Who is the *Other*?: An Analysis of Discourses of Diversity in Studies on Chile's Teacher Training

¿Quién es el *otro*?: Un análisis de los discursos de diversidad en estudios sobre formación docente en Chile

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Abstract

This article aims to identify and analyze the prevailing discourses in the construction of the *diverse subject* in the research on teacher education. To achieve this objective, a literature review is conducted on research and reflection papers about teacher education and diversity in Chile. From a critical perspective, we want to observe who the other is and how they have been conceived in the studies reviewed. To answer these questions, a critical discourse analysis is performed, based on three concepts that emerge from reading the papers: school integration, school inclusion, and interculturality/intercultural education. In addition, is also made an analysis of the diversity's discourses that approach a concept of the *other* from exclusion, and the normative assumptions that define the construction of diverse subject are problematized. Thus, in first place, in this paper we present three theoretical lines offered as three possible ways of thinking about diversity, without this being a comprehensive and all-encompassing review of the subject. The central methodological aspects of the project are then presented and, finally, the most relevant findings are highlighted and discussed.

Keywords: teacher training, diversity, educational inclusion, intercultural education, exclusion

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Resumen

Este artículo busca identificar y analizar los discursos que prevalecen en la construcción del *sujeto diverso* en la investigación sobre formación docente. Para alcanzar este objetivo, se realiza una revisión bibliográfica de artículos de investigación y reflexión sobre formación docente y diversidad en Chile. Desde una perspectiva crítica, nos interesa observar quién es el otro y cómo se lo ha concebido en los estudios revisados. Para responder estas preguntas, se realiza un análisis crítico de discurso a partir de tres conceptos que emergen de la lectura de los artículos: integración escolar, inclusión escolar e interculturalidad/educación intercultural. Adicionalmente, se hace un análisis de los discursos de diversidad que avanzan hacia una concepción del *otro* desde la exclusión y se problematizan los supuestos normativos que delimitan la construcción del sujeto diverso. Así, en primera instancia, se presentan en este artículo tres líneas teóricas que se ofrecen como tres formas posibles de pensar la diversidad, sin ser esta revisión exhaustiva ni totalizante de la temática. Luego, se presentan los aspectos metodológicos centrales del proyecto y, finalmente, se destacan y discuten los hallazgos más relevantes.

Palabras clave: formación docente, diversidad, inclusión educativa, educación intercultural, exclusión

Topics such as diversity and teacher education currently have a marked presence in discourse on education, provoking, through their conceptual articulation, the emergence of lines of work such as teacher education in and for diversity. Based on this perspective, there are those who state that, although it is true that research and theoretical contributions to this field have increased significantly, practical training is still weak, receiving marginal attention in study plans (Esteve, 2006, as cited in López & Hinojosa, 2012).

So, teacher education programs that discuss diversity issues include those that understand it in terms of curricular topics or content, addressing concepts in isolation such as *school integration*, *special educational needs* and *disability* (Skliar, 2007). From another perspective, diversity is present in reflections of teacher education when understanding interculturality as a challenge for the whole education system, where, before training teachers, citizens must be trained to be conscious of differences and capable of fighting for inclusive practices (Cuenca, Nucinkis, & Zavala, 2007).

These views of diversity range from those that are defined depending on normativity, which is to say that they implement fixed and stereotypical identities of subjects and further standardize possible forms of integration (Almeida et al., 2010), to those that question the different forms of representation of the others that capture and govern the differences (Larrosa & Skliar, 2001). These latter views problematize rhetorical discourses of diversity that are present in schools and are transferred to teacher education situations.

In view of the above, it is interesting to investigate what is being understood by diversity, as well as how to study discourses of the *other* resulting from research in teacher education. Through critical analysis of discourse, this article seeks to distance itself from the traditional paradigms used to define the *other*, in which notions of hierarchy prevail. Therefore, it takes taking a position from a critical perspective that proves the power relationships present in what is being defined as 'diversity', since traditionally, hegemonic markers of identity in terms of race, class, culture, ability, gender, etc. have been considered for *diverse subjects*.

This study is relevant insofar as it provides a broad analysis of the ways in which diversity is understood, based on the relationship with the *others* in research on teacher education. It is expected to contribute to critical reflection on a topic, which despite having had a greater presence in education policy in recent times, still seems not to have great resonance in teacher education, since aspects such as teaching and learning processes, assessment, and knowledge and practice of specialties continue to be prioritized in the research (Cisternas, 2011).

