

Intercultural Bilingual Education in Ecuador as a site
of negotiation and struggle over difference: A case
study of an Amazonian Kichwa school system

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Abstract

The aim of this research is to study the process of Intercultural Bilingual Education (IBE) in Ecuador as a means of formulating, representing and incorporating 'indigenous' knowledge into formal schooling. The study is based on an ethnographic case study of a Kichwa Amazonian territory.

I frame schooling within the historical struggle for recognition as generating an intrinsic tension between the need to demonstrate 'sameness' and simultaneously 'difference'. I contrast between two theoretical trends conceptualizing intercultural education as a means of positioning epistemological pluralism. Through textual analysis of education policy and government discourse, I demonstrate a utilitarian notion over cultural difference and suggest a serious undermining of the active participation of diverse political actors in policy decision-making.

Locally I identify the demand for recognition of difference in schooling, is express as 'una educacion propia' (our own education). I argue, this reflects the political objective of constructing an 'intercultural utopia' (Rappaport, 2005) as means of a decolonizing education. From my analysis of classroom observations I suggest little evidence of teaching practice that aims to reveal epistemological plurality. I interpret teachers generate equivalence between 'official' and 'local' knowledge, creating a disjuncture between what they enunciate and what corresponds to the school subject. I conclude that classroom practice does not aim to put into dialogue different forms of knowledge whether this is to contest or expand official knowledge. I propose however that identifying intercultural education practice limited to an epistemological concern, could in effect inhibit the actual enactment of difference, I suggest takes place in the classroom.

By shifting the focus of analysis away from an epistemological concern, to consider ontological divergence, I propose difference passes unnoticed whilst existing as continued possibilities of 'worlding' (Latour, 1994; Blaser, 2009) within the classroom.

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Introduction

The overall aim of this research project is to explore how the emergence and establishment of what is known in Latin America as 'Intercultural Bilingual Education' is translated into practice in the classrooms of a particular indigenous territory. At the time of my research the education system in Ecuador was undergoing an extraordinary structural and political overhaul, discursively positioned by central government as a necessary move to improve the quality of education for all sectors of society. These changes involved the centralization of the bilingual education system under the single governance of the Ministry of Education. This led to the claim by the indigenous movement that the existing possibilities for their direct participation in the decision-making process were being undermined and with this in effect, their relative autonomy to establish an appropriate education system for their communities. The indigenous movement accused the government of reneging on the significant social and political achievements in terms of collective cultural rights that had been gained over the previous thirty years. The period from 2009 onwards in particular has witnessed a significant change in the power relationships between distinct socio-political actors regarding the possibilities for defining, formulating and implementing an intercultural bilingual education.

Through this thesis I explore and contextualize the processes involved in recognizing difference within state education in Ecuador. I explore the inherent tension between the demand for equal recognition and the claim to difference within multicultural politics. This tension, as raised by Taylor (1994), implies recognition on the basis of assumed "sameness" and simultaneously, the need to recognize "particularity" as a universal. Inevitably this creates a requirement to demonstrate difference in terms of 'particularity', which in turn essentializes the process of reproducing cultural ethnic identity. However, as I shall demonstrate, it is also important to recognize in an analysis of the production of cultural discourse that this is a dynamic, multi-sited process involving the interrelationship between distinct social actors at specific moments in time.

With regard to formal schooling as a site of cultural transmission and knowledge production, my research aims to encompass how 'different knowledge' is conceptualized, claimed and recognized in cultural discourse production. Following an analysis of how difference is produced, at a discursive level I question how this compares with how difference may be presented and enacted upon in the school classroom of a particular indigenous territory.

The main focus of my research is to trace the shifting power relationships between different socio-political actors and how this determines the possibilities for defining, formulating and contesting the implementation of an intercultural bilingual education on the ground.

The research questions, which frame the structure of this thesis, are:

- How is interculturalism theoretically framed in the context of IBE?
- What has been the function of state education as part of the struggle for recognition?
- How do shifting power relationships between political actors delineate the definition of IBE at a discursive level?
- How is IBE interpreted and discursively constructed at the local level?
- How is 'difference' as unauthorized knowledge inserted into classroom practice in the case of a particular indigenous territory?

In order to answer these questions, I have conducted my research by employing discourse analysis of official texts and also conduct an analysis of the various discourses relating to the definition of IBE by diverse political actors at the national and local level at different periods of time. In order to historically contextualize what is understood by intercultural education, I explore the emergence of formal schooling as it takes shape in the particular location of the Kichwa Amazonian territory in which I conducted my main ethnographic research. I carry out a textual analysis of the historical archives created by the Dominican Missionaries and contrast these with the oral accounts of the elders describing

the establishment of formal school through to the present, from their own lived experiences.

The opportunity to carry out a school-based ethnographic study was a key element of the research as I was able to explore at first-hand how intercultural bilingual education was interpreted and translated on the ground. Consequently, I was able to place the discursive construction of IBE at this local level within the context of the broader political and theoretical framing of IBE. I then moved on to compare the implications of how IBE is framed discursively with the reality on the ground as it is applied in the classrooms of this particular indigenous territory.

From a philosophical perspective, I analyse the conceptualization of the term 'interculturalism' related to education, tracing the convergent vision and inherent tension that exists over the framing of an 'ideal' intercultural education practice. A key objective of this research is to contribute to the academic debate that problematizes the nature and practice of IBE by contrasting what occurs in the classroom, with how IBE is formulated at different discursive levels.

I contrast the discursive construction of what is understood to be intercultural education practice with how cultural specificity is translated into practice in the school classroom. I query the extent to which it is possible to incorporate 'indigenous/local knowledge' into the context of the school classroom as a means of challenging the universality of 'official knowledge'. I use the term 'official knowledge' as that which is legitimized through an official curriculum, and therefore taught as specific school subjects, usually in the form of school textbooks (Apple, 2013; Ball, 2013). I question the extent to which as a researcher I am able to 'see' difference and the implications therefore, over how to identify 'indigenous knowledge' in the formal space the school classroom represents.

My own position and rationale for this research

The motivation for this research emanates from my own experience as an educator both in formal and informal education, which led to my political

engagement with indigenous and environmental activism against oil exploitation projects in the Amazonian region of Ecuador. During this time, I came into contact with having to legalistic 'language' and everyday language spoken in this region and though both were in the medium of Spanish, which I am a native Speaker myself, understanding what was stated and meant, involved a steep learning process.

In 2004, I arrived in a small town in the central Ecuadorian Amazon region, just at the moment when the law encompassing the right to prior consultation by indigenous groups over state oil exploitation in their lands and territories was being implemented. It was the first time I had read and begun to make sense of legislative language and its implications. At first this was as foreign to me as though I were reading a completely different language. Similarly, I also came to realize that although I could understand the words local people were saying (since the words were in Spanish), I really could not understand what I was being told, and neither did it seem that I was able to make myself understood.

This legislation was clearly an abusive act against people who were locally dependent on the land as their main means of livelihood. There was an array of different social and political actors involved, assuming oppositional positions within this conflict, though curiously, many claimed to have adopted a neutral position. Many of these socio-political actors undertook a role of 'transmitting information' to the local population with the intention of giving them more details that would help them to make informed decisions. It soon became clear that the whole process of 'informing' translated into dictating what should be said and done by local organizations and their people. From their different standpoints, most of these actors were over-confident in their ability to recognize what was at stake. Admittedly, in hindsight, this later criticism could also have been applied to my small group of activist colleagues (university graduates from the capital city of Quito) and myself.

On the other hand, many local socio-political actors, gave an outward impression of being frustratingly inactive, were often highly conciliatory, with some being all-too-keen to act out of personal short-term gain to the detriment of collective local

interests. However, rather unexpectedly, various local leaders who had previously preferred to stay in the background began to take action. Community assemblies were held independently of those organized as part of the consultation process, several local women actors who previously had not spoken out nor appeared to hold much sway, began to openly challenge the actions of various local leaders and very soon a protest demonstration was organized. Entire communities, some a half-a-day's walk or more from the town, came together and marched in protest against the consultation process. The streets of the provincial town were suddenly transformed by a profusion of banners and people shouting out protest slogans against the consultation process and oil exploitation in general. Local youth groups and radical councillors helped to prepare the town coliseum for a large assembly, where more than four thousand people eventually gathered. After many public outpourings and denunciations of the official consultation programme, an opposition manifesto was drawn up on the basis that the process was a violation of human rights and deeply unconstitutional. As a consequence, a lawsuit asserting the unconstitutionality of the consultation process was presented to the Constitutional Court, gaining international coverage. For myself, of course, this was an exciting and elating experience, one which I had been part of, but I was unable to comprehend the full extent of what it was had taken place.

At the time of all these events I began to stay with a local indigenous family, whom I subsequently continued living with over a period of several years and naturally, we formed a close friendship. Although obviously concerned about the events described above, surprisingly at first the family did not appear to be alarmed or challenged by what was occurring around them. It was only after several years later when I realized that the political and social threats were a constant to them, varying only in the level of intensity, was I able to appreciate that although the events in the way they unfolded were new to them, the scenario, political strategies and types of voices heard, were nothing particularly new to this family.

As I continued to live with my friends and their young daughter, I was able to take things in more slowly. Without noticing, I could make sense of what people said

to me and gradually I was understood in return. However, the improved communication began to unsettle me, and I found myself facing a new dilemma. I came to understand that on occasions my friend's interpretations were not metaphorical allusions at all but were expressed as literal descriptions of events or explanations for why certain events occurred in a certain way. The family sometimes spoke of corporal changes and communication with other beings that shared the human capacity of free will. Trained as a biologist/ecologist, I felt uncomfortable with these types of explanations. I could of course have settled the matter by translating my dilemma into 'their beliefs' and reinterpreting 'their knowledge' into terms that fitted my own understandings of the world. However, this felt somewhat hypocritical, since having been involved in activist work aimed at protecting and recognizing the need for self-determination and relative territorial autonomy of local indigenous communities, 'their beliefs' and 'their knowledge' had been mobilized and legitimized within the political conflict. If I were then going to maintain my confident view of scientific knowledge as being paramount over 'their beliefs' I would simply be acting in the same way I had been protesting against: I would be continuing to separate and marginalize the possibilities of sustaining different ways of living precisely in terms of different ways of knowing and being.

Several years later, I was confronted by another unexpected dilemma, when my friends decided to use the little economic surplus they had to send their daughter, and later their son, to the local religious school in the centre of town. On account of them living in the town centre, they had the choice of either sending their children to the local public school or the intercultural bilingual school in one of the nearby communities. However, as parents who wanted the best for their children, they insisted the catholic school provided the best level of education available to them.

Hence, I have been motivated to carry out this research from both the sharing of experiences and being unsettled by them. I have understood this endeavour as an on-going project, principally as a means to delve into, and have the luxury of, exploring that which with much patience, my friends have attempted to explain but which I have not been able to fully comprehend. It is a way of highlighting this

lived experience as a common everyday tension, linked to what is also a significant theoretical educational concern. How to acknowledge difference over what counts as knowledge and to what extent this can be brought into the classroom, is a core issue of this study. My aim is not to settle this dilemma, but to have an opportunity to explore and contribute to an on-going debate. Specifically, my intention is to shed light on the shifting possibilities and limitations within formal education for recognizing difference and reproducing distinct ways of knowing.

Brief background of case study

Informed by my previous experience, as described above, I decided to conduct my research in a location that could be identified as providing relatively optimal conditions for the incorporation of local knowledge within formal education. The school location I chose lies within a legally recognized Kichwa Amazonian territory along the Bobonaza River in the province of Pastaza, in the southern central Ecuadorian Amazon region. The Bobonaza River flows into Peru and the particular territory is relatively close to Peruvian Amazon border. In order to preserve the inhabitants' right to relative anonymity, I have changed the name of this collective territory to Pumamaki.

Since Pumamaki is not accessible by road, the only options for reaching it are by air or river, involving a flight by propeller airplane from the Shell airfield, fifteen minutes from the provincial capital of Puyo, or downriver by motor canoe, a journey that normally takes between four-to-six hours. Pumamaki is made up of approximately one thousand members, though a large number of people who live outside the territory still identify themselves as belonging to it. The legally recognized and demarcated territorial extension is of approximately 135,000 hectares. From archival records, Pumamaki is identified as a separate indigenous missionary settlement dating back to the late 1800s.

The first formal school in Pumamaki was established in 1942 as a public state school, although the Dominican Catholic mission had been providing rudimentary

education in the form of catechism lessons from much earlier; I explore this in more depth in chapter two. At the time of my research, there were five primary schools and one secondary school serving approximately four hundred students with thirty-two teachers. The longest-serving primary school was one that was defined as '*completa*', which meant there was one teacher for each respective school grade, while the other four primary school '*pluridocente*' had one teacher who would be responsible for two or more grades.

Pumamaki is currently composed of one central community and four outlying communities. The largest and oldest primary school is located within the central community, close to the main square where there is a church and a communal house where community assemblies and political meetings are held. The other primary schools are located in each of the four outlying communities. The secondary school is located next to the runway where small light aircraft land and take off, usually once a day, though this can vary from no aircraft arriving for several days, to two or three arriving daily.

