus important to better understand (potential) outcomes of change.

DECOLONISING EDUCATION REFORM DIFFICULT IN CONTEXT OF CONTINUING COLONIALITY
Not all teachers are agents of decolonisation as is foreseen in the ASEP reform. Teachers and other education actors are also actors of colonisation. Can we expect teachers to advocate for teaching and learning indigenous knowledges and languages in a context where these knowledges and languages continue to be undervalued and Spanish/English provide better opportunities at the labour market? While Spanish or English might provide better job opportunities (economic justice) your own language is part of your identity (cultural justice). A combination of these languages as foreseen in ASEP with its proposal of plurilingual education might be a good solution. Yet, structural constraints such as teachers not speaking an indigenous language and limited training, restrict this option. Moreover, continuing coloniality of knowledge might discourage teachers from teaching an indigenous language. This thesis demonstrates that putting into practice a ‘decolonising’ education reform within a context that is still in large part ‘colonised’ is difficult. To put it differently, structures of economic, cultural and political justice (Fraser 2003) need to be transformed within Bolivian society. As Freire (Gutstein 2010:3) stated, education should act for liberation rather than for domination but education alone cannot change society. Changes at societal level are required.

LACK OF SUPPORT FOR TEACHERS TO IMPLEMENT

Another main issue identified in this research is a lack of support for teachers to implement intercultural education. As revealed in chapter 3 the development of in-service teacher training and development of the new curriculum is in its early stages. Yet research at the secondary school level reveals that many teachers feel uncertain about how to implement intercultural education and request training and material to support implementation. Similarly, a key criticism at critical approaches to intercultural education has been the apparent inability of its authors to translate the theoretical concerns into illustrations for pedagogy and practice, leaving educators in uncertainty how to implement (May & Sleeter 2010: 12). This research, similarly, showed a main challenge for practice of intercultural education is a lack of guidelines explaining how it could be implemented by teachers. In addition, the great majority of teachers included in this study reported to not feel confident in teaching in the local indigenous language or a foreign language. Teachers face a restricting strategically selective context that provides little support for them to act as agents of intercultural education. A pressing issue for realising educational transformation towards critical intercultural education (in Bolivia), therefore, is the development and implementation of guidelines and training for teachers as argued by other studies in the Bolivian context (Delany-Barmann, 2010: 198; Lopes Cardozo, 2011) and in other contexts (Gay and Kirkland, 2003: 181; Vavrus, 2010: 28). To achieve this it is also crucial that guidance and resources are provided to education governance actors, including local government authorities so they can facilitate the process of curriculum development and
support for teacher training, overcoming the current ‘educational impasse’ as discussed in chapter 3. In terms of future research, exploring illustrations of what critical approaches to intercultural education may look like into practice remains an area that merits research attention.

**ONLY RHETORICS: GAP BETWEEN DISCOURSE AND PRACTICE**

A final conclusion of this research is that there is still a gap between a more transformative discourse towards intercultural education and practice of liberal forms of intercultural education. With the exception of some motivated teachers in La Paz and Trinidad who tried to implement intercultural education on own initiative, teachers continued teaching as they did. Classroom observations showed continuation of ‘copying’ teaching techniques that do not stimulate critical reflection & action (CIE dimension 1). In addition, findings showed that discrimination, including towards indigenous peoples, inhabitants of the Andean highlands vs. Eastern Lowlands, and inhabitants of rural areas, continues to exist at secondary schools included in this study. In terms of plurilingual education, the medium of instruction at the schools included in this study is Spanish and English was taught as a separate subject. In addition, the great majority of teachers included in this study don’t feel confident teaching in a local indigenous language or foreign language. It remains to be seen how the imagined plurilingual education system will be implemented.

In conclusion, while a transformative education governance discourse on intercultural education may stimulate teachers to act as agents of change, simplistic/reified visions of intercultural education in governance discourse, a lack of support for teachers to implement and continuing structures of ‘coloniality’ in education and society limit teachers’ space for manoeuvre or agency to adopt strategies for critical intercultural education. I especially suggest more research into: teachers’ perceptions and practices as ‘local knowledge’ (Smit 2005) on the one hand; and further theorisation of intercultural education following a ‘politics of intercultural education’ approach as set out in the theoretical chapter on the other hand; so as to gain insights into processes of intercultural education reform and close the gap between critical intercultural discursive imaginaries and educational realities.
BIBLIOGRAPHY


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APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1: LIST OF RESEARCH ACTIVITIES