Conceptual framework

In the education field, the way diversity is addressed varies depending on the theoretical paradigm used or favored. Certainly, changes in the ways of responding to people outside the realms of normalcy take a conceptual transition into account, so it is worth leaving the concept of diversity to be considered for later analysis. Three theoretical lines are outlined below, which are defined as three possible ways of considering diversity, without these being exhaustive or all-encompassing descriptions of the subject in question in any way.

According to Duschatzky (1996), diversity implies renouncing any logic that attempts to reduce everything to the same level and accepts, therefore, intercultural intersections in such a way that the absolute truth or final meaning cannot be attributed to any narrative or authority. However, talking about diversity nowadays can result in an excessive focus on *other strangers,* who possess attributes that must be underlined and denoted, so to avoid falling into rhetoricals and euphemisms specific to educational reforms. Here it is proposed that *diversity*, following Skliar (2014), should be understood as a gesture of hospitality that welcomes the *other* and resides in conversation.

However, understanding diversity from a viewpoint that distances from notions of hierarchy when defining the *others*, we will undertake a review of the theoretical models that have addressed the diverse or different subject, to finally go more deeply into the concept of diversity from a post-critical perspective.

Biomedical model of disability

From this viewpoint, the diverse is the one whom diagnostics are assigned, the person who is categorized and classified to guide a specific treatment aimed at reducing or eliminating the existing pathology (Bricout, Porterfield, Tracey, & Howard, 2004). Medicine, as well as psychology, has a strong impact on this model, so labels become a key concept, which not only results in new ways of talking about the subject, learning, or development, but also represents a change from the moralization of disability to the medicalization of disability which occurred during the twentieth century (Baker, 2002).

Based on these criteria, the school creates special education through a dual education system that maintains a general core in parallel to special responses. This system allows people with disabilities, who were previously excluded, to have an educational response through so-called *special schools* (Parrilla, 2002). Since the beginnings of this type of education, teacher education has been directed at providing methodologies to meet the special needs of the individual student (Ainscow, 1995).

Although special education has been transformed by conceptual changes that have taken place in educational reforms during the eighties and nineties, characterized by a reduced focus on the deficit and more on actual educational processes (Godoy, Meza, & Salazar, 2004), experiences can still be found of training of expert educators in this area who address diversity from, biomedical technicists and behavioral psychological, perspectives, generating discourses that reproduce the illusion of normalcy and draw a rigid line between *us* and the *others* (Pérez de Lara, 2001).

Social model of disability

From this paradigm the conditions of the disability do not form part of the body of the subjects, as suggested by the biomedical model, but instead conceive social causes, arguing that the cause of the disability is the limitations of society to meet the needs of people with some kind of deficiency. This model is used to advocate the rehabilitation or normalization of society, conceived and designed to meet the needs of all people (Palacios, 2008).

Practice based on this model is no longer oriented towards clinical rehabilitation but towards political mobilization, the demand for citizens' rights, and inclusion. However, this practice does not take into consideration certain crucial aspects for opportunities for people with disabilities: «The social

model has abandoned the body and diversity» (Ferreira, 2011, p. 10), since it addresses an analytical framework that homogenizes the phenomenon of disability according to categories that do not consider the diversity of experiences faced by people with disabilities and which would imply the existence of quite different social identities.

In relation to teacher education, from this perspective the actions are immersed in the particular environment of each school in order to build an institutional culture that is consistent with the needs of the educational community. Political, social, and cultural contexts are considered to create learning difficulties, so the educational spaces go beyond the search for specialized techniques to creating conditions to facilitate and support the learning of all students (Ainscow, 1995).

Post-critical perspectives

Post-critical perspectives consider the groups named within markers of differences (disability, gender, class, ethnicity, etc.) from a sociopolitical context. So, within the educational system, they analyze power relationships, questioning the normalization of the practices developed at the school, as well as the assignation of diagnostic labels and categorization of students, both formed as wider mechanisms of social ordering and regulation (Youdell, 2006).

In this approach, assumptions of normalcy are problematized, which is not addressed in the models mentioned previously. Questions therefore arise, such as «who is normal?» and «who is abnormal?», establishing normalcy as the space occupied by a prototype of person who meets certain standards constructed by society, while abnormality relates to those subjects that depart from the pre-established parameters, with different abilities and behaviors and broken bodies (Almeida et al., 2010; Pérez de Lara, 2001).

Discussing the assumptions of normality/abnormality from the perspective of education allows one to take a critical stance towards the concept of inclusion, which is currently so pervasive in institutional policies and projects. It is established, then, that inclusion implies new forms of exclusion, because by defining an idealized and normalized center to which a group of subjects belong, there will always be those on the periphery who persist in maintaining diversity, occupying the place of *the others*, inferior individuals and therefore excluded (Dussel, 2000; Graham & Slee, 2008).