The people of Pumamaki self-identify as belonging to this territory as part of a particular collective ethnic identity, inscribed within the broader political national classification of Amazonian Kichwas. Most people in Pumamaki are subsistence farmers with yucca being the staple food source, converted into a thick brew known as '*chicha*'. In contrast to other Amazonian Kichwa communities, such as those living in the neighbouring province of Napo, the communities along the Bobonaza River continue to make *chicha* by firstly mashing yucca (root manioc) by hand a followed by the action of chewing the mashed yucca, a role reserved for the women of the community, which begins the fermentation process. The *chicha* is stored in large ceramic containers some measuring over fifty centimetres in diameter and approximately a meter tall, made by hand, again by the women of the community. *Chicha* must always be available and is served whenever anyone arrives at the house. While some families keep chickens and some farmed fish in small pools, fishing in the rivers and hunting wild animals continues to be a regular activity conducted by the men and young boys. Local traditional practices such as these continue to sustain day-to-day livelihoods. It is for these reasons that Pumamaki offers significant opportunities for exploring how

local knowledge that is associated with everyday practices can be incorporated within the space of formal schooling.

However, it is important to note that Pumamaki is in no way isolated from the '*outside*' world. Almost all families have members living outside the territory, most commonly in Puyo but also throughout the national territory and some have moved beyond national borders. Also, most adults, and quite a significant number of children, have travelled to the main city or beyond and some families do this on a regular basis. As with other indigenous territories of the region, this community represents a dynamic space of interaction between diverse cultural practices and forms of livelihoods.

Pumamaki can be understood as a relatively strong, politically-organized indigenous territory with important networks at a national and international level, as described in more detail in chapters two and four. Relative to the size of its population, as from the 1960s onwards, the community represents an important and influential political actor at a national and international level. During the early 90s, the women of Pumamaki mobilized the leadership of Pumamaki's political organization to initiate a process of resistance against government plans for oil extraction in their territory, which continues to this day. As I describe in chapter 4, the leadership of Pumamaki has been able to establish important networks at a national and international level between other indigenous organizations and collaborate with NGOs, academics, etc., and in so doing, has been exposed to experimental educational initiatives and in-situ teacher training programs which other indigenous communities in the area have not experienced. It is these particular circumstances of Pumamaki, as a politically-organized indigenous community, able to sustain local forms of livelihoods, with long-established schools and a trained teaching body that makes it a significant space in which to research how intercultural education is translated and implemented on the ground.

It was on account of my previous knowledge and experience of working on popular educational initiatives as an environmental activist in the region that I intentionally chose, and fortunately was granted the opportunity, to conduct this

particular research in Pumamaki. I was aware that Pumamaki could represent a best-case scenario from which to explore the opportunities and limitations of how local actors interpret and negotiate and incorporate local knowledge into the space of formal schooling.

Research Methodology

My research is based on linking changes in education policy and governance, from the perspective of the national context of 'ethnic state relations' (Ramos, 1998), with that of an in-depth ethnographic study of a local educational context.

I applied grounded theory (Charmaz, 2006) in order to explore relevant aspects from the analysis of my interviews, informal conversations and observations, framed by the following specific themes:

- Levels of participation in decision-making in IBE: identifying the particular socio-political actors involved
- Definition over cultural specification: considering language specificity and diverse knowledge systems
- Pedagogic concerns, description of curricular content and forms of teaching practice

Applying grounded theory enabled me to reconsider and extend my initial theoretical framing, resulting in my questioning of some of these conceptualizations and the inclusion of other theoretical concepts in order to describe and explain my research findings. I began my fieldwork by conducting interviews with educational experts who had experience of participating in Bilingual Intercultural Education (IBE) system. I then interviewed the education officials who were currently in post and directly involved with IBE. For all of these, I requested specific consent by writing a letter of introduction, explaining the interest of my research and the areas I aimed to cover, as well as where I was based, and my contact details. At the time of the research, education in general but particularly education relating to ethnic nationalities, was a politically

contentious matter, therefore most of the individuals I interviewed, while not objecting to my taking notes, preferred me not to record the conversation verbatim. In these cases, I have avoided personally identifying those I interviewed and have instead referred to their official job title, giving a description, rather than a specific citation of their opinions and evaluations. On other occasions, interviewees did grant me explicit permission to record their views.

I carried out an analysis of policy documents throughout this period following the broad scheme described above; I identified particular concepts and elements of analysis as I examined the documents and interviews. The range of policy documents I analysed included: updates and changes to the 'Intercultural Education Law' (LOEI) of 2011, curricula reforms specifically targeting bilingual intercultural education and guiding documents including evaluations based on measuring education quality through standard testing. I also reviewed official discourse expressed through national media and government webpages, throughout the period of my research. I selected individuals to interview on the basis of their specific role and level of experience relating to IBE. However, this was extended on account of the 'snowball' method, whereby further recommendations and contacts were suggested to me, by individuals initially interviewed.

At a local level I endeavoured to build up an extensive collection of descriptions relating to schooling and diverse knowledge from local sources by recording conversations with those significant actors I had access to, namely, teachers, various community leaders and elders. My aim, following Geertz (2008) notion of 'thick description' was to build a narrative relating to schooling from a local perspective.

In this way my ethnography did in certain respects follow traditional ethnographic methods by taking into consideration the importance of 'being there' (Marcus, 2011). However, in contrast to these methods, my 'being there' did not cover a sustained period of living in one particular location but was conducted through regular visits over a period of a year-and-a-half. My ethnographic school

research consisted of ten visits to Pumamaki, remaining for periods of ten days to sometimes longer than two weeks.

During my visits to Pumamaki I centred on three aspects:

- Historical contextualisation of formal schooling within the territorial location of Pumamaki
- Local discourse relating to IBE and objectives of local schooling
- Perceptions of local actors and observations of teaching practice in terms of language use and content, identified as either relating to local or official school-based knowledge

In terms of the historical contextualization relating to the introduction and function of formal schooling in Pumamaki, having gained prior permission, I conducted informal interviews with seven community elders (five women and two men). I recorded and then transcribed relevant sections of their partial life histories describing their own experience of formal schooling in Pumamaki. As part of my field diary conversations with teachers and community leaders, I recorded their childhood school experiences and the process that enabled some members of the community to become professional teachers. I had aimed to review the official documents and reports on the establishment of formal schooling in this location, however I discovered that, regrettably, the local district education office did not hold these records. I was informed that several files of records had been misplaced during a previous departmental move and no physical official documents had been kept locally. Within this area, paper records quickly disintegrate due to the humid conditions therefore no historic records were available. I was however able to obtain some general information by scouring through specific reports from the Dominican Missionary magazine published every six months from the early 1930s to mid-1950s, retained in the archival Dominican library in Quito. I was therefore able to build a narrative between the voices of the missionaries expressed in these journals and the oral histories of the elders of Pumamaki.

In order to analyse local discourse on intercultural education and the objectives of contemporary schooling in Pumamaki, I noted down and used extracts from oral discourses expressed in community assemblies, individual interviews with community leaders and everyday conversations with teachers and other members of Pumamaki. I was also able to use formal written documents published by the Pumamaki political organization in articles and reports as well as those published through social media.

Analysing classroom practice was a central element of my research, and during my stay in Pumamaki, the largest proportion of my time was focused on this. It was important to rise before 6 a.m. each morning to be ready to enter the classroom with the teachers and students at 7 a.m. I would gain permission in advance from specific teachers to join a particular class and further confirmed this with them the day before. My aim was to follow lessons conducted by all of the thirty-two teachers, at least once, and so doing I would have comprehensively covered all the schools and teaching staff. However, this became impractical due to issues of logistics and the limited time available to complete my research, so I had to make the difficult choice to miss out one of the outlying schools.

I was able to cover four of the five primary schools, observing all twelve teachers of the two centrally-located primary schools and four-out-of-six of the teachers from the two outlying schools. For the secondary school, which was also located centrally, I was able to observe all of the teachers conducting an entire lesson on at least one occasion. I focused my observations at the secondary school level on lessons pertaining to the subject of Kichwa and 'Indigenous Cosmvision'. I therefore observed these lessons on three separate occasions, being highly pertinent for my research.

My method for recording lesson observations was based and adapted from Cazden (2001) analysing classroom discourse by considering speech activities and interactions. I divided the lessons into three periods of time: introduction, main activity/theme, ending. I made notes of my observations every five minutes, relating to what type of speech activities dominated (instructions, questions, discussions) during these three periods. I divided these speech activities

according to the speaker i.e. whether student/s or teachers and the language used, i.e. whether Kichwa and/or Spanish. In terms of language use, I also made specific observations as to the medium of communication, i.e. whether oral or written. In summary, every five minutes I noted whether it was the teacher or students speaking, the language used and the general activity. My level of knowledge of Kichwa precluded me from writing down the details of conversations in the language unless they were simple question-and-answer sessions. Through my note-taking I could only record a general description of activities and interactions, revealing trends.

For more a detailed level of analysis, I referred back to audio recordings I had taken of particular sections of the lessons, which I had earlier identified as relevant from my observation notes. These included key moments when there was a noticeable switch between language use, or sustained periods of conversations in Kichwa. In terms of lesson content, I identified certain sections as being particularly significant when teachers related the themes or particular aspects of the lesson to the local context. This usually occurred at times of greater interaction and discussion in Kichwa between students and teachers. Therefore, with prior consent from the teacher involved, I recorded sections of the discussions during the classroom period. I later transcribed and translated relevant sections of these recordings with the help of my formal Kichwa teacher.

Some teachers asked for feedback from my observations. Although this was not part of my formal research and I was not assessing teaching performance, I did discuss with them some aspects of my observations. From these informal feedback sessions, I was able to inquire on an individual basis over their reasoning for particular tasks and classroom activities. This opening proved invaluable for providing a greater degree of insight over teaching priorities and issues of concern.

During my stay, I came into more frequent contact with several teachers and began to develop closer working relations with them. This helped to open up spontaneous conversations that often led to more in-depth discussions

concerning the difficulties and tensions they were experiencing as teachers. I also seized an opportunity to accompany the entire teaching body, at an early stage of my fieldwork, on a formal government two-day training workshop in the provincial capital city of Puyo, having obtained the corresponding authorization to participate.

Although I aimed to privilege a local context, I identify my research as multi-sited by following a dynamic construction over the conceptualization of intercultural education within diverse and interrelated sites (Marcus, 2011). My field notes include the entire two-year period of conducting research in Ecuador from September 2013 to July 2015, covering distinct and interacting sites. My ethnographic research did not therefore only include my visits to Pumamaki but was also undertaken in the capital city of Quito and the regional city of Puyo. Therefore, I consider I was also 'there' when living in Quito, attending protest marches and interviewing specific political actors, including indigenous leaders, education experts and education officials.

Whilst in Puyo I conducted two specific visits over a period of four weeks to one of the first urban bilingual intercultural schools (incorporating both primary and secondary school) and still currently the only IBE school in Puyo. Although specific details of my observations concerning this part of my research are not incorporated in full within the body of this thesis, nonetheless these experiences as they unfolded provided me with additional opportunities for gaining a deeper insight and understanding of the relationship between the national, regional and local spaces of interaction between socio-political actors involved with IBE.

Conducting an academic study in a 'traditional' indigenous territory implied making certain decisions and confronting some ethical dilemmas at the beginning and throughout the time of my research, including during the formal write-up period.

Ethical considerations of ethnographic research

As described above, I specifically chose Pumamaki as an appropriate location for researching the relations between local and official knowledge within the formal space of the school classroom. When I began my research, the issue of bilingual intercultural education was a relatively contentious matter but there was no specific concern at that time over the nature of the relations between Pumamaki and government institutions. Following the Anthropological American Association's ethical recommendations, I agreed with the community gatekeepers who provided me with formal authorization to enter the territory, to use pseudonyms in my written research. I used pseudonyms both in relation to the specific location as well as for the names of those people who collaborated with this work and shared their opinions and experiences with me.

When making initial contact with the community leadership, I followed the same protocol as with the officials I had interviewed, in submitting a formal letter of introduction. This was followed up by two meetings with local leaders who act as gatekeepers to the community, explaining the nature of the research and how the final manuscript might be used as a published academic document. Before entering the territory, I provided these gatekeepers with an approximate timetable of my intended visits and agreed that I would cover all personal costs of travel, food and accommodation. It was also agreed that a local coordinator (a member of the teaching body as well as part of the central leadership group) would be assigned to work with me in terms of logistical needs.

During my first visit to Pumamaki I was introduced to all the members of the teaching body and local leadership at a community assembly, where I presented my research intentions and explained what they would involve. It was at this general community assembly that I was granted official permission to conduct my research. The conditions I had to comply with, where to provide regular reports to the local leadership as well as complete the proposed workshops at the end of my research period. I also agreed that a copy of the final thesis would be submitted to them once completed and approved. Whilst acknowledging that some members of Pumamaki can read English, I will also translate significant

elements of thesis once completed, so that a wider local audience can read it directly and - if pertinent - I will agree at that time with the local actors if pseudonyms should be retained.

However, whilst complying fully with these agreements, ultimately it became clear there was an added risk due to the nature and timing of my research. During the course of my study, the relationship between the political organization of Pumamaki and central government deteriorated and reached a crisis point towards the end of 2014. Throughout this particular time, I had to suspend visits to Pumamaki for a period of approximately two months, since entry and exit into the territory was under police surveillance. While it still would have been possible to enter the area, I decided to reorganize my visits in case of any further increase in the levels of tension. Although my research was not related to the specific conflict with the government at the time, I understood how, in such tense circumstances, it could be misappropriated as a negative evaluation of intercultural education in this location. I particularly wished to avoid any possibility of my research being misused to gauge the relative quality of education provided by these teachers, potentially placing them at risk of losing their jobs and further increasing tensions. Therefore, I avoided centring the research on any particular individual and have aimed to thoroughly contextualize my research findings historically, within shifting socio-political contexts. I have attempted to avoid positioning any individual, especially teachers, in a vulnerable situation in relation to my research.