The table below includes the research activities this thesis is based on. For convenience, a division has been made between activities at the governance level (Chapter 3) and at school level (Chapter 4) of which the latter is subdivided into activities at the five schools. The numbers included in the first column correspond with in-text citations. Interviews were conducted in Spanish, recorded and transcribed unless stated otherwise. To guarantee anonymity, names of respondents and schools are not included. School-level actors are referred to with their name in the data analysis programme Dedoose. The gender of respondents is indicated with m (male) or f (female).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>#</th>
<th>Research activity</th>
<th>Name/Position</th>
<th>Date/Location</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>GOVERNANCE LEVEL</strong></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Attended lecture</td>
<td>Lecture 'Estado Plurinacional y Desarrollismo: ¿Dualidad de poderes o ecología de saberes? (speaker Boaventura de Sousa Santos)</td>
<td>30-08-’11, La Paz, Palacio de Comunicaciones</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>Interview</td>
<td>Educational researcher (m)</td>
<td>31-08-’11, La Paz, café</td>
</tr>
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<td>3</td>
<td>Interview</td>
<td>Technical coordinator (m) of National Coordinating Committee CEPOs</td>
<td>01-09-’11, La Paz, office</td>
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<td>Interview</td>
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<td>06-09-’11, La Paz</td>
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<td>Interview</td>
<td>Leader (m) of national level urban teachers’ union CTEUB</td>
<td>07-09-’11, La Paz, union headquarters</td>
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<td>Interview</td>
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<td>Interview</td>
<td>Head (m) of Unit of Intra-/intercultural and Plurilingual Education Policies</td>
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<td>Interview</td>
<td>Head (m) of Plurinational Institute of Educational Investigations</td>
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<td>Interview</td>
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<td>22-09-’11, La Paz, café</td>
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<td>Vice minister (m) of Alternative and Special Education</td>
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<td>Attended colloquium</td>
<td>Colloquium ‘100 years of education: teacher training and early childhood education</td>
<td>29-09-’11, La Paz, MUSEF museum</td>
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<td>Attended presentation</td>
<td>Presentation of Curricular Plan by Minister of Education (m) ('Curículo Base del Sistema Educativo Plurinacional')</td>
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<td>10-10-’11, La Paz, office CEBIAE</td>
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<td>Group interview</td>
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<td>18-10-’11 La Paz, café</td>
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<td>19-10-’11, La Paz, Plaza San Francisco</td>
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<td>Interview</td>
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<td>24</td>
<td>Attended Fair</td>
<td>‘Feria Departamental de Innovaciones Pedagógicas en Educación Comunitaria Vocacional’</td>
<td>03-11-’11 and 04-11-’11, central square of Trinidad and in a public school</td>
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<td>In-service teacher training class organized by UNEFCO called ‘Bases, Fines y Objetivos de la Ley de la Educación Nº 070 Avelino Sñañi-Elizardo Pérez’ (Bases and objectives of the ASEP law)</td>
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<td>01-12-'11, La Paz, UMSA</td>
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APPENDIX 2: GUIDE FOR INTERVIEWS WITH TEACHERS

Introducción
- ¿Usted se ha enterado sobre la nueva ley educativa Avelino Siñani – Elizardo Pérez? ¿Las ideas de la intraculturalidad, interculturalidad y el plurilingüismo?

Opiniones sobre las ideas de la educación intra/intercultural y plurilingüe
- ¿Qué piensa usted de las ideas de intra/interculturalidad y plurilingüismo incluidas en la nueva ley educativa?
- ¿Cree que estas ideas son importantes para la educación en Bolivia? ¿Por qué sí o no?

Conceptualizaciones de las ideas de la intraculturalidad, interculturalidad y plurilingüismo
- ¿Qué entiende usted por:
  - Intraculturalidad/educación intracultural?
  - Interculturalidad/educación intercultural?
  - Plurilingüismo/educación plurilingüe?
- ¿Cómo podría (en su materia) trabajar en las clases con las ideas de:
  - Intraculturalidad?
  - Interculturalidad?
  - Plurilingüismo?

Diferencias con la Educación Intercultural Bilingüe (incluida en Reforma 1994)
- ¿Ha trabajado en Educación Intercultural Bilingüe (EIB)? ¿Cree que ha cambiado la idea de la interculturalidad en esta ley?

Formación docente
- ¿Cree que los profesores están preparados para implementar las ideas de intra/interculturalidad y el plurilingüismo? En caso que no sea así, ¿Qué necesitarían los profesores para trabajar con las ideas de intra/interculturalidad y plurilingüismo?

La profesión de maestro/a
- ¿Está contento/a ser maestro/a? ¿Por qué sí o no?
- ¿Cuáles son las principales razones por las que eligió la profesión de maestro/a?

¿Hay algo sobre que no hemos hablado pero de que piensa que es importante para este estudio?