From post-critical positions comes the proposal to denature normalcy to reach a point at which idealizations of the center dissolve (Graham & Slee, 2008). A first step towards this is to make new subjectivities visible in relation to aspects such as race, gender, disability, culture, etc., allowing the different educational actors to inhabit mobile and transient identities, as opposed to fixed identities, controlled by normalization mechanisms (Rose, 1999, as cited in Infante, 2010).

Teacher education proposals therefore go beyond ensuring that future teachers are able to make curricular adjustments: they aim to open spaces of critical reflection to understand the very notions of diversity and inclusion of each of the participating subjects (Infante, 2010). This can certainly be one possible way of resisting the normative discourses that define diversity, where different ways of being are not conceived of, but instead different ways to control and regulate the difference.

Methodology

To identify and analyze the prevailing discourses in the construction of the diverse subject in the research on teacher education, the data collection strategy used for the research was a literature review. According to the criteria of Boote and Beile (2005) with respect to the category of *coverage*, this review included research and reflection papers published in Chile that addressed the concepts of *diversity* and *teacher education*.

This review was conducted through databases of publications and journals that are recognized in the field of Chilean education[1] and related areas. The criteria for inclusion for selection of papers included studies disseminated and published in scientific journals between 2004 and 2012, as the aim was to cover the most recent studies, with this time range being chosen arbitrarily. While acknowledging the important contribution of book articles to intellectual production, we selected only those studies that were available on the internet, as the intention was to investigate what presence the topics of diversity and teacher education had on the web, taking into account the digital transformation that has been experienced for more than the last decade, from which new forms of bibliographic searches are derived.

The title or keywords of the publications selected had to include the concepts of *teacher education* (or an equivalent term) and *diversity*, or at least one related concept, such as *school inclusion*, *disability*, *exclusion*, *interculturality, differences*, because, even if the risks of assuming *a priori* concepts to approach conceptions about *others* are understood, it is also known, as Skliar (2014) says, that there are terms that exist in pedagogy and which are more approved than others when talking about diversity, and these are being used en masse in educational research.

Although no distinction was made between pre-service teacher education and in-service teacher education, all studies found relate to the training of future teachers. As regards the exclusion criteria, papers relating to the teaching identity of the teacher educators or studies specifically focused on special education were not taken into account.

A total of 12 papers were analyzed, of which 8 were *research papers* and 4 were *reflection papers*[2] (see Table 1). To collect the data, a matrix was created which included the following sections: author (s) and title; type of paper (reflection, research); purpose; concepts and definitions addressed; methods, evidence and analysis units; paradigms; relevant results; and, finally, recommendations, implications, and projections. These sections were chosen according to the structure considered for research papers (objectives, theoretical framework, methodology, results, recommendations, or projections), facilitating subsequent analysis, since with a complete plan of the various papers it is possible to note both the concepts repeatedly used in studies and the consistencies in articulation of the discourses. In other words, the analysis is based on the concepts emerging from the evidence: (a) *school integration*, (b) *educational inclusion* and (c) *interculturality/intercultural education*; and not in the matrix, which has a primarily organizational purpose.

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[1]   It is understood to be journals that are recognized in the education field, those attached to faculties of education and humanities of Chilean universities that receive contributions from researchers, educators of professionals and students interested in education topics in general.

[2]   According to the Colciencias classification (2010), a *scientific and technological research paper* is a document that presents the original results of completed research projects. On the other hand, a *reflection paper* is a document that presents the results of research completed from an analytical, interpretative or critical perspective of the author on a specific topic, using original sources.