My analysis and interpretation of the lessons are not intended to reflect the teaching ability or knowledge of any particular individuals but rather the relationship between language use and forms of knowledge that enter into and are made use of in the classroom. Whilst I have made use of particular examples, providing some background to individual teachers, these examples reflect themes of analysis which emerged from my ethnographic research, and I do not aim to contrast or evaluate the teaching practices of any individual teacher. The comparisons I draw relate solely to the need to question the theoretical and discursive limits in the construction of intercultural education as an ideal practice, in relation to how teaching practice takes place on the ground. My aim has been

to contextualize and problematize classroom practice as part of the political objective and function of local schooling, understanding this as an on-going socio-historical struggle.

Personal reflections

My subjectivity and relative power position in relation to participants of my research, shifted over the time of my research and in relation to the context I was in. In Quito I felt and I believe was perceived by some as both an outsider and insider. That is, I was both a foreign research student, as well as somebody with internal knowledge and experience aligned with particular positions due to my previous participation with local communities and in collaboration with the environmental and indigenous movement. The majority of people I interviewed concerning a national perspective, where in positions of power either directly in government posts or as renowned academics, as well as significant indigenous leadership. In these cases most were telling me and explaining why and how things were as they were. Those individuals working directly in the ministry of education tended to be cautious answering mostly in the form of information. Most academics on the other hand granted me extensive time and long complex explanations often contrasting between different historical political moments. On the other hand mostly indigenous leadership and collaborators positioned against government policy though initially cautious, once it was clear I did have previous experience and had knowledge of the historical and current political scenario, were enthusiastic to converse and describe how they were experiencing and reflecting on the effects of the current moment. Being both an academic foreign research student as well as a local did provided advantages, since I was able to access and speak to a wide range of actors. However, the sheer amount of information I had and my own knowledge of the complex political scenario, was not always easy to know how to manage and reflect in my research in order to provide a full and clear interpretation.

My subjectivity and relative power position when in Pumamaki was not the same as that in Quito though equally complex. In Pumamaki I was clearly identified and

indeed did feel as an outsider, perceived as an “education expert”. This initially made it difficult to develop a relationship with teachers so that they felt comfortable with me observing classes and conversing with me. My relationship with the teachers and other local participants did slowly develop as we got to know each other and perhaps most importantly in terms of not only being seen as an “expert”. However it is important to recognize I was an outsider and was principally perceived as an “expert” reflecting my relative position of power in terms of judging and expressing outwardly the teachers practices and local education context. As I have described above and reflect in depth in chapter four I took care in avoiding evaluating and comparing specific teaching practices and have aimed to historically contextualize and provide a complex reading of the current educational scenario. However whilst I did have a relative position of power as an academic conducting research within a particular territory, as an individual I often felt knowledge-less, out of depth and vulnerable.

Travelling to and living in Pumamaki was by no means trouble-free, logistically, physically or emotionally. To begin with, I had been assigned an official local coordinator who was to help with logistics, although it quickly became obvious that I would have to do most of this on my own account.

Entering and leaving Pumamaki was not something that could be planned or scheduled precisely, rather I had to coordinate with boat owners both in Pumamaki and in Puyo for a space on the boat on the day of travel, or at the earliest, the night before. This meant that my original intention of travelling with my son was difficult to plan for with any certainty, and this turn affected my ability to coordinate my length of stay in Pumamaki. Travelling by plane was also difficult since the only way to guarantee a place was to hire the entire plane, which was too costly. There were also two plane accidents during the period of my research, one of which unfortunately proved to be serious with several fatalities, which meant I subsequently preferred to avoid this form of travel if at all possible.

For my first visit I travelled by plane with my son and husband and had arranged to stay for a month with a community elder, who was also the mother of one of

my husband's friends. The practical arrangements of staying in this house became difficult over a period of time, mostly in relation to obtaining food and preparing meals. Food was cooked on a small fire which meant only being able to use one cooking pot at a time and as our host did not eat meat, it was difficult to provide a diet that was appealing enough to encourage my young son to eat his meals. My partner who had accompanied me in order to help with the day-to-day logistics unexpectedly had to leave within the first few days. Unfortunately, both my son and I fell ill with stomach problems after the first week, leaving me with no choice but to travel home after only a week; this entailed having to wait for a further two days close to the runway for a plane to arrive which had enough vacant seats to take us.

My morale was seriously weakened at this point and though I already had experience of living in Amazonian communities, I had not stayed previously in a location, which was so difficult to access and challenging in terms of buying food and basic necessities. I did begin to doubt whether I could continue with the research project.

Following this initial visit, I decided it was more appropriate to travel alone, leaving my son and partner in Quito. This was difficult too since I did not have any way of regularly getting in touch. I would occasionally obtain contact by skype at night using the central internet site when the satellite connection was working, but this was very much a hit-and-miss affair. On the next two visits I stayed for approximately ten days in the same house as during my previous stay, this time alone since the elderly lady and owner of the house was staying in Puyo. The house was large with a raised wooden floor approximately one-and-a-half meters high and with a beautifully high thatched roof, with no external or internal walls. I slept in a tent in the house, the main nuisance at night being the resident bat, which regularly came around my tent to pay a visit. Staying alone was quite a lonely experience, particularly in the evenings and I had to rely on the good will of the neighbours to help light and sustain the fire, which I needed for cooking. On a couple of occasions, the neighbours invited me to share their meal from a hunt with them, which I was extremely grateful for. By far, the most challenging part of conducting the research in this location was obtaining and

cooking food, since I needed to bring my own supplies during my visits and there is only so much that can be carried and transported in canoe or small aeroplane. The experience of not being able to buy food since nobody was willing to sell any of their products, was novel to me, as so too was the accompanying sense and depth of utter dependency on others. When the teachers or other members described their experience of traveling 'out' of Pumamaki, and how for the most part they felt vulnerable and dependent because everything cost money 'outside', I knew exactly how they felt, but in reverse. The sense of boundaries and travelling between boundaries became a lived experience I could easily relate to, though clearly in a different way to those growing up and living in Pumamaki.

After these first few visits, I managed to arrange a stay with one of the local teachers and his family who, as I discovered, was renting out rooms to travellers. Staying with this family immediately improved my living conditions and with it, my morale. During my stay I gained a much more detailed and complex local perspective; most significantly, I no longer felt so lonely or isolated. The easier arrangements for preparing meals in no small way also helped to raise my morale. I helped with the cooking rather than having to prepare all the meals individually and in exchange for allowing me to share their meals with them, I contributed certain food products I had brought in from Puyo. I therefore had a new opportunity to reunite with my own family, my partner and our son, who was then aged six. Fortunately, the family we were staying with had four children of their own with an age span of between one and ten years, so my son also had company of his own age and spent many happy hours playing with them.

These two concurrent stages of conducting research while trying to subsist on my own, followed by a more agreeable stay in a family home together with my own family beside me, provided new insights, which I drew on for my research. Unpredictably, it was my family's presence that added value to my lived-in experience in Pumamaki on account of the shared commonality of family life with local people including the various aspects of child rearing, and this enabled me to gain a more comprehensive perspective than I could possibly have anticipated. My son was able to provide me with a child's insight and perspective that I could not have planned for as part of my formal research.

On his visits to Pumamaki, my son attended one of the local primary schools. To my surprise, he found the school experience not much different to that of his normal private day school in the capital city of Quito. For him the biggest contrast was in the level of independence he experienced. For him, the best part of going to school in Pumamaki was being able to walk to and from school on his own without wearing shoes, in common with the other children. Most significantly, he mentioned the lack of physical boundaries between the school classroom and the community itself, explaining that: “when you leave the classroom you can play wherever you want, there are no walls or gates, and nobody tells you where you can or can’t play”. As I explore further in this thesis, the absence of physical boundaries around the school is something that is currently under threat as part of the new policy regulations. My son therefore enabled me to see how the experience of attending school in Pumamaki was not only that of being in the classroom, but in a subtler sense of also the direct link of the school and community.

Prior to this period in Pumamaki, my partner and I had some shared experience of working as colleagues together in the Amazon region. Since my partner had been able to maintain his links with regional community leaders, he was already known to the leaders of Pumamaki. On the occasions when he publicly accompanied me, he was usually approached first by local leaders and was invited alongside me to attend assemblies and speak about my research. It seemed unimportant to the leaders that he was there in a supportive capacity to help look after our son. The emphasis on the male public role did not come as a surprise to me. There were also important advantages to this aspect since I had someone with me who understood the local context and was well informed from a different angle about aspects of the national and local political context. I was therefore able to discuss issues and obtain a slightly different perspective over various political aspects of my research with a second person that was acquainted with the specific context.

Another significant aspect of my research, involved learning Kichwa. To support my research project, I had taken formal lessons over a period of six months in

Quito at a private language school with a professional teacher of Kichwa whom I had already known for several years. Rumi offered invaluable assistance in translating and transcribing specific school lesson recordings. As I describe in more detail in chapter five, Rumi was at the time finalizing his university degree in language and literature in the department of education at the public University of Quito. He had grown up in the highlands and was forced to migrate to Quito as a result of land conflicts during the agrarian reforms. The process of working together in transcribing and translating classroom notes consequently led to in-depth discussions which became a significant element of my analysis. Following De la Cadena's (2015) description of her own ethnographic work through making 'partial connections' (Strathern, 2005) in conversation with others, I identify the translation work and related conversations I carried out together with Rumi as a process of 'co-labouring' (De la Cadena, 2015). This process, as de la Cadena (2015) reflected upon, provided me with the confidence to 'slow down' (Stengers, 2005) and acknowledge evident gaps that cannot be breached in translation.

All of these interactions and conversations, whether formal or informal, became part of my research when explicitly represented through my interpretation and analysis of information and events, or implicitly, allowing for my own shifting perspective as a process of constructing a partial and dynamic understanding with others.

Structure and content

This thesis is developed over five chapters, beginning with a broad theoretical analysis and social-political contextualization of IBE, to a careful, detailed reading of classroom observations, where I aimed to privilege a local perspective over the function of schooling.

In chapter one, I explore the theoretical framing by which intercultural education is conceptualized within the wider context of multicultural politics, specifically in relation to Charles Taylor's (1994) analysis of the 'politics of recognition'. From this broad theoretical framing, I consider the context of Latin America and more

specifically Ecuador, distinguishing between two theoretical tendencies: a rights-based and a decolonial-based discourse aimed at defining 'intercultural bilingual education' as an ideal pedagogic practice. I position there is convergence over the vision of intercultural education as an intrinsically critical and emancipatory process, legitimized as a means of overall social transformation towards pluralism. However, by analysing between theoretical tendencies, I propose there exists an inherent tension and divergent notions of epistemological pluralism in discussion. I conclude that each theoretical tendency positions the 'critical subject' from a different epistemological vantage point. I later use this analysis of the theoretical framing of intercultural education as an ideal practice as a notional basis from which to contrast with my own ethnographic analysis of what takes place in the classroom, in the particular location of Pumamaki.

In chapter two, through my analysis of Dominican missionary archival records and the oral histories of elders, I trace the emergence of schooling from the specific location of Pumamaki. An exclusive reliance on the records produced by dominant discourse tends to invisibilize the agency of those that are being othered, in this chapter; I draw attention to the dynamic and continuous power relations between the different social actors involved. I identify how changing attitudes towards formal schooling at the local level can be understood as part of the historical struggle to sustain social cohesion and relative territorial autonomy and I consider how the function of schooling as a means to access citizenship in this context is not simply granted from above. I propose formal schooling becomes part of a strategic response to changing national policies by local actors in their determination to achieve 'visibility' and recognition by the State as full citizens.

In chapter three I turn to the national context to examine how IBE emerged to become part of an indigenous political project that challenges the dominant assimilationist ideology of formal education. I contrast the historical moment of the late 1980s and early 90s with the current highly contentious situation that has developed over the question of who is recognized as having legitimacy to defined and implement an IBE. Following on from this, I analyse the implications of

national changes to education policy in relation to defining and representing 'indigenous/cultural' knowledge through formal schooling.

I conclude that inherent within current government policy is an essentialization from a top-down position over cultural difference. Through my analysis, I show how under current official discourse, equality is considered as equivalent to inclusivity, and suggest that inequality, in terms of the relative power to participate in decision-making, is not recognized. This reveals how inequality is being masked by through a discourse presenting equal opportunities as being 'at the heart' of a standardized education developing a meritocratic system. Further, I propose that the recent political scenario raises two serious concerns: firstly, the narrowing of possibilities for diverse political participation in decision-making and secondly, that diverse cultural knowledge is being objectified and valued as a source of information, to be applied within a dominant vision of development and society.

In chapters four and five I return to the local context of Pumamaki and focus on classroom practice. Chapter 4 provides an analysis of how local discourse concerning intercultural bilingual education is produced and expressed as a means of constructing an 'intercultural utopia' (Rappaport, 2005). Thus, the discursive construction of the local political objective is contrasted with the theoretical notion of a decolonizing educational process. An analysis is then given of the translation of this discourse into classroom practice as well as the impacts of the unfolding implementation of current education policy on teaching practices in this specific location.