Muchas gracias por su tiempo.
APPENDIX 3: GUIDE FOR INTERVIEWS WITH EDUCATION GOVERNANCE ACTORS

Introducción

- ¿Me puede contar sobre su carrera (y cómo llegó a la dirección de...)?

Opiniones sobre las ideas de la educación intra/intercultural y plurilingüe

- ¿Qué piensa usted de las ideas de intra/interculturalidad y plurilingüismo incluidas en la nueva ley educativa?
- ¿Cree que estas ideas son importantes para la educación en Bolivia? ¿Por qué sí o no?

Conceptualizaciones de las ideas de la intra/interculturalidad y plurilingüismo

- ¿Qué entiende usted por:
  - Intraculturalidad/educación intracultural?
  - Interculturalidad/educación intercultural?
  - Plurilingüismo/educación plurilingüe?

Diferencias con la Educación Intercultural Bilingüe (incluida en Reforma 1994)

- Uno de los ejes de la Reforma anterior era la Educación Intercultural Bilingüe (EIB)? ¿Cree que ha cambiado la idea de la interculturalidad en esta ley?

Formación docente

- ¿Cree que los profesores en servicio están preparados para implementar las ideas de intra/interculturalidad y el plurilingüismo? En caso que no sea así, ¿Qué necesitarían los profesores para trabajar con las ideas de intra/interculturalidad y plurilingüismo?

- ¿Hay algo sobre que no hemos hablado pero de que piensa que es importante para este estudio?

Muchas gracias por su tiempo.
APPENDIX 4: QUESTIONNAIRE FOR TEACHERS

Nombre profesor(a) (opcional): 
Nombre colegio: 
La fecha: 

Encuesta para los profesores/profesoras en colegios secundarios
Las últimas semanas he hablado con profesores y profesoras en colegios secundarios en Trinidad para mi tesis de maestría en Ciencias Sociales. Para complementar la información, le ruego por favor responder a estas preguntas. Los datos serían tratados de manera confidencial.

¿Cuál es su año de nacimiento?

¿En qué Normal realizó su formación profesional docente y en qué años?

¿Cuál fue el mayor nivel de educación que alcanzó? ¿Dónde? ¿Cuál es su especialidad?

¿Desde cuándo ejerce el oficio de docente?

¿Desde cuándo ejerce como maestro/a en este colegio?

¿Qué materia(s) enseña usted en este colegio?

¿Cuántas horas por semana enseña usted en este colegio?

Además de ser maestro/a en este colegio, ¿tiene usted otra ocupación? En caso sí, ¿qué ocupación es y por cuántas horas a la semana?

¿Cuál es su lengua materna? ¿Qué otros idiomas sabe usted además su lengua materna? ¿Dónde ha aprendido estos idiomas?

¿Usted se considera de origen: Indique la(s) que aplica(n)

Moxeño  aymara  quechua  guaraní  otro: .................

Los nombres solamente utilizaré para relacionar las respuestas a las entrevistas, para complementar la información. En mi tesis no voy a nombrar ni el nombre del colegio, ni los nombres de los maestro/as.
Cómo maestro/a, ¿en qué categoría está actualmente? *Indique la que aplica*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>quinta</th>
<th>cuarta</th>
<th>tercera</th>
<th>segunda</th>
<th>primera</th>
<th>cero</th>
<th>al merito</th>
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¿Usted tiene buen acceso a facilidades de actualizar sus conocimientos? ¿De qué manera?

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¿Usted se ha enterado sobre la nueva ley educativa Avelino Síñani – Elizardo Pérez? *Indique la que aplica*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>si</th>
<th>no</th>
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¿Usted se ha enterado sobre los conceptos de la: *Indique la que aplica*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>intraculturalidad</th>
<th>si</th>
<th>no</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>interculturalidad</td>
<td>si</td>
<td>no</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>plurilingüismo</td>
<td>si</td>
<td>no</td>
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</tbody>
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En caso sí, ¿Cómo se informó sobre la nueva ley o/y estos conceptos?

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100
¿Qué piensa usted de las ideas de la intriculturalidad, interculturalidad y el plurilingüismo, incluidas en la nueva ley educativa Avelino Siñani – Elizardo Pérez?

¿Tiene alguna(s) sugerencia(s) para trabajar con las ideas de la intriculturalidad, interculturalidad y el plurilingüismo en sus clases/en esta unidad educativa?
Otros comentarios:

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Muchas gracias por su tiempo.
APPENDIX 5: GUIDE FOR OBSERVATION IN CLASSROOM

I INFORMACIÓN BÁSICA
- Colegio
- Profesor(a)
- Materia
- Grado
- Fecha y hora de observación
- Duración de observación

II ALUMNOS
- Número de alumnos en clase durante la observación
- Sexo de los alumnos
- Etnicidades de los alumnos (en la medida de lo posible)
- ¿(Todos) los alumnos usan uniforme?