Table 1
List of papers reviewed

Author(s)	Title	Journal
Aranda, V. (2011)	Reflexión y análisis de políticas y prácticas innovadoras a la luz de las representaciones sociales y de la necesidad de una educación intercultural en la formación inicial docente. [Reflection and analysis of innovative policies and practices in light of social representations and the need for intercultural education in initial teacher training].	Estudios Pedagógicos, 37(2), 301-314.
Bravo, A., Díaz, C., Sanhueza, S. & Friz, M. (2008)	Percepciones y actitudes de los estudiantes de pedagogía hacia la inclusión educativa. [Perceptions and attitudes of pedagogy students towards inclusive education]	Estudios Pedagógicos, 34(2), 169-178.
*Del Río, M. & Balladares, J. (2010)	Género y nivel socioeconómico de los niños: expectativas del docente en formación. [Gender and socioeconomic level of children: expectations of the teacher in training]	Psykhe, 19(2), 81-90.
Geeregat, O., Vásquez, O. & Fierro, J. (2012)	Procesos de formación inicial docente en contextos multiculturales: inclusión y exclusión. [Processes of initial teacher training in multicultural contexts: inclusion and exclusion]	Estudios Pedagógicos, 38(1), 345-351.
Gómez, V. e Infante, M. (2004)	Actitudes de los estudiantes de educación hacia la integración de personas con discapacidad y hacia la educación multicultural. [Attitudes of students of education towards the integration of people with disabilities and multicultural education]	Cultura y Educación, 16(4), 371-383.
Infante, M. (2010)	Desafíos a la formación docente: inclusión educativa. [Challenges for teacher education: educational inclusion]	Estudios Pedagógicos, 36(1), 287-297.
*Lizana, V. (2008)	Representaciones sociales sobre feminidad de los estudiantes de pedagogía en contextos de formación docente inicial. [Social representations on femininity of students of pedagogy in contexts of initial teacher training]	Estudios Pedagógicos, 34(2), 115-136.
Lizana, V. (2009)	Representaciones sociales sobre heterosexualidad y homosexualidad de los/las estudiantes de pedagogía en los contextos de formación docente inicial. [Social representations on heterosexuality and homosexuality of students of pedagogy in contexts of initial teacher training]	Estudios Pedagógicos, 35(1), 117-138.
Matus, C. e Infante, M. (2011)	Undoing diversity: Knowledge and neoliberal discourses in colleges of Education.	Discourse: Studies in the Cultural Politics of Education, 32(3), 293-307.
Quilaqueo, D. & Quintriqueo, S. (2008)	Formación docente en educación intercultural para contexto mapuche en Chile. [Teacher training in intercultural education in the Mapuche context in Chile]	Cuadernos Interculturales, 6(10), 91-110.
Rubio, M. (2009)	El desarrollo de la competencia comunicativa intercultural en la formación inicial docente. [The development of intercultural communicative competence in initial teacher training]	Estudios Pedagógicos, 35(1), 273-286.
Tenorio, S. (2011)	Formación docente inicial y necesidades educativas especiales. [Initial teacher training and special educational needs]	Estudios Pedagógicos, 37(2), 249-265.

Note: The papers denoted by * were reviewed in the research, however, they are not considered in this manuscript because the study prioritized concepts of integration, school exclusion, and interculturality associated respectively with identity markers in function of the capacity or learning and the ethnicity.

The method used is critical discourse analysis (CDA) which, in the interests of revealing the structural relationships of domination, power, and control expressed in language (Wodak & Meyer, 2001), constitutes an analytical strategy to expose the normative and hierarchical assumptions under which diversity is being constructed based on intellectual production on teacher education. The results are discussed according to the authors' perspectives, identifying the underlying discourses in the

development of their research. Two questions form the core of this process: Who is the other? And how are they conceived from studies of diversity and teacher training?

Analysis

After searching, the first aspect perceived is that the concept of *diversity* used in most of the papers is consistent with Chilean education policy. On the one hand, from the viewpoint of Intercultural Bilingual Education Policy, cultural diversity is related to original indigenous people, while, on the other hand, the Special Education Policy considers the diversity of students in relation to special educational needs. These two markers of differences, indigenous and tied to special educational needs, are those that appear most frequently in the papers reviewed. Along with these, but less frequently, there are differences regarding nationality, class, and gender, naming the *others* as immigrants, vulnerable, or subjects with low socioeconomic status, women, and homosexuals.

Once it is identified who the *others* are conceived in the studies, the following paragraphs outline the various discourses regarding how these *others* are conceived. In order to do that, three predominant concepts will be reviewed in the analysis of the papers selected and these will be discussed in light of theoretical aspects from a critical perspective: (a) *school integration,* (b) *educational inclusion*, and (c) *interculturality/intercultural education*. Finally, we will develop a section that is intended to demonstrate approaches of diversity that, unlike proposals that shift processes towards inclusion, are aimed at dissolving the normative center from which exclusion is derived (Graham & Slee, 2008).

School integration

Two of the studies reviewed refer to a concept of integration traditionally associated with disability. On the one hand, Gomez and Infante (2004) refer to the fact that regular education must meet the special educational needs of students with disabilities through the implementation of integration projects. Likewise, the paper by Tenorio (2011) understands school integration as the manner of participation in regular education for students with disabilities: «Mineduc [the Ministry of Education] has encouraged regular schools to integrate students with disabilities into their classrooms in an attemptto respond to changes in the way of considering learning and disability …» (Tenorio, 2011, p. 252).