I conclude by explaining the growing frustration experienced by teachers, resulting from a sense of being 'trapped', of having to demonstrate intercultural education in practice while needing to respond to two opposing political objectives. On the one hand, I argue that teachers are perceived as key agents for fulfilling the local political objective of demonstrating 'an own education' while on the other, they are being forced to demonstrate their skills as 'adequate' bilingual intercultural teachers and are evaluated as such by means of standardized assessments. I conclude that teachers are not in a position of

empowerment over teaching practice and currently are tending to reproduce hierarchical social practices rather than challenging them.

In chapter 5, through a detailed analysis of classroom transcripts as a process of co-labouring, I propose that classroom practice in Pumamaki does not reveal 'local knowledge' in dialogue with subject knowledge, as a critical education process. Alternatively, I suggest teachers create equivalence between 'local' and 'subject' knowledge, as part of their classroom practice. Through my analysis I propose that difference is present in the classroom by passing unnoticed and unchallenged. Moving my analytical focus away from the epistemological struggle at the heart of education practice, I consider the presence of 'divergent agency' (Blaser, 2009, 2014) at the centre of what is at stake from a local perspective. This is revealed through an analysis of statements made by teachers during class which seem to be expressed in standard subject-specific terms but on closer inspection discordant with what can make sense as scientific knowledge. I argue it is in this form that difference is made present in the classroom. What I recognize as 'making no sense' is what (Holbraad & Penderson, 2017) describe as an encounter with a 'nonsense' requiring an ontological openness to what is actually made present.

I contend that the emphasis made by teachers on acts of performing citizenship criteria by students in the classroom, reflects the avoidance of an epistemological confrontation taking place between systems of knowledge of unequal status. Further, I propose that the avoidance of an epistemological clash enables the enactment of ontological difference (Holbraad & Penderson, 2017; Blaser, 2009, 2014; De la Cadena, 2010, 2015) to pass unnoticed.

If, as I suggest, classroom practice can be viewed principally a performance corresponding to the function of schooling for public recognition of citizenship, equally significant therefore, is what cannot be seen. I conclude that the enactment of difference in the classroom demands an 'ontological openness' towards the presence of divergent agency, reflecting the intrinsic relationship between what occurs inside the classroom and that occurring outside. Following Stengers (2005), I endorse a call for a 'slowing down' in considering the limits of

what is defined as a 'matter of concern' from the perspective of local education practice (Stengers, 2005; Latour, 1994). I suggest formal schooling is aimed at being 'domesticated' (Greene, 2009) as a long-term process in order to minimize the impact of further marginalizing different 'ways of worlding' (Blaser, 2009, 2014). I suggest in this way the possibility of making enunciations that apparently make no sense as part of official subject knowledge by local teachers, whilst not reflecting an empowered critical subject position, can be understood as coherent within a process of mediating between 'internal and external' power relations, maintaining the school as a space to construct an intercultural utopia.

Chapter 1. Contrasting the theoretical framings over 'Intercultural Education'

This thesis is about intercultural education in Ecuador, more so, it is about exploring intercultural bilingual education as it emerges historically in the case of a particular indigenous territory. The question must be asked; why does it matter? Why, beyond the concern for those in this supposedly far away community located 5 hours downstream from the nearest road, does what happen in schools here, matter? In this chapter I establish the relevance of such an inquiry, questioning particular theoretical assumptions over how intercultural education is positioned challenging and extending emancipatory educational objectives. In particular, I question the limitations of what can be *seen* to be 'intercultural education' by critically analysing current theoretical debates framing interculturalism in relation to an ideal educational practice.

My analysis here is based on the philosophical debate for the recognition of difference, with the aim of revealing inherent tensions and underlying conceptual assumptions framing intercultural education. I position the current theoretical debates over intercultural education within the wider context of multicultural politics, specifically in relation to Charles Taylor's (1994) analysis of the 'politics of recognition'. The specific political contextualization of multicultural politics in Latin America is discussed in reference to defining 'interculturalism', linked to the historical struggle for recognition of difference.

From this analysis I suggest that intercultural education, theoretically framed as an ideal education practice, identifies 'difference' as a mechanism to reveal plurality from a critical subjective position. I develop the argument, that intercultural education is theoretical framed as an emancipatory education practice understood as the possibility of revealing epistemological diversity, whether conceptualized as challenging a dominant epistemological perspective or as expanding this epistemological perspective. In conceptualizing intercultural education practice as intrinsically about revealing epistemological diversity, I contend difference is therefore assumed as something knowable. I propose that

theoretical discourse assumes the need to reveal epistemological diversity as a mechanism of 'dialogue' across difference by developing a critical subjective position. I use the analysis developed in this chapter, to contrast with the notion of 'intercultural education' as it occurs on the ground, explored later from my own ethnographic research of classroom practice.

As a tool for analysis, I distinguish between two theoretical tendencies framing the conceptualization over 'interculturalism' in relation to education; the first theoretical tendency I describe as a Rights-based discourse and the second as a decolonial-based discourse. From this analysis, I identify a convergent vision between these discourses over intercultural education as a space of dialogue between epistemological and cultural differences in equality. I propose this convergent vision positions interculturalism as an intrinsically critical and emancipatory process of education, legitimized as a means of overall social transformation towards pluralism. However, by analysing between these theoretical tendencies, I establish there exists divergence over what is assumed as epistemological pluralism, principally in relation to the positionality of the critical subject being considered within each discourse. I conclude that each theoretical tendency positions a particular form of critical subject as having an epistemological vantage point, creating an impasse between these discourses, and an inherent tension within each discourse.

1.1 Multiculturalism and the politics of recognition

At a political level, multiculturalism is understood within the debate for equal citizenship Rights against the backdrop of a 'nation state building model' (Kymlicka, 2003, p 148) based on the concept of a monoculture national identity. As Kymlicka describes: "In this model, the state was seen as the possession of a dominant national group, which used the state to privilege its identity, language, history, culture...and which defined the state as the expression of its nationhood" (Kymlicka, 2003, p 148). Multicultural politics therefore refers to an on-going construction of the relationship between the state and citizen to incorporate the

recognition of diverse cultural identity, which in reality takes many forms and is often politically contentious (Kymlicka, 2003).

The demand for recognition by marginalized groups in society and the need to respond to this political demand by national state institutions has been a key issue of debate within political philosophy. In broad terms, the need to recognize a multicultural existence, stems from the ideal of establishing relationships of mutual respect across cultures as opposed to the imposition of one cultural group's norms and values over another (Taylor, 1994). If this seems obvious for advancing harmonious conditions of existence, clearly this occurs against a continued historical backdrop of this not being the case. Taylor states:

“...multiculturalism as it is often debated today,...has a lot to do with the imposition of some cultures on others, and with the assumed superiority that powers this imposition. Western liberal societies are thought to be supremely guilty in this regard, partly because of their colonial past, and partly because of their marginalization of segments of their populations that stem from other cultures” (Taylor, 1994 p 63)

Multiculturalism is therefore concerned with the acknowledgement first: of the existence of cultures in the plural in contrast to a single linear vision of universal cultural development and secondly of the harm caused when one culture assumes superiority over another. Based on a historical contextualization of the development of the principal of equality within the liberal philosophical debate, Taylor frames the notion of cultural rights as emerging from the politics of recognition. Taylor argues that the principal of equality is based on establishing as a core value within a liberal ideology, the capacity to become autonomous agents as a universal human characteristic:

“The politics of equal dignity is based on the idea that all humans are equally worthy of respect. It is underpinned by a notion of what in human beings commands respect...what commanded respect [for Kant] in us was our status as rational agents, capable of directing our lives through principles.” (Taylor, 1994 p 41)

The recognition of a *universal* capacity of developing individual autonomy however, required the further recognition that developing agency is not independent of the construction of our social and cultural identities (Levinson, Foley & Holland, 1996). Agency, therefore does not develop in a vacuum but is understood currently as underpinned by the human need to be recognized and treated with equal dignity acknowledging cultural diversity (Taylor, 1994). Establishing equal citizenship rights is therefore premised on the equal recognition of cultural differences acknowledging that culture is integral to what makes us who we are and therefore our ability to develop as an independent thinking human being, i.e. an autonomous agent (Taylor, 1994). In this sense, from a liberal philosophical debate the becoming a 'person', i.e. the acquisition of 'full personhood' if theoretically inherent to all human beings is also inherently mediated by external conditions of being recognized as an equal human being. The lack of equal recognition of our distinct cultural identities is a fundamental act of violence against the integrity of the individual, by not granting equal conditions for the development of the universal human capacity to become autonomous agents:

"The thesis is that our identity is partly shaped by recognition or its absence, often by *misrecognition* of others, and so a person or group of people can suffer real damage, real distortion, if the people or society around them mirror back to them confining or demeaning or contemptible pictures of themselves" (Taylor, 1994, p 25).

In contrast to this political philosophical debate, before the 1980s, dominant political discourse reflected an assimilationist ideology (de la Cadena & Starn, 2007) underpinned by a continued hierarchical notion of culture. Under an assimilationist ideology, whilst culture is extended to all social groups, this continues to be conceptualized along a linear historical developmental timeline, i.e. from primitive to advanced (Levinson, Foley & Holland, 1996). Expanding access to education under this dominant discourse of developing a universal culture, not surprisingly assumed an assimilationist ideal, resulting in the *misrecognition* of 'others'. An education process as a means of cultural

assimilation therefore must be understood as a violation against an individual's integrity. In this way, the expansion of formal education under a liberal ideology has for the most part violated the principal of granting equal dignity in relation to distinct cultural identity. Under an assimilationist ideology 'culture' conceptualized as singular and progressive, represents at the level of the individual the imposition of a hierarchical notion of what it is to acquire autonomous agency, i.e. 'full personhood'.

The development of full personhood understood within liberal philosophical debates, can therefore be equated with the demand for recognition of being an autonomous agent, able to produce knowledge. It is in this way that a direct conceptual link is established between recognition of cultural difference and recognition of value of diverse knowledge production. Under an assimilationist education ideology, the implication is not only the lack of recognition of cultural difference and therefore the agency of the 'other', but also what is implied is the violation of generating equal conditions for acquisition of full personhood. Schooling in this form negates the 'other' as an autonomous agent able to produce knowledge and may seriously affect those individuals identified as other.

The expanding of equal access to formal education under an assimilationist ideology can be clearly identified in international discourse of the mid-20th century. The 1957 International Labour Organization (ILO) convention on 'Indigenous and Tribal populations' explicitly makes reference to the underpinning notion of 'evolving' culture, with specific reference to education:

"Equal educational opportunities shall be available to the populations concerned at the same levels as other national citizens. Such education programs shall be adapted...to the stage these populations have reached in the process of social, economic and cultural integration into the national community" (ILO, 1957, Art 22).

In relation to Taylor's analysis of liberal philosophical ideals, the statement above reflects the principle that *all individuals* should have the opportunity to become full citizens, achieved through access to formal education. I propose the

statement implies equivalence between the conceptualization of what a national citizen is, with that of the acquisition of full personhood, achieved through being formally educated. It is in this sense that previously marginalized groups in society were to become the focus of state intervention, by providing greater access to formal schooling. However, the recognition of the equal rights of access to education for all, must be understood as a means of 'becoming' an equal national citizen. In other words, under an assimilationist education ideology, equal recognition is not granted to all as a point of departure but as a point of arrival. It is understood from the quote above, that the 'indigenous populations' are not recognized as being at an equal stage of development as 'other national citizens'. The extent that national education policies and initiatives towards indigenous populations reflected a significant ideological shift in expanding citizenship is therefore premised on the notion that these populations represented individuals with the 'potential' to become equal citizens.

1.2 'Indigenous' education in Latin America: From 'bi-cultural' to 'intercultural'

Luis Enrique López (2010) describes how from the mid-20th century state led education initiatives began to be *directed* towards indigenous populations in Latin America. At the time, the predominant terms used for 'indigenous education' were 'bicultural' and 'bilingual' education. From a sociolinguistic perspective, López (2010) draws attention to how the historical development of 'indigenous education' maintains a conceptual continuity with the early colonial period. Fundamentally, López argues, that the colonial period established a denial of the predominant multilingual complexity encountered on the ground, imposing instead a homogenizing indigenous language for diverse groups as a 'lingua franca' (official language) (López 2010, p 5). In the Andean region, the indigenous 'lingua franca' imposed was Quechua, (Mannheim, 1991; Hornberger, 2002) representing a process of homogenization of cultural and linguistic diversity, creating a dualist hierarchical cultural/linguistic binary between Spanish as dominant versus Quechua as the 'Indian' language of all others.