III CONTEXTO DEL AULA
- Materiales educativos
  - ¿Todos los alumnos tienen los materiales que necesitan para participar en la clase?
- Infraestructura
  - suficiente mesas & sillas; temperatura; olor; luz; vidrios; pizarra

IV CONTENIDO (DE LA CLASE)
- Tema central de la clase
- ¿Qué material didáctico utiliza el profesor en su clase? (Descripción del material)
- ¿El material incluye ejemplos de diferentes culturas?
- ¿El material incluye prejuicios?
- Si profesor(a) utiliza libro(s)/cuaderno(s), ¿qué es el fuente? (p. ej. escritor/financiadores del libro)
- ¿Profesor(a) incluye explícitamente el tema de intraculturalidad, interculturalidad o plurilingüismo en la clase? ¿Cómo?
- Lenguaje de instrucción

V COMMUNICACIÓN Y RELACIÓN ENTRE PROFESOR(A) Y ALUMNOS
- En general, ¿profesor(a) tiene paciencia con alumnos?
- ¿Profesor(a) promueve participación activa de los alumnos?
- ¿Profesor(a) considera las opiniones de sus estudiantes en la toma decisión relacionada a situaciones en el aula?
- ¿Profesor(a) recibe por igual las intervenciones (espontáneas o inducidas) de sus estudiantes, independientemente del sexo, lengua, etnicidad, estatus social?
- ¿Profesor(a) trata de incluir todos los alumnos en la clase?
- En general, ¿los alumnos ponen atención a que dice profesor(a)?
- ¿Qué estrategias utiliza profesor(a) para mantener el orden?
- ¿Profesor(a) resuelve situaciones de conflicto con los alumnos? ¿Cuáles? ¿Cómo?
- ¿En qué idioma(s) hablan profesor(a) y alumnos/as?

VI COMMUNICATION Y RELACIÓN ENTRE ALUMNOS
- ¿En qué idioma(s) hablan alumnos con otros alumnos?
- Descripción de la interacción entre los alumnos (P. ej.: ¿Hay alumnos que no interactúan mucho con los otros? ¿Hay interacción entre alumnos de diferentes sexos, etnicidades, estatus social? (en la medida de lo posible)
- ¿Hay conflictos entre los alumnos? ¿Sobre qué tratan?

VIII OTROS COMENTARIOS
Estimada Sra. Directora:

Soy Joëtta Zoetelief, estudiante de maestría de la Universidad de Ámsterdam en los Países Bajos. Hago un estudio sobre educación en Bolivia como parte de mi maestría y prácticas en la embajada de los Países Bajos en La Paz.

Mi interés es conocer los colegios secundarios bolivianos desde un enfoque intercultural. El énfasis de mi estudio es en los maestros y maestras en colegios secundarios, actores muy importantes en la educación. Estoy interesada en conocer qué piensan los maestros y maestras en colegios secundarios en La Paz y Trinidad sobre los conceptos de intraculturalidad, interculturalidad y el plurilingüismo, orientaciones incluidas en la ley "Avelino Siñani - Elizardo Pérez", aprobada en diciembre 2010. Por este motivo me gustaría entrevistar a maestros y maestras en su prestigioso colegio.

En Trinidad me voy a quedar por tres semanas, hasta el 17 de noviembre. Me gustaría hacer entrevistas con los maestros y maestras, hacer una encuesta y hablar con unos alumnos y observarlos en el aula, en los meses octubre y noviembre 2011, siempre en consulta con usted.

Las entrevistas serán confidenciales y anónimas. Usaré los resultados de este estudio para escribir mi tesis y quizás una publicación científica. No van a estar los nombres de las personas y del colegio en mi tesis. La tesis será estrictamente científica. Si desea, le podría mandar un informe de los resultados de mi trabajo en castellano. Además, podría presentar los resultados antes de regresar a mi país, según su disposición de tiempo. Para mí eso sería muy importante.

Si tiene alguna pregunta, por favor contacta a mí o a mis supervisoras.

Agradeciéndole mucho su atención y disposición a colaborar con mi investigación. Le saludo muy atentamente,

Joëtta Zoetelief
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Correo electrónico: joetta.zoetelief@student.uva.nl

Supervisora 1: María Luisa Talavera Simoni (Universidad Mayor de San Andrés (UMSA), La Paz)
Número de teléfono: ...
Correo electrónico: ...

Supervisora 2: Anke van Dam (experta en educación, La Embajada de Los Países Bajos)
Número de teléfono (fijo): ...
Correo electrónico: ...