As proposed by Chilean educational policy, both studies relate the concept of school integration to special education, since they consider the *others* as students with special educational needs that are inserted into regular education. These definitions are attached to the social model without that being made explicit, because the studies suggest that the school context has to be adapted to the different needs of students with disabilities, in line with the ideas of Palacios (2008), where it is society that must be prepared and designed to meet the needs of all subjects.

These conceptions about school integration in the papers demonstrate that a change of model is being considered from the viewpoint of teacher education, with the emphasis moving from being exclusively on the rehabilitated subject, present in the beginnings of special education, to the emphasis being placed on the context: «[Regarding the conceptions about school integration], although with various students a traditional paradigm (medical-clinical) takes precedence regarding disability, there is a newer focus on concepts such as *special educational needs*, *curricular adjustments*, and *inclusion*» (Tenorio, 2011, p. 263).

Another important aspect is that studies addressing integration as one of the central concepts share the purpose of investigating the attitudes and views of students in teacher education on issues related to special educational needs and teaching strategies to address them. Thus, for example, Gómez and Infante's study (2004) addresses the attitudes of future teachers towards people with disabilities and the integration of cultural minorities, since this is considered to be fundamental for the preparation and implementation of educational integration projects. Along the same lines, Tenorio (2011) underlines the importance of teachers' attitudes towards integration, which are influenced by knowledge of the subject and the ability to provide an educational response to the students who need it.

This shows, on the one hand, that the studies cited attribute great importance to the attitudes of future teachers to the *other*, approaching the construction of notions of diversity from what is known about the subjects. However, a kind of essentialism of difference can be perceived, since Gomez and Infante (2004) and Tenorio (2011) both refer to special educational needs (SEN) or disability, thus creating new forms of exclusion by placing a specific label on a certain group (Graham & Slee, 2008): «School integration as an educational phenomenon is not considered in the same way by the different actors regarding the benefits it could provide to children with SEN and the rest of the students» (Tenorio, 2011, p. 254).

This coincides with the study by Infante, Matus, and Vizcarra (2011) where they argue that the concept of *diversity* includes identity markers defined in terms of a hegemonic standard, such as talking about people with disabilities or students with special educational needs.

In the same vein, we observe that teacher training addresses integration issues in isolation within the school curriculum and, as Skliar (2007) says, falls into a trend of presenting diversity in terms of curricular content that suggests how to work with the problem didactically and defines ways of relating to the other, increasing the distance between *us* and the *others*. This can be clearly observed in the paper published by Gómez and Infante (2004): «The Pedagogy students assessed in this study have not received intentional and explicit education in attention to diversity in their professional curriculum…» (p. 381).

Educational inclusion

Four of the papers reviewed address elements related to inclusion. It is interesting that two of them focus on maintaining a relationship between inclusion and disability/special educational needs, while the others address this concept from a critical perspective which, unlike previous studies, analyzes inclusion from the viewpoint of spaces of exclusion. In the study conducted by Bravo, Díaz, Sanhueza, and Friz (2008), the concept of inclusion is understood in line with the conventions and other actions of international organizations, considering diversity from a perspective of universal rights: «Inclusive education can offer an effective education to the majority of students and improve the efficiency (cost-effectiveness) of the entire education system» (Bravo, Díaz, Sanhueza, & Friz, 2008, p. 170).

This concept of inclusion leaves certain questions unanswered regarding how diversity is being understood in the educational field, because behind the interest in making the school a place that each and everyone can inhabit, there would also be economic benefits when measuring inclusion in terms of school effectiveness and efficacy. This is in line with the findings of the research conducted by Infante et al. (2011), who express the desire to expand neoliberal economic policy through education, operating under the neutrality with which differences are seen with a «reassuring» equality and encouraging individual competition.

This way of understanding diversity from the free market viewpoint is being transferred to teacher education, in which it is necessary to provide future teachers with tools to successfully promote equality and inclusion, but without questioning the hegemony under which the relationship *ability versus disability* or special need is presented. This coincides with the findings of Matus and Infante (2011), who state that through «effective» programs, technocratic and essentialist discourses of difference become popular.

The vision of inclusive education is equated here with the concept of school integration discussed above, demonstrating a position based on the social model of disability, while students included are viewed beyond their *deficiencies*, as individuals with the same right to education and, therefore, it is the school as a social structure which must adapt to different needs, thus preventing situations of marginalization and exclusion (Ferreira, 2011).