This cultural/linguistic ideology has been critiqued as establishing a 'bi-lingual/bi-cultural' model of education, maintaining a dualist hierarchical conceptualization reflecting the on-going racialized power relationship between the 'native' population and the European settlers (López, 2008, 2010; Howard 2007; Hornberger & Coronel Molina, 2004; Moya, 1998; Yáñez Cossío, 1998; Abram, 1992). Specifically, the dominance of state led education related to language planning policies, is identified as emerging from the alliance between the protestant Summer Institute of Linguistics (SIL) and the post-revolutionary Mexican state in the 1940s (López, 2010, p 7). In this way, the expansion of access to formal schooling inscribed within an assimilationist educational mode was directly related to fulfilling the ideal of creating a "monolingual-monocultural nation-state" (López, 2010, p 5). This is clearly identified as the dominant political ideology at this time in the Latin American (Albó, 2004; King, 2001; Howard, 2007; Larson, 2004; Oliart, 2011; Yáñez Cossío, 1998; Abram, 1992). The implementation of bilingual education is therefore conceived as that of 'transitioning' (López, 2010, p 7), whereby indigenous languages are used as a pragmatic and efficient mechanism for effective teaching to integrate those others as national citizens (López, 2008; Hornberger & King, 1996; Moya, 1998). Paradoxically the result of the expansion of formal education under an assimilationist ideology whilst apparently expanding access to citizenship maintains a continued mechanism of restricted citizenship (Larson, 2004; Oliart, 2011), by continuing to deny the equal recognition of cultural difference. This is because, the state continues to position the products of formal education as a key criterion for expanding citizenship and therefore continued to legitimize the marginalization and exclusion of indigenous peoples as 'other'. Implicit therefore is the direct relationship made between the level of education (and economic and social status) with and developing full-personhood and therefore recognition of full-citizenship.

Education for indigenous populations framed either as a process of evangelization driven by religious orders or as a secular process driven by the state government for acquiring citizenship, is premised on the notion of the need for 'educating the other'. Access to education is therefore conceived as a means of becoming an 'educated person' (Levinson & Holland, 1996) understood as

acquiring a type of universal 'personhood'. The core objective of formal schooling, in this sense, can be understood as a process of 'conversion' as an 'evangelizing inter-cultural' education (Dávalos, 2008, p 27-36). Fundamentally, under a transitional/assimilationist notion of education, the objective of education is conceived as independent of the cultural context and language employed, developed in terms of the explicit curriculum as well as the 'hidden curriculum' (Apple, 1996). Under a transitional model, in so far as diverse cultural context and language is acknowledged, incorporating this diversity into formal education is simply instrumental to an effective means of 'educating the other'. This is because the end result of formal education is understood in terms of developing the ideal citizen, conceived as a monocultural homogenous national state citizen.

1.2.1 Contesting bicultural education

From the 1980s onwards international discourse shifts significantly, reflecting the on-going political struggle for recognition of cultural diversity and therefore distinct social identities. In the context of Latin America, Walsh describes the term 'intercultural', articulated in specific reference to replacing the term 'bilingual/bicultural' indigenous education, occurring in the first regional meeting of specialist on bilingual education held by the 'Instituto Indigenista Americano' in Mexico, 1982 (Walsh, 2009, p 80). The articulation of the term 'intercultural' is positioned as emerging with the growing participation of indigenous teachers in formal education, providing a space of encounter as a critical response to the existing model of bilingual/bicultural education (Walsh, 2009; Moya, 1998; López, 2002, 2010; Dávalos, 2008).

At an international level, in 1989 changes to the wording of the ILO Convention on Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Rights, No. 169, reflects the political imperative to recognize cultural diversity as integral to individual human development. On the ILO webpage the introductory sentence to the convention No. 169 on indigenous and tribal rights, is described as; "based on respect for the cultures and ways of life of indigenous and tribal peoples. It aims at overcoming

discriminatory practices affecting these peoples and enabling them to participate in decision-making that affects their lives.” (ILO, 2016) ¹

The ILO convention No 169 also makes explicit reference to the need, not only for recognizing the universal capacity of individual agency, based therefore as Taylor describes on the assumption of ‘sameness’ (Taylor, 1994), but also the recognition of ‘particularities’ in relation to cultural diversity:

“Education programs and services for the peoples concerned shall be developed and implemented in co-operation with them to address their special needs, and shall incorporate their histories, their knowledge and technologies, their value systems and their further social, economic and cultural aspirations” (Art 27, ILO, 1989).

The ILO Convention 169 of 1989 therefore, also extended recognition of direct political participation by ‘indigenous peoples’ over educational matters, reflecting an ideological shift from assimilation to incorporation of cultural differences, through political and education processes. Furthermore, this convention recognizes the importance of self-governance and establishes possibilities for control and responsibility over specific education systems and initiatives by indigenous peoples themselves, as stated below:

“In addition, governments shall recognize the right of these peoples to establish their own educational institutions and facilities, provided that such institutions meet minimum standards established by the competent authority in consultation with these peoples. Appropriate resources shall be provided for this purpose” (Art, 27, ILO, 1989).

It is clear from the wording of this convention that recognition of cultural diversity becomes an imperative as part of the legitimization of a national democratic state building project, in order to respond to the on-going demanding for direct

¹ See website: (<http://www.ilo.org/global/topics/indigenous-tribal/lang--en/index.htm>)

² Whilst acknowledging the danger of oversimplifying, I am using incommensurability here in

participation in decision making of those to which formal education had up to this point been directed towards.

In the case of Ecuador, by 1988, a parallel intercultural bilingual national education institutional body; 'Dirección Nacional de Educación Indígena Intercultural Bilingüe' (DINEIIB), had been established. By 1992, several years before the international convention was ratified by the Ecuadorian government, the 'Confederación de Nacionalidades Indígenas de Ecuador' (CONAIE), the representative national indigenous organization, gained administrative independent governance over the directorate. For Latin America, this creates a precedent as the first of its kind, whereby indigenous organizations gained political control at a national level over part of the state education system.

However, Walsh argues that the term 'intercultural' whilst challenging the static conceptualization of 'other' cultures and therefore claiming the right for linguistic and cultural pertinence as intrinsic to an education process, was nevertheless limited in its directionality. Intercultural education in this way was assumed as a concern principally for indigenous groups and not directed towards society as a whole (Walsh, 2009, p 81). For Walsh the replacement of the term 'bilingual' with 'intercultural' should be understood on the one hand as, "reflecting the emergent positioning of an alternative political process *in construction*, evident in the demand by the indigenous movement in Ecuador for a pluralist national project; whilst on the other, the recognition and institutionalization by the state of the demand for 'intercultural' processes, directed towards the bureaucratization and control of a radical ethnic political process" (Walsh, 2009, p 82).

At the international level, intercultural education, as opposed to bilingual/bicultural education, can also be seen to respond to a broad ideology pedagogic shift towards constructivist education practice (Zúñiga y Gálvez 2003: 325, cited in Howard, 2007, p 243). A constructivist pedagogy centres the focus of attention on the learning process of the individual as agent in the acquisition of knowledge, as opposed to a traditionalist education practice centred on the content to be acquired through repetition and memorization. This ideological pedagogic shift is made explicit and so formally recognized in the 'World Conference on Education

for All', under the auspices of UNESCO, held in 1990 in Thailand (Howard, 2007). As a direct result of this international conference, by April of 1991, at Latin American regional level an overarching guide document named: 'Proyecto Principal de la Educación en América Latina y el Caribe' (UNESCO/OREALC 1991) (The major Project for Education in Latin America and the Caribbean), was designed for the implementation of "a transformational education process" (UNESCO/OREALC, 1991, p 7)

Although linked within the broad arena of multicultural politics a distinction can be made in terms of the articulation of 'interculturism' by social movements in Latin America in contrast to that articulated by international bodies and state institutions, (Walsh, 2002, 2009). The articulation of 'interculturalism' by social movements in Latin America, is usually identified with a politics of contestation whereby recognition of diverse collective ethnic identity is a key element in the demand for a radical process of social transformation (Tubino, 2002, 2013; Walsh, 2009, 2010; Gustafson, 2009). As these authors describe, interculturalism articulated as part of a politics of contestation is not fundamentally a demand for recognition as a means of incorporation but in order to advance a racial transformation of the existing racialized social order. For Walsh, intercultural education only when assumed as a critical process in challenging the existing hierarchical 'colonial social structure', can it be understood as a potential space for building an alternative political project. This alternative political project is one envisioned towards the *whole* of society based on the concept of 'pluralism', in opposition to the dominant homogenizing concept of national unity (Walsh, 2009, 2014).

In the case of Ecuador, the growing legitimacy and influence gained at the national level by the indigenous movement, demanding an active role in the transformation of formal education, meant IBE can be seen to be part of a national politics of contestation in opposition to an assimilationist ideology (Walsh, 2002; López, 2010; Dávalos, 2008). The political openings created at this time for active participation of the previously excluded indigenous subject within education processes, coincides with the broader context of international educational trends promoting more inclusive practices centred on the individual

learner. The pedagogical shift towards the individual learner as active agent in the learning process also demands recognition of individual's particular contexts including their own cultural identity. However, these forms of recognition of particularity are not equivalent and create an inherent tension in conceptualizing an intercultural education, as I shall describe further on, since the demand for recognition over cultural particularity is formulated in terms of collective recognition, whilst child centred education's focus is on recognition of the individual's particularities.

Whilst recognizing the contentious nature and complexity surrounding the articulation of 'intercultural education', I interpret the point of convergence, is reflected in an overall ideological shift over the recognition of cultural difference in terms of the need towards advancing 'equality' and greater political participation. As discussed above, it is the recognition of cultural diversity also as a universal that marks the progression within the politics of recognition to that of the politics of recognition of difference (Taylor, 1994). However, as Taylor notes, multicultural discourse in terms of a politics of recognition, masks two opposing tensions; the first is that of recognition of equal worth of all individuals on the basis of an assumed universal sameness, and the second is the notion of recognizing of particularity, as differences in cultural identity, equally requiring universal recognition as an intrinsic human characteristic. Tracing the historical development of 'indigenous education' in the context of Latin America, clearly demonstrates the unresolved underlying tension identified by Taylor, requiring simultaneous recognition of 'sameness' and 'particularity'.

1.3 'Interculturalism' as a critical education process

As discussed above, the emergence of intercultural bilingual education, can be described as a shift in education objective away from transitioning into dominant society to that of "maintaining, recognizing and valuing cultural difference and collective identity" (López, 2010, p 8). However, it is important to note that the stronger claim made by both López and Walsh is that 'interculturalism' provides the *potential* to challenge the traditional function of education as a means of

dominant cultural reproduction, creating a space for critical engagement across difference, and not for a simple *incorporation* of difference but for radical social transformation.

The theoretical conceptualization over 'interculturalism' is therefore not simply of the acknowledgement of a multi-cultural existence, but places emphasis on the aspect of establishing a relationship of equality, i.e. 'inter' as the space between cultures. In the sense of 'inter-cultural' as creating a space of equal relations between cultures, 'interculturalism' in the literature in the context of Latin America, is often referred to as 'un dialogo de saberes', (a dialogue between distinct ways of knowing) (De Sousa, 2010, De Sousa & Meneses, 2014; López, 2010; Walsh, 2014; Figueroa, 2015). Therefore, theoretically intercultural education is concerned with establishing a process of education *between* different cultures as a means of promoting greater social justice and equality. Intercultural education as an ideal, is therefore to be understood as learning from 'difference' and in dialogue with 'others' as equals. It as an ideal, that intercultural education acquires significance beyond a specific educational practice and therefore a matter of concern to us all. As part of a theoretical debate, the emphasis on a dialogue for establishing relationships of equality can be seen in opposition to the process of cultural essentialization which functions to circumscribe culture as identifiable 'features' and so able to incorporate the 'other' into an existing dominant social structure. I interpret that intercultural education as part of a radical political demand for social transformation is conceptualized as an intrinsically critical educational process.

Since the aim of intercultural education is theoretically constructed as a means of social transformation, I argue, this frames it as an ideal to advance an emancipatory pedagogic practice, appearing to provide a consensual vision over what intercultural education can be seen to be. For the purpose of analysis, I identify intercultural education, conceptualized as an intrinsically critical process of education within two broad theoretical tendencies; A rights based discourse and a decolonial based discourse. Below I develop the argument, that what is conceptualized as the focus of critical praxis within these debates, varies. I contrast the articulation defining interculturalism by Enrique López on the one

hand and Catherine Walsh on the other, as broadly representing these two theoretical tendencies. I suggest the common articulation of intercultural education in terms of an ideal education practice, seen as an emancipatory and transformative process, masks significant conceptual tensions.

1.3.1 Rights based discourse

López defines 'interculturalism' in relation to education in the following terms:

"Interculturalism in education refers to learning that is rooted in one's own culture, language, values, worldview and system of knowledge but that is, at the same time, receptive, open to and appreciative of other knowledge's, values, cultures and languages. The final aim of intercultural education is learning to live together, since systems of knowledge, civilizatory patterns, cultures and languages are seen in complementary distribution rather than from the angle of segregation or opposition" (López, 2010, p 9).

López's conceptualization of 'intercultural' as I interpret is framed as an educational progressive objective in terms of advancing the need for *recognizing* cultural difference as a fundamental right. In the statement above López refers to the need for mutual acknowledgement referring to being "receptive, open to and appreciative of other knowledge's, values, cultures and languages". He also states the aim of intercultural education in relation to the encounter with difference as 'complementary' rather than from an 'oppositional' perspective. Further on López states: "...IBE [Intercultural Bilingual Education] is neither a matter of simply adequate and culturally sensitive methodologies nor of only an active and more innovative pedagogy above all it relates to indigenous peoples' rights. The use and development of indigenous languages and the cultivation and enjoyment of indigenous cultures is a right in itself now internationally sanctioned" (López, 2010, p11). Specifically, therefore, for Lopez the reaffirming of cultural distinctive knowledge and practices is not seen as an end in itself but as a *right in itself* for the purpose of greater equality in society.