From this point of view, inclusion causes a change in school learning environments (Skliar, 2011), including the methodological resources, associated with an instrumental view of diversity that repeatedly appears in discourses on teacher training and which is intended to give future teachers the tools needed to provide the appropriate educational response. «We totally agree that the University has

to equip education professionals with the knowledge and tools necessary to meet the demands of student diversity, which should form part of study plans for pre-service teachers' education» (Bravo et al., 2008, p. 177).

From another perspective, the study conducted by Geeregat, Vásquez, and Fierro (2012) questions inclusive education, as implemented in the school system currently: «The education system masks the ideology that supports it; it hides the lack of options behind a false kindness that "includes" the negation of the other» (p. 349). To the authors, inclusion means that the others deny their knowledge and expression of being, renouncing their culture to accept a set of rules, values, and beliefs that are often not consistent with their lifestyle. Meanwhile, Infante's paper (2010) critically analyzes the concept of *inclusion*, understanding it as the action of 'bringing in', where someone is incorporated into an implicit center defined by normative assumptions:

> The concept of inclusion refers to the construction of «others» (a student that strays from the norm) to one that has not had the privilege or, in actual words, the right to be in these educational spaces. It seeks, therefore, to move those others towards regular spaces that are socially and culturally constructed as centers (p. 289).

This notion of inclusion, defined by normative assumptions, is consistent with the principles of Veiga-Nieto (2001), where inclusion is seen as an order operation that is necessary to approach the other to recognize it and establish knowledge about it. By identifying a difference, a distance appears between the *self* and the *other*, thus operating asymmetric relationships between two elements which maintain a difference between each other.

Besides questioning the concept, the papers with a critical perspective pose significant challenges in teacher education. Thus, Infante's text (2010) outlines a new challenge in defining inclusive practices as from teacher education, which implies «questioning existing normative assumptions about learning and teaching in order to respond to the diversity of subjects involved in the educational context …» (p. 288). Similarly, to Geeregat et al. (2012), «the challenge is to build new epistemological frameworks that effectively allow visualization of a diverse, inclusive, and surprising reality that constantly questions us regarding established frameworks» (p. 350).

Both experiences agree on the necessary questioning of the normative parameters that have been imposed in the education system which, in turn, allows new notion of diversity to be constructed. Thus, the rethink of teacher education could be oriented towards the decentralization of scientific-technical knowledge to describe diversity in order to open spaces of criticism and reflection about how the *others* are defined and how future teachers and educators are positioned with regard to those others (Pérez de Lara, 2001).

Interculturality/intercultural education

Two readings can be made of the concept of *interculturality*. On one hand is the *official perspective*, which corresponds to the adoption of treaties of international organizations based on a democratic discourse that agrees on viewing indigenous peoples as groups with different collective rights, framed within a *neo-indigenism* that is consistent with neoliberal policies. On the other hand, there is an approach to the *critical perspective* of interculturality, which shows the asymmetrical relationships between the hegemonic culture and indigenous people, demonstrating how intercultural education is not only an educational decision, but also a political one (Sartorello, 2009).

Regarding the official perspective, one of the papers refers to the «intercultural pedagogical approach» that allows dialogue between different cultures, clarifying that intercultural education is not only aimed at students of Mapuche origin, but is also targeted at non-Mapuche students. «[This approach] involves evaluating the identity, content, and educational purposes of the *others* for educating the individual, construction of knowledge, and dialogic competences between Mapuche and western sociocultural knowledge in the school environment» (Quilaqueo & Quintriqueo, 2008, p. 93).

Although this study makes some approaches towards the critical perspective, since, as will be discussed below, it is concerned with situations of negation and concealment of Mapuche culture, throughout this paper, it can be observed that interculturality is viewed from a socio-educational

context, leaving aside the political context and, therefore, concealing the power relationships in the construction of new relationships between the state and indigenous communities (Sartorello, 2009).

On the other hand, from a critical perspective, Aranda (2011) understands interculturality as a way of addressing cultural diversity based on respect, which implies establishing horizontal relationships with individuals who belong to diverse human groups (ethnically, culturally, and socially). In this sense, intercultural education is seen as the possibility of dialogue between different cultures, seeking mutual enrichment, recognition, and the appreciation of that diversity in society, particularly in the school.

What distinguishes the latter approach from the former (official) is that the rejection of all manifestations of asymmetrical relationships is evident, being critical of subordinated integration processes in which one hegemonic culture hosts another less influential culture, as is done from a multicultural viewpoint (Aranda, 2011).

From that same critical perspective, Rubio's study (2009) understands interculturality as an approach in which sociopolitical transformations are determining factors, rather than the pedagogical situation, to which bilingual intercultural programs are frequently reduced from an official perspective. «It is not enough that the intercultural approach should adopt a political approach that calls for transformations of oppressive structures, but it must also formulate strategies to allow conflict negotiation …» (Rubio, 2009, p. 279).

As in Aranda's paper (2011), in which the considered notion of interculturality defines the others, not solely by racial ethnic aspects, but also incorporates other markers of difference in relation to issues of gender, class, culture, and disability, but without falling into essentialism, which coincides with the point made by Rivera (1999, as cited in Walsh, 2010), who states that the problematic focus of interculturality does not lie solely in the indigenous and afro-descendant populations, but in all sectors of the population, including white westernized mestizos.

Regarding teacher education among the proposals of the papers related to the critical perspective, Rubio (2009) suggests the need to investigate notions of identity managed by student teachers, shifting toward the concept of changing identity, thus avoiding the imposition of static categories to which subjects are reduced. This is immersed in continuous questioning of traditional teaching practices and the school as an institution:

> Training of [intercultural communicative competence] in initial teacher educations must start with an understanding of the historical development of the school in our country, the oppressive ways in which its civilizing mission was executed, and its contribution to shaping the dominant version of national identity (Rubio, 2009, p. 283).

In the same vein, Aranda (2011) supports critical reflection, this time towards everyday teaching practices to transform representations and imaginaries, and contribute to the deconstruction of prejudices and stereotypes that student teachers bring with them:

> It is necessary to make a proposal of curricular intervention in initial teacher training to facilitate the initiation of critical reflection on everyday teaching practices in order to transform ... the representations and imaginaries and contribute to deconstruction of prejudices and stereotypes (p. 306).

Diversity understood from the perspective of exclusion

In the studies reviewed it is interesting to observe that the concept of diversity from the perspective of teacher education is not only associated with educational responses, such as school integration, inclusive education, or intercultural education, but it has also advanced towards the conception of the *other* based on the inherent exclusion to the traditional school.

Beyond the exclusion in the school space, Infante (2010) discusses how the limited notions of inclusion that ensure the objectification of the individual difference —for example, through the

imposition of labels on students— can result in new forms of exclusion. In the words of Slee (2001), the intervention of traditional models from special education produces a facade in the school, where exclusionary practices shift to the interior. «[The National Policy on Special Education] has legitimized new practices of exclusion within the school. Specifically, there is an urgent need to establish accurate diagnostic categories for those students …» (Infante, 2010, p. 290).

In this way as part of the analysis of exclusionary practices, Rubio (2009) uses the *dialectic negation of the other*, understood as the symbolic exclusion of ethnic and cultural groups that is not about depriving these groups of certain spaces, but is a *negation* that also integrates the concealment of cultural differences, uniting the *others* in one large homogeneous mass.

The paper by Quilaqueo and Quintraqueo (2008) understands *negation* as the way in which the education system has traditionally obscured the world view of indigenous people, imposing Western knowledge over Mapuche knowledge. Tenti (2008) calls this «exclusion of knowledge» in the sense that the very differences of subordinated social groups are not valued by the school establishment and thus become obstacles to learning:

> Negation is understood as a process associated with a hegemony of power and of Western knowledge that denies and eliminates the Mapuche subject from their own knowledge. Thus, the subject is conditioned to assume a state of inferiority in the school environment and situations of social relationships with the non-Mapuche (Quilaqueo & Quintriqueo, 2008, p. 94).

Along with these notions of negation, the aforementioned papers agree that concealment is another condition resulting from the prevailing homogeneity, which arises in two ways: on the one hand, from society which, with a tradition and ideology of miscegenation, has led to the *concealment* of the very ethnic and cultural diversity of each country (Rubio, 2009) and, on the other hand, from the same individuals who, to avoid situations of discrimination, *conceal* their sociocultural characteristics to establish relationships with people who are different from their community.

Furthermore, this concealment of one's own culture to achieve integration into society is not solely experienced by indigenous people, since Lizana's study (2009) shows how homosexual and heterosexual people are governed by the *law of discretion*, that regulates the constant and unvarying conditions and qualities of the behavior of individuals: «Homosexuals and heterosexuals will be accepted by the community as long as they are discrete» (Lizana, 2009, p. 127). In these two cases, both regarding indigenous identity and being homosexual/heterosexual, there are regulations that govern the behavior of individuals to avoid exclusion, in the school system in this case. According to Duschatzky and Skliar (2001), in order for otherness to be «well regarded» within cultural diversity, it must be deracialized and desexualized, shedding its identifying marks to be like everyone else.