From this perspective, the central educational political objective is one of creating “intercultural citizenship” (López, 2010, p 11). I suggest the ideal of intercultural education here, is being envisioned in terms of fulfilling the *conditions* for developing equal intercultural citizenship. In this sense, the right to one’s distinct cultural identity is positioned as that belonging to every individual in relationship with society at large. In other words, all individuals are recognized as *equal* citizens and should be granted the conditions to exercise their particular cultural rights. I identify López’s theoretical description as strongly related to a ‘rights based discourse’ as that which envisions intercultural education framed as a *right* to one’s own cultural identity for establishing greater social equality. In this way, I considering a rights based discourse reflects Taylor’s discussion of the development within a liberal ideology requiring extending recognition of equal individual worth to encompass equal cultural rights. I suggest that from a ‘rights based discourse’ intercultural education is aimed at overcoming the wrong, implicit in the violation of the conditions to develop ‘*full personhood*’ that is become an autonomous agent, as a necessary and legitimate means for a society as a whole to flourish.

As discussed above, Taylor argues that recognizing individual’s rights to exercising *their* cultural rights, is aimed at avoiding unequal or restricted citizenship. However, Taylor goes further highlighting that this form of recognition of particularity on the basis of individual rights may miss a different demand. Taylor states that interculturalism raises the demand for recognition not only on the basis of equal worth of individuals *a priori* but of different cultures:

“In the case of the politics of difference, we might also say that a universal potential is at its basis, namely, the potential for forming and defining one’s own identity, as an individual, and also as a culture. But at least in the intercultural context, a stronger demand has recently arisen...the demand for equal recognition extends beyond an acknowledgement of the equal value of all humans potentially, and comes to include the equal value of what they have made of this potential in fact.” (Taylor, 1994, p 42-43)

Recognizing the equal worth of existing cultures creates a serious tension in relation to the central value within liberal ideology of developing independent individual agency. In other words, it is one thing for individuals to value their *own* culture whilst at the same time assuming that individuals have the capacity to critically reflect on their own cultural values, it is quite another to value all cultures equally. The difference between recognition of multiculturalism as that of avoiding discrimination, i.e. *misrecognition* of individual's particular cultural identity is extended with the demand for recognition of interculturalism, as equal worth of particular cultures. As stated by Taylor: "The demand...*was* that we let cultures defend themselves, within reasonable bounds. But the further demand we are looking at here is that we all recognize the equal value of different cultures; that we not only let them survive, but acknowledge their *worth*" (Taylor, 1994 p 43, my own emphasis).

I argue that López's description of interculturalism in education refers to the first framing of recognition that acknowledges individuals right to value their own culture whilst able to critically reflect on this in the encountering difference. López, in his definition of intercultural education, specifies '*...learning rooted in one's own culture, language, values, worldview and system of knowledge but that is, at the same time, receptive, open to and appreciative of other knowledge's, values, cultures and languages...*' Clearly López's emphasis of the educational objective is on the notion of learning to develop the individual's capacity to critically reflect on their own cultural values in the encounter with others. However, this does not necessarily assume granting equal worth to different cultural values in this encounter.

Extending recognition to encompass the intrinsic worth of any given culture at the level of policy becomes controversial because it is seen as a form of essentialization. Habermas (1994), in response to Taylor's reflection, argues that recognizing cultural worth violates the principal of a liberal state to be neutral in terms of the content of defining what is 'a good life' (Habermas, 1994, p 130). More so Habermas considers that to recognize equal cultural worth violates the principal of exercising judgement as a critical and dialectic process of developing agency:

“The ecological perspective on species conservation cannot be transferred to cultures. Cultural heritages and the forms of life articulated in them normally reproduce themselves by convincing those whose personality structures they shape, that is, by motivating them to appropriate productively and continue the traditions....The constitutional state can make this hermeneutic achievement of the cultural reproduction of life-worlds possible, but it cannot guarantee it. For to guarantee survival would necessarily rob the members of the very freedom to say yes or no that is necessary if they are to appropriate and preserve their cultural heritage. When a culture has become reflexive, the only traditions and forms of life that can sustain themselves are those that bind their members while at the same time subjecting themselves to critical examination and leaving later generations the option of learning from other traditions or converting and setting out for other shores. (Habermas, 1994, p131)”

In this way, what Habermas brings to the fore is that cultural diversity in contrast to biological diversity cannot be intrinsically valuable independently of the forms involved. For Habermas citizenship is the exercise of agency in the form of a constant re-evaluation and individual judgement that either results in cultural survival or abandonment through constant reappraisal.

1.3.1.1 Limitations of a rights based discourse

As explored by Larson (2004) nation building as a historical process in the context of the Andean region has been largely based on a process of restricted citizenship criteria, reproducing racial hierarchical social structures, legitimizing the continued marginalization of a majority of the population from society. I interpret that intercultural education in relation to a rights based discourse, aims at expanding citizenship criteria to include cultural difference, retaining as a core liberal value the individual's capacity to develop critical thinking as the exercise of what it is to be an autonomous agent. At a political level therefore, a rights based discourse frames unequal and differentiated levels of citizenship as the central issue to be resolved, so avoiding discriminating against cultural difference. The

expansion of citizenship criteria to include cultural differences, I argue, appears to enable the recognition of specific differences that can be incorporated into the notion of citizenship as intercultural, therefore assuming the existence of equal intercultural citizens. However, from a rights based discourse, recognition continues to be based on 'sameness', in terms of the type of human subject conceptualized, i.e. the critical subject as autonomous agent representing the notion of the ideal citizen. I argue, that essentially this means that the 'intercultural citizen' is represented as an independent critical thinking individual within the philosophical liberal debates framing personhood as the exercise of agency understood as universal type.

For Habermas, the critical citizen seems to represent an ability to assume a neutral subjectivity within a dialogue, where 'difference', is mediated by a universal external objectivity. In this sense, different but equally critical citizens partake in a radical democratic engagement. Individuals are projected as citizens in terms of being critical agents exercising their will to adhere to and transform their cultural identity, on the basis of objective criteria. Under this framing I interpret that intercultural citizens would be understood in terms of being individuals who adhere to a cultural identity as having developed the capacity of a continued process of critical reflection, exercising their agency freely, in critical dialogue with others. From this, I suggest recognition of cultural difference becomes equivalent to an obligation by individuals to exercise critical reflection for continued adherence to a cultural identity. I consider López's reference to 'openness and receptivity' could be interpreted as reflecting a reciprocal recognition between individuals adhering to different cultural identities with the obligation of the mutual exercising of their individual agency i.e. to become a *critical* intercultural citizen. The emphasis pivots on the notion of developing the capacity for critical thinking, i.e. individual judgement as a fundamental liberal value.

In terms of formal education, from this perspective, I suggest the wrong to be righted is to fulfil the conditions that will enable the capacity of human beings to develop as critical 'intercultural citizens'. In other words, 'letting cultures defend themselves, within reasonable bounds', as discussed above, which in turn

reflects the dominant ideological framing of international conventions as part of their discursive construct. I suggest, intercultural education in this way, becomes defined as an educational process that enables the development of the capacity for critical thinking, justifying difference as a mechanism for critical dialogue, recognized as the exercise of individual agency as a necessary condition for society as a whole to flourish.

One of the central limitations of this argument, relates to conceptualization, the exercise of critical thinking and consequent dialogue as taking place from a neutral position, bounded by a universal objectivity independent of cultural identity. For Habermas, recognizing the equal worth of existing cultural forms, as of intrinsic value in themselves, seriously threatens a return to an ideological position that values 'tradition' per say, i.e. a return to dogma. Taylor (1994), acknowledging this tension proposes that equal cultural worth could be presumed *a priori* rather than valued per say, as an ethical position, assuming a liberal ideological stance.

In Taylor's proposition, the emphasis is to be placed not exclusively on cultural diversity as a Right, but as an ethical position adopted towards the 'other'. In this way, cultural worth cannot be granted or judged from the perspective of one's own cultural categories and norms, since we simply lack the criteria from which to judge that which we do not know (Taylor, 1994, p 66). Taylor claims, that individual members cannot 'defend their own culture within reasonable bounds' because marginalized groups have to articulate their 'defence' within particular categories, predominantly of western liberal criteria of worth (Taylor, 1994 p 67). Following Gadamer's notion of a 'fusion of horizons', a need is created to acknowledge a necessary shift in our 'own perspective' first to understand other cultural criteria of worth and then to be able to establish a judgement of its worth (Taylor, 1994 p 67). For Taylor, it is necessary that the notion of judgement as a process of critical reflection within liberal ideology should be upheld but cannot be extrapolated to judge the worth of other cultures without first the possibility of a shift in perspective. In this way, objectivity cannot be presumed from the outset but requires knowing other possible categories through first undertaking a shift in one's own perspective. Taylor rejects a postmodernist position that puts into

question criteria for objective judgement itself and holds on to the need to defend liberal ideology against a cultural relativist position. Taylor is critical of Foucault and Derrida's postmodern critique that 'the world' or 'truth' is determined by discourse, in which discourse itself is hegemonic (Taylor, 1994, p, 70). A cultural relativist position denies objectivity as a means of making a better judgement, i.e. in correspondence to 'truth' according to Taylor. From this theoretical argumentation, 'truth' should be acknowledged as dependent on cultural perspective but underpinned by the notion that ultimately all cultural contexts provide a perspective on *the world* that must respond to being universally epistemologically sound.

I interpret, that Taylor's proposition is that by understanding other culture's categories and criteria of worth, a universal epistemological position as an eventual fusion of horizons could in theory be achieved. In other words, taking into account different cultural perspectives leads to a more complete view of the world, a better judgment over how things are. It could be argued that even if the end point were only a potential ideal, this road marked would in any case be worthwhile. A broadening of horizons is therefore a boarding in understanding categories and criteria of worth, which as critical individuals we can reflect and make judgements from. Taylor's argument pivots on assuming a greater vantage point in achieving greater correspondence with an independent reality, by shifting and expanding our perspective in order to make a judgement of worth.

The question is therefore, if a rights based discourse can incorporate Taylor's broader ethical proposal of a broadening of horizons? Lopez's description of the aim of intercultural education as: "learning to live together, since systems of knowledge, civilizatory patterns, cultures and languages are seen in complementary distribution" can indeed be understood to chime with Taylor's proposal for a fusion of horizon. Learning through difference becomes a crucial aspect of education from this perspective as an acknowledgement of our own limited perspective. In pedagogic terms, the encounter and acknowledgement of difference is the key element of a critical process of education, enabling and providing the conditions to develop agency. Therefore, from this line of

argumentation, an intercultural education seen as an intrinsically critical process of education also becomes justified in epistemological terms.

When taking the proposal outlined above into practice, the first immediate danger lies in that a limited perspective is not actually acknowledged. In other words, for Taylor, valuing other's cultures *a priori* is to be assumed as an ethical position, before judgement acknowledging that the other's categories are unknown and require a shift in perspective in order to become knowable. Without acknowledging not knowing the other's categories of knowledge and therefore judgement of worth, the need for a shift of horizon will not be recognized and will likely result in cultural differences interpreted as already incorporated within a dominant perspective. The danger is that 'other's' knowledge is not aimed at being understood in context, but abstracted to fit into dominant categories of knowledge and existing criteria of worth serving simply as a source of 'information' or 'inspiration'. I shall raise this issue again in chapter 3 in order to analyse the framing of current education policy in Ecuador. However, beyond differing ideological positions in the interpretation of intercultural education in the political sphere, I consider first there is a need to explore the theoretical tension raised in concern with Taylor's proposition.

Significantly, Taylor aims to shift our position of understanding in order to bring into view what 'others' are seeing/understanding, from a different perspective to our own. The problem with this argument is that essentially Taylor denies incommensurability². Indeed, whilst Taylor's proposal does go further than Habermas' radical democratic dialogue, the central issue of what can be seen to

² Whilst acknowledging the danger of oversimplifying, I am using incommensurability here in reference to the general philosophical debate over difference signalled as the limits of the possibilities of representation and therefore understanding that which is other. The limit of getting to know that which is unknown and so reaching an understanding, is not simply framed as a potential limit to be overcome, but as an acknowledgement of the real limit of our own power to know Other (Standish, 2002). Incommensurability referring to Lyotard's notion of 'the differend' acknowledges the lack of a universal language of translation as a common medium in a dispute. In this way enunciations belonging to diverse discourse practices may not share the same rules of judgement. The lack of acknowledgement of the existence of the 'differend' violates the existing gap of mutual understanding over the dispute, invisibilizing the existence of incommensurable rules of judgement. Derrida refers to 'différance' in terms of the impossibility of representation, destabilized in the process of its own production (Watson, 2014), which again in not acknowledging the impossibility to know by assuming our own representation of the other, this violates the existence of difference with Other.

be the exercise of agency is not resolved. I consider Taylor, in rejecting a postmodernist critique as leading to a nihilist cultural relativism, continues to leave the 'other' as 'other' without a voice of their own. By rejecting the arbitrariness of discourse as the dynamic and contingent relations of power, I would argue, Taylor fails to acknowledge that what is articulated exists within power relations that determine the possibilities of what can be articulated and most importantly heard (Foucault, 1972; Spivak, 1988). Whilst on the one hand acknowledging that judgements cannot be made from a single perspective, the problem remains that apparently, what the 'other' articulates has to wait for the possibility of being able to be heard, that is, understood by a 'knowledgeable' critical subject. Difference in this way is positioned as ultimately knowable and in waiting for a 'fusion of horizons', the ethical demand is that judgement is withheld until this moment.