Final discussion

After having analyzed the papers reviewed and having emphasized the most important concepts that emerge when defining diversity from the perspective of teacher education's researchers, presented below is a discussion that seeks to reveal the conceptual assumptions that influence the construction of the *other*.

Based on the most important results, it follows that the place of the *others* is still inhabited by subjectivities that define them as *minorities* to whom static labels are assigned: students with special needs, people with disabilities, indigenous people, homosexuals, and individuals with low socioeconomic status, as shown in the studies reviewed. This is not new, since it is consistent with the findings of research, such as that by Infante et al. (2011) and Infante and Matus (2011), in which discourses of diversity that essentialize the differences are evident. However, from the viewpoint of intellectual production on teacher education it is interesting that these categories are established in the discourses as absolute truths which, instead of questioning essentialisms, reproduce the ways of «seeing» the others.

Naming the *others* goes hand in hand with how they have been conceived. Therefore, educational proposals such as school integration, educational inclusion, and intercultural education have constructed *diversity* as that which is formed by students with learning, cultural, and linguistic needs, among others, and therefore is the society, and in this case the school, which must be transformed to become an open space for everyone. However, the difficulty outlined here is that a construction is made of the *diverse subject* based on normative assumptions that define the notion of diversity and impose a barrier between *us* and the *others* (Duschatzky, 1996; Pérez de Lara, 2011).

This clearly has implications for teacher education because the assertions of some of the papers reviewed reveal the importance of prospective teachers having sufficient tools to deal with diversity. So, thinking of the relationship with the *others* from the norm suggests that a certain group is missing or lacking something and, therefore, an effective and efficient proposal is required in the school context to move them closer to the idealized center (Graham & Slee, 2008). In this regard, Matus and Infante (2011) suggest that there is a kind of instrumentalization of the teachers' knowledge towards difference, while strategies and techniques are prioritized over critical reflection.

These new ways of talking about diversity which promote «equality» operate under the logic of the neoliberal economic model. To illustrate this, based on the political equality demanded by civil rights movements of lesbians and gays, the principles of Duggan (2003) are taken up again. She argues that neoliberal policies do not reject heteronormative assumptions but, on the contrary, they reinforce them, promoting a privatized and depoliticized gay culture. This could be compared with discourses about educational inclusion and interculturality present in some of the papers reviewed, in which existing educational policies are not questioned but instead are reaffirmed, giving form to a conception of the *others* in the research defined from the perspective of society hegemonic groups in relation with race, class, ethnicity, ability, etc. On the other hand, they reproduce a view of the *diverse subject* that must keep their differences discrete, with no debate in teacher education of the neutrality with which differences are seen in the school.

However, discourses of diversity were also identified, different from hierarchical views to define the *others*, showing that in teacher education there is resistance to the essentialist notions with which the diverse subject has been constructed. Thus, the research undertaken from critical positions has become potential *lines of flight* which, as described by Deleuze and Guattari (2002) in their analysis of the segmentarity of society, flee or escape binary organizations and cause destabilization. In our case, the position of these investigations destabilizes the discourses implemented from the teacher education, which define diversity in terms of normalcy and difference.

This leads to reflection about how to understand the relationship between research in teacher education and diversity, going beyond the investigation of representations and attitudes of student teachers toward the *others* that are frequently present in the papers reviewed. Thinking of educational research that questions and resists the structures of power that reproduce static identities, where the *diverse subjects* are still the distant and foreign *others*, can become a way to (trans) form one's view.

Conducting research that is allowed to go through the experience, understood as «that which happens to us» (Larrosa, 1996, as cited in Contreras, 2010) with the differences, would contribute to the construction of relationships with the *other* from the perspective of hospitality, welcoming and respecting their otherness (Derrida, 1997; Skliar, 2014).

Certain projections emerge here that can contribute to the discussion on the construction of the *other* from the perspective of teacher education. Indeed, it is important to underline that contextualized instances of multidisciplinary dialogue and discussion become the main ways of critically addressing the various notions of difference. Along with this, and now with greater ambition, it is essential to create spaces where different points of view may be put into play, from politics, academia, the school, and social programs in relation to notions of normalcy, differences, diversity, inclusion, and exclusion. It is also important to conduct more critical studies that raise the profile of research practices in light of the difference, different from the approaches from which the *other* has traditionally built in teacher education, all in order to open a wide range of possibilities for pre-service teachers or in-service teachers to be able to position themselves in front of their students not from the *absence* or the *problem*, but instead from a perspective of equality that, according to Contreras (2014), destroys borders and welcomes the particularities of every person.

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