Intercultural education under a broad rights based discourse, from my analysis, ultimately becomes justified as a means of knowing the other. This leaves several positions to frame intercultural education as a coming to 'know the other', i.e. a coming to know that which is as yet unknown. Habermas' argument, positions the process of education principally as the development of critical agency through the exercise of a radical democratic dialogue. Here the emphasis is placed on the individual's obligation to critically reflect, assuming a neutral subjective position. A neutral subjective position is highly questionable since it ignores the existence of power relations and assumes an external objective truth independent of cultural context (Giroux, 2011). I suggest Taylor recognizes this non-neutrality and epistemological historical inequality but leaves the 'other' waiting. I propose Taylor's vision becomes limiting, in so far as the 'other' would have to become knowable, for a fusion of horizons to occur. Significantly, incommensurability then becomes something to be ultimately overcome, with the potential danger that, that which is not commensurable is discarded or at best left perpetually in waiting on the margins. The implication is that 'other' would have to wait for a fusion of horizons, in order to speak with his or her own voice to join into the universal judgement of what is of worth.

I consider Taylor in effect continues to leave the 'other' in an unequal relation of power within existing hierarchical epistemological status between that which is recognized as worthwhile knowledge and that which is seen as of potential worth. I consider underpinning intercultural education from this discursive framing assumes a universal positioning of the 'critical subject'. In essence the critical subject able to formulate judgement over what is of worth, occupies a single position that encompasses as broad a horizon as possible. From a rights based discourse, whilst human beings are universally recognized as having the capacity for agency, a universal conceptualization of what agency is, remains unquestioned, assumed as a specific type of universal 'personhood'. I shall return to this critique to reflect on the specific context of what takes place in the school classroom of Pumamaki in chapter five.

1.3.2 De-colonial based discourse

A decolonial based discourse frames intercultural education from the opposite end of the argument. The point of departure from a decolonial based discourse is from the articulation of the 'other' where 'other' exists in an on-going epistemological inequality between 'modernity' and other as 'non-modern'. The focus on the capacity to develop critical thinking from a decolonial discourse does not pivot in terms of the individual subject reflecting a universal human capacity, though Tubino, (2002) argues this is implicit. I suggest, from a decolonial discourse the principal focus is to relativize the subjective position as a knowing subject. In other words, the subject position is relative, and it is therefore those historically marginalized as knowing subjects who stand at an epistemological vantage point to reveal plurality. From a decolonial discourse, it is therefore the subaltern subjective position that grants the vantage point for critical reflection in revealing the existence of epistemological plurality, rather than correspondence with an independent reality.

The proposition is made, that epistemological plurality is denied by 'modernity' as a universalizing epistemological process (Mignolo, 2011; de Sousa, 2010). From a decolonial perspective, modernity is constitutive of a colonial relationship;

'dominant verses subaltern'. This is constructed as a socio-historical process establishing difference as a racial/ethnic hierarchical relationship. This colonial power relationship is described as 'the coloniality of power' (Quijano, 2000, p 210) producing an intrinsic hierarchical dualism, naturalizing a dominant cultural perspective by denying and effectively invisibilizing difference (Quijano, 2000, p 210-211). As decolonial thinkers Mignolo and Dussel describe the emergence of a capitalist modernity arising from the point of convergence between the European Enlightenment and European colonial expansion establishing a Eurocentric 'universal' history (Mignolo, 2000; Dussel, 1994). The universalizing of history from a Eurocentric cultural perspective is also an imperialist and universalizing epistemological project, 'the geopolitics of power and knowledge' (Mignolo, 2012). In other words, a western universalizing epistemology masks its own historical, cultural and geographical subjectivity as *the* way of knowing. Effectively difference is denied and hierarchical relations of power through colonial expansion are naturalized. This relegates all 'others'; individuals, collective identities and systems of knowledge to be characterized as 'pre-modern' or 'particular' becoming subaltern subjective positions (Dussel 1994; Quijano, 2000; Mignolo, 2000; Walsh, 2009; De Sousa, 2010).

For those writing from a de-colonial discourse, coloniality is the on-going subalternizing of cultural difference based on a 'colonial/subaltern' power relationship. A decolonial process is therefore conceptualized as: "a way of critically thinking modernity" (Mignolo, 2000b, p 8, cited in Walsh, 2002, p 117), challenging modernity's universalizing epistemological project. Decolonizing as a process can be understood as the revealing of the colonial relationship, which requires the deconstruction of the on-going 'coloniality of power' (Quijano, 2000). It is in this way, that Walsh positions that only a critical conceptualization of interculturalism as a decolonizing project can be understood as a means for a social transformation towards pluralism (Walsh, 2009). Walsh defines 'interculturalism' as emerging from below positioning a 'political, social and epistemological alternative project for the whole of society' (Walsh, 2009).

In common with López, Walsh's central critique over indigenous education processes, framed as directed towards indigenous groups, is that this does not

encompass a critical notion of interculturality as a means of a radical social transformation. Therefore, a central issue encompassed by both López and Walsh, is the identifying of intercultural education as a process that must take as its start point 'one's own' knowledge and collective ethnic identity. Walsh states: "in practice this [intercultural education] requires processes that are directed towards strengthening 'lo propio' (one's own) as a *strategic* response in the face of symbolic and structural violence³" (Walsh, 2002, p 8, my own translation).

Significantly for Walsh 'lo propio' should be understood in relation to subalternized knowledge and ways of being. Therefore, from a decolonial perspective re-vindication of 'lo propio' on the basis of ethnic collective identity is not about essentializing and distancing of difference but a strategic means of advancing a process of emancipation over cultural difference. The notion of 'lo propio' from a decolonial perspective is understood as intrinsically relational in terms of a subaltern/dominant subjective position. Cultural difference in this sense is not descriptive, and in contrast to López, neither is it about individual rights per say, but encompasses an on-going epistemological struggle as distinct ways of knowing. Walsh states interculturalism as; "defined and constructed from a subjectivity and locus of enunciation *within the experience* of social, political and cultural subalternization" (Walsh, 2002, p 4, my own translation and highlight).

The emphasis made by Walsh and others writing from a decolonial discourse is on the critical subjective position as relational, in other words, the knowing subject assuming and therefore enunciating from a subaltern subjectivity. From a decolonial perspective an intercultural educational process re-vindicates 'lo propio' as emerging from below, not as an end in itself but as a space from which difference enables a critical process in reveal the continued colonial hierarchical imposed relationship. Whilst, in educational terms as I have pointed out, convergence between a rights based discourse and a decolonial based discourse, the underlying assumptions over the type of critical subject and what epistemological pluralism is seen to be diverges. The focus of critical thinking

from a decolonial discourse is in terms of the relations of power that generate the subalternizing of 'other epistemologies and subjectivities', not only the failure to recognize individual's rights to adhere to and exercise their own cultural identity. Walsh states that 'lo propio' is a strategy "to open up the space of struggle and relation with other sectors of society in conditions of asymmetry, and to promote structural and systemic changes" (Walsh, 2002 p 8, my own translation). From this theoretical position, a process of intercultural education is legitimized as a means of revealing epistemological difference necessarily from a critical subaltern subjective position. The aim is that knowledge in terms of 'lo propio' is legitimized not in relation to a dominant epistemology but as intrinsically of worth to reveal the modernist 'western' epistemology as falsely universalizing.

The proposition of a decolonizing education appears to be, on the one hand the critical process of revealing the coloniality of power and on the other the reversing of this process as the de-subalternizing of epistemologies and subjectivities. The end point therefore, of a decolonizing project is the disappearance of a subaltern/dominant constitutive subjective position, transformed into non-hierarchical plural subjectivities. I identify a decolonial based discourse as a claim for the existence of epistemological plurality and a demand for recognition of epistemological equality. The enunciation from a subaltern position is framed as counter hegemonic to a modernist universalizing singular epistemology.

1.3.2.1 Limitations of a de-colonial based discourse

From a decolonial discourse, modernity is framed as a particular way of knowing that universalizes its own categories of knowledge establishing an epistemological hegemony. Therefore, from a decolonial perspective the focus of critical reflection is the revealing of the myth of modernity's universalizing epistemology by recognizing the existence of plural epistemologies and subjectivities as *different* collective socio-historical constructions. Mignolo formulates the argument as follows:

“What I am arguing is that the subalternization of non-Western knowledge did not leave it behind but aside: on the margins, in the colonial difference. It also resulted in the impoverishment of human intelligence and creativity in the name of a superior way of knowing. What I mean them by restitution is not recuperation but reinscription. This argument is necessary because of the colonial difference and not from the perspective of the subalternization of knowledge that, today, “recognizes” and laments that things have been as they were.” (Mignolo, 2011, p 478)

For Mignolo ‘non-Western knowledge’ is articulated at the margins and is equally contemporary knowledge. The demand is for a ‘restitution’ of ‘non-Western knowledge’ as of equal worth not ‘recovery’. In other words, it is the enunciation from the non-permitted subject position as knowledgeable, i.e. the subaltern, which disrupts the legitimization of a dominant and universal subject position as centre. From a decolonial framing it appears that the subaltern has *the* vantage point from which to reject the claim to universal knowledge enunciated from within modernity. Modernity is in this way seen as oppositional to the revealing of plurality, since modernity is constituted as a universalizing project, blind to its own particularity masking and denying the existence of ways of knowing as intrinsically plural. In terms of an epistemological debate between a decolonial discourse and a rights based discourse, the result is evidently an impasse over the ‘critical subject’ in discussion. To be specific, each discourse is conceptualizing a different subjective position assumed as able to enunciate as a critical subject. A rights based discourse assumes the critical subject as taking the position from a bird’s eye view, potentially encompassing all perspectives as the utopian goal for a truly universal perspective from which to make a judgement of worth. A decolonial discourse assumes an oppositional marginalized subjective position from which to enunciate from the lived experience of plurality as knowledgeable and critical subject, in order to demystify a universal epistemological perspective.

From a decolonial based discourse difference, is framed as that embodying the experience of being denied a position as a ‘knowing subject’ which intrinsically challenges modernity’s differentiated positionality of ‘centre’ as the only possibility

for the enunciation of knowledge. The argument from a decolonial discourse frames the enunciation from a subalternized subjective position as reflecting the existence of epistemologies. I suggest one of the central limitations of this theoretical framing, is that an epistemological vantage point of a type of critical subject is again assumed and granted. From a decolonial discourse the starting point is the existence of the unequal relations of power. It is from this point of departure that the vantage point for a 'true' critical position can be claimed. In this way, the 'other' denied epistemological standing, in contrast to Taylor's proposition, is not kept waiting but is the space from which demystification and therefore a critical stance is possible. The enunciation of knowledge as an already non-permitted but existing Subject, is the contradiction that enables the revealing of 'modernity' as a myth. The problem I suggest with the framing of this discourse is that a 'critical subject' is assumed and does not breakdown an epistemological dualism, which is at the core of a decolonial framing. I consider the current dispute over bilingual and intercultural education in Ecuador strongly reflects the limitations inherent in formulating the debate as that of 'epistemological perspective/s'.

1.4 Theoretical impasse

What appears to take central stage in the theoretical disputes I have identified above is who has, or to be more specific which is the epistemological vantage point for critical reflection. From a decolonial discourse this appears to be the existence of cultural difference as epistemological plurality, whereas from a rights based discourse epistemological plurality is the expansion of a perspective to include diverse and previously excluded cultures and social groups. The path marking the utopian vision of pluralism from a decolonial discourse is removing the binary set up between centre and margin as a place of epistemological enunciation. In contrast, I interpret a rights based discourse assumes as a utopian vision the position of epistemological enunciation as universal, granting that different cultural perspective may stand in this position as a unified broad perspective. A decolonial discourse requires the recognition of epistemology as already plural, as already in existence as a dynamic process of critical reflection

embody the space of 'border thinking' (Mignolo, 2007, 2012). Border thinking assumes the lived experience of the subaltern as a subjective position able to critically engage with 'modernity' and in this way, provides a different subjective position of enunciation of knowledge, denied by modernity (Mignolo, 2007).

Pluralism from a decolonial perspective is the existence of epistemologies, masked by an on-going colonial hierarchical imposition, the can therefore only be revealed from a critical subaltern subjective position in which the enunciation of knowledge is culturally relative. Pluralism from a rights based discourse appears to be the *incorporation* of different perspectives creating an eventual universal position of enunciation of knowledge. The 'other's' perspective is something that needs to be known and in this way judged in order to expand all perspectives. In both cases I argue the implication is that difference is seen as an intrinsic means for assuming a critical subjective position in reveal the other, though clearly from opposite positions, resulting in that difference potentially becomes limited to that which must be made visible and therefore ultimately something knowable.

In relation to education I propose that these theoretical framings converge on the core notion of 'interculturalism' as the possibility of developing a 'critical subjective position'. Contrasting these theoretical discourses, I argue the 'critical subject' in question is positioned from opposite ends, creating an impasse between these theoretical framings. I consider that the limitations that both theoretical framings have in common, is the assumption of revealing difference from the vantage point of a particular critical subjective position. In this way 'intercultural education' becomes defined in relation to an ideal emancipatory education practice in which 'difference' becomes legitimized as an epistemological concern as either a means of achieving plurality incorporating diverse cultural perspective or as a means of revealing plurality by demystifying modernity. Therefore, as I have developed above not only is the critical subject position divergent so too is the notion of plurality in discussion. This theoretical divergence is I propose not acknowledge in education policy and political discourse over intercultural education masked by an apparent convergent vision over an ideal intercultural education practice.

1.4.1 Masking theoretical divergence in discourse on intercultural education

Established in 2009 the independent Intercultural University 'Amawtay Wasi' represented the first intercultural university in Ecuador. This project had been a relatively long time coming, debated and discussed since the early 2000s initially lead by the indigenous leader and intellectual Luis Macas⁴. The Ecuadorian government, in 2013, controversially closed the university. The focus of the controversy was based on the fact that this university as the first of its kind, should not have been closed on the basis of standard measures of evaluation set by the central body CEAACES (Consejo de Evaluación Acreditación y Aseguramiento de la Calidad de la Educación Superior). Supporters and those involved in the university argued that this university was and aimed to develop a different form of educational practice, that relied less on centralized resources and more on community learning (Sarango⁵, 2009). Various intellectuals have stated that the philosophical, epistemological and pedagogic premise of this university challenged the traditional elitist university and could not be evaluated on the same or similar basis⁶.

Figueroa, a well-established Ecuadorian academic, discussed this controversial closure in an article published in 2015, on the basis of a critique over the conceptualization of intercultural education. In this article, Figueroa, strongly critiques the proposition and therefore justification of exclusivity over difference established from a decolonial discourse. Figueroa argues that the decision to close the University is rightly based on not fulfilling adequate minimum standards. For Figueroa, the theoretical issue of concern is the setting up of 'modernity' as

⁴ Luis Macas, was the first president of CONAIE and was the president for the commission to create the Universidad Intercultural Amawtay Wasi from 1996 to 1998.

⁵ Sarango was the Director of the University Amawtay Wasi at the time of closure. See, Sarango, L, F. 2009 Universidad Intercultural de las Nacionalidades y Pueblos Indigenas "Amawtay Wasi". Ecuador/Chinchaysuyu. En Daniel Mato (coord.), Instituciones Interculturales de Educación Superior en America Latina. Procesos de construcción, logros, innovaciones y desafíos. Caracas: UNESCO – IESALC, p 191-214

⁶ See Oviedo, A., 2013. Revolución educativa o recolonización posmoderna, en *El Correísmo al desnudo*, p246-262 and Walsh, C, 2015 Interculturalidad? Fantasmas, fantasías y funcionalismos; en *Ecuador: desafíos para el presente y el future*, en (editors) Mancheno y Franco, Universidad Andina Simon Bolivar, Ediciones la Tierra.

an intrinsic universalizing epistemology framed from a decolonial discourse. Instead Figueroa proposes, that it is the processes of exclusion and not modernity itself, that is problematic. Figueroa argues that from a decolonial discourse as that developed by Walsh and Mignolo, an oppositional subjective dualism is created, ignoring and denying the processes of solidarity, participation and construction of political and social contestation.

I suggest Figueroa's reading is an example of the masking of the inherent tension and impasse I have explored above. I interpret Figueroa's critique reflects a theoretical framing from a rights based discourse and I propose whilst the critique is explored and established towards a decolonial discourse this reading does not explore the assumptions over the relative positioning of the 'critical knowing subject' from its own theoretical framing. I interpret, Figueroa positions intercultural education as a consensual vision of developing a 'critical dialogue across difference', where all have a contribution to make to expand universal knowledge. The assumption being made is that knowledge is produced within a heterogeneous construction of modernity. I argue this reflects a rights based discourse by which the critical subject is understood as already universal, theoretically able to encompassing all. The issue of concern appears therefore to be an epistemological debate in reaching a better understanding of 'the world' among equals.

Figueroa's critique towards Walsh and Mignolo's decolonialist reading of intercultural education is the intrinsic antagonistic perspective that in practice, reproduces and legitimizes the same processes of exclusion and marginalization constitutive of a colonial practice:

“Las perspectivas de Walsh y Mignolo ejemplifican como de manera paradójica, para muchos intelectuales metropolitanos, dispositivos heredados de la experiencia colonial y reforzados por las condiciones neocoloniales como el analfabetismo, se convierten en rasgos positivos, al ser definidos como esencias culturales como la oralidad, lo que conlleva a que el analfabetismo sea elevado a un estatus particular que permite la emancipación del dominio occidental” (Figueroa, 2015, p 9).

“Walsh and Mignolo’s perspectives, for many metropolitan intellectuals exemplifies the paradoxical manner in which the inherited dispositions of the colonial experience and neocolonial conditions such as analphabetism are reinforced. By defining them as cultural essences such as that of orality, these expressions of colonial/neocolonial experience are transformed into positive characteristics, which results in that analphabetism is raised to such a particular status so as to enable emancipation from western dominance” (my own translation)

Figueroa argues that ‘orality’ becomes a cultural characteristic of marginalized groups in contrast to ‘literacy’ as a modern characteristic, reinforcing rather than challenging process of exclusion and marginalization that the decolonialist claim to transform. Figueroa proposes that a decolonial stance essentializes cultural characteristics imposed on marginalized groups, reproducing the conditions of social, political and economic marginalization. According to Figueroa, the decolonial proposal centred on particularizing modernity as European culture reflects a radical cultural relativism, creating an oppositional essentialist categorization between ‘mestizo (criollo/indigena)’ as immutable positions of ‘victim and aggressor’ (Figueroa, 2015 p 7). Figueroa’s proposal is that, positioning ‘modernity’ as essentially ‘western’, belonging to a historical European particular epistemology denies the fact that a universal epistemology is a heterogeneous contribution.

I consider Figueroa’s proposal highlighting’s the problematic dualism established by a subaltern subjective position constituted in contrast to a dominant ‘modern’ subjective position. However, Figueroa’s proposal makes the move in the opposite direction, shifting a universal epistemological position as intrinsically heterogeneous. It appears that for Figueroa the emphasis should be placed on granting ‘cognitive justice’ as the misrecognition that needs to be righted. Figueroa does this by interpreting Boaventura de Sousa’s proposal of ‘una ecología de saberes’ (an ecology of ways of knowing) centred in terms of constructing *cognitive justice* making space for ‘knowledge’ to be understood beyond the exclusionary classification of science.

Figueroa states: “an ecology of ways of knowing challenges the monocultural perspective of modern science and recognizes a plurality of heterogenous knowledges (one of which is modern science) making the process of knowing an inter-knowing” (Figueroa, 2015, p 21, my own translation).

In this way, I suggest Figueroa interprets ‘una ecología de saberes’ as able to conceptualize interculturalism as a convergent space confronting ‘modern science’ with other forms of knowledges. I consider this chimes with Lopez’s perspective on intercultural education as discussed above and could potentially be seen to correspond within Taylor’s proposition of a fusion of horizon. It would appear that the proposition is to create ‘plurality of heterogenous knowledges’ therefore granting *potential* validity of different perspectives as contributing to universal knowledge. Figueroa proposes:

“A diferencia de Mignolo o Walsh, la noción de ecología de saberes de De Sousa reconoce las contribuciones provenientes de la ciencia y ofrece algunas pistas que podrían permitir ver que tipo de problemáticas pueden ser afrontadas de manera eficiente a partir de los saberes populares” (Figueroa, 2015, p 22)

“In contrast to Mignolo or Walsh, the notion of De Sousa’s ecology of knowledges, recognizes the contributions coming from science and offers some clues that could allow us to see what sort of issues can be faced in an efficient manner from popular knowledges” (my own translation)

The clear intention of this proposal is to consider *knowledges*, as a heterogenous contribution, acknowledging that science provides a particular perspective and should not exclude ‘local knowledges’ of having epistemological validity, *within* modernity. Few may dispute the validity of such a proposal however, the possibility of heterogeneous social groups contributing to knowledge necessarily confronts the limitations and possibilities of recognizing the ‘other’s’ enunciation as valid (Foucault, 1972). I suggest Figueroa is using ‘plurality’ and ‘heterogeneity’ as equivalent terms, in so confusing and masking what is to be recognized as plural knowledges in contrast to universal knowledge production. It

is one thing to accept that modern sciences are heterogenous contributions and are not constructed from a single dominant cultural perspective allowing for critical reflection from a modern subjective position, however, I would argue that Figueroa fails to problematize the basis of judgement over what 'knowledges' will count, or as Spivak highlights can be spoken (Spivak, 1988). The on-going power relations and hierarchies in status of particular discourse practices (Foucault, 1972), such as natural science, is I argue, not addressed in the process of an 'inter-knowing' that Figueroa describes.

Also significant is to contextualize the production of this argument. I suggest the wording employed is particularly revealing, since what is placed and assumed as the core concern, is resolving 'issues' in 'an efficient manner' whereby 'popular knowledges' seen as potential contributions. As I shall explore in depth in chapter 3, the political ideology framing education policy at this time, reflects a strong tendency towards standardization and measurable outputs. Significantly, Figueroa's argument assumes that what is to be resolved is *already* something in common, with the potential to be more 'efficiently' resolved by greater participation, from different cultural perspectives.

My concern is twofold; Firstly, that 'other's' knowledge, is to be valued from a utilitarian assumption of worth, i.e. useful to resolve a problem or issue *efficiently*; Secondly the lack of recognition that the theoretical argument is framed within existing unequal power relations. In other words, I consider Figueroa's proposition does not acknowledge that what is to be resolved may not be assumed as already or even potentially in common. I suggest Figueroa's interpretation circumvents the issue of epistemological plurality by assuming a neutral position over the 'issues' to be resolved as demonstrated in the following statement:

"Quisiera sostener que la realización de una ecología de saberes solo es posible en un espacio intercultural que se defina no por unas identidades preconcebidas, sino como un significante vacío (Laclau & Mouffe, 1987) en el cual pueden converger los distintos grupos sociales con sus contribuciones culturales y epistemológicas pertinentes y donde puedan desarrollarse los inter-

aprendizajes entre los distintos grupos, reconociendo y hacienda explícitos los conflictos, los consensas y los disensos que caracterizan las relaciones interculturales” (Figueroa, 2015, p 23)

“I propose that the realization of an ecology of knowledges, is only possible in an intercultural space that is defined not by preconceived identities, but from an empty significant (Laclau & Mouffe, 1987) in which different social groups can converge with their pertinent cultural and epistemological contributions, recognizing and making explicit the conflicts, consensus and the designs that characterize intercultural relations” (my own translation)

I question that: ‘pertinent cultural and epistemological contributions’ are to be recognized and ‘conflicts and consensus made explicit’ based on the assumption that the ideal ‘intercultural space and relations’ is one where all can equally enunciate and be heard. I would argue, that it is precisely the impossibility of ‘making explicit the conflicts’ and assuming ‘consensus’ that characterises intercultural relations within existing unequal relations of power, in contrast to the assumed ideal. What the ‘issues’ to be resolved are, is not problematized masking on-going power relations in terms of what is to be considered worthwhile contributions over what is already delimited as an issue or problem to be overcome. I therefore interpret Figueroa proposition assumes a possible neutral standpoint as ‘an empty significant’, in close correspondence to Habermas’ visualization of a radical democratic dialogue.

I argue Figueroa’s analysis potentially minimizes the element of relative power relations not only in the production of knowledge but more importantly in being blind to the limits of the debate in terms of what is judged to count as a ‘contribution’. I conclude that Figueroa’s analysis is in danger of interpreting ‘different ways of knowing’, i.e. epistemological difference only as functional to making a *universal* contribution, ignoring that the frames of reference continue to exist in unequal and hierarchical relations of power, determining what can be seen and heard (Spivak, 1988) to be a worthwhile contribution to knowledge production.

I suggest the divergence over the conceptualization of plurality within this theoretical debate, is masked by shifting the notion of difference by encompassing 'modernity' as heterogeneous whilst maintaining epistemological universality. The danger lies in a subtle but nevertheless continued process of marginalizing difference by positioning the frames of reference as theoretically universal and so again excluding the possibilities of acknowledging incommensurability. In not allowing for incommensurability, encompassing all within what that which can potentially become known and in the case above useful, I argue difference is not actually permitted, since recognition of difference is being assumed on the basis of a universal recognizable sameness. Standish (2002), considering the philosophical debate over the recognition of 'Other,' argues that this requires not only a process of a getting to know as a mutual process of transformation but crucially the process of transformation requires the acknowledgement that the Other may not be knowable and never fully disclosed, which therefore demands recognition of our own limits of our power to know, as a real rather than simply potential limit to be overcome (Standish, 2002). The ethical demand positioned here, is, I suggest, extended beyond that which Taylor proposes, since the recognition of difference makes a claim towards ourselves in terms of acknowledging that our subjective position and therefore any subjective position cannot encompass all, allowing for difference to exist without becoming known, i.e. knowable.

In the case of the closure of the university, I interpret that in acknowledging modernity as an on-going heterogeneous contribution, the established criteria of evaluation, in this particular case over 'quality', is assumed as theoretically able to encompass all. The use of particular words such as 'pertinence' and 'efficiency' also reflects dominant current discourse within education policy, as I shall analyse in depth in chapter 3. In chapter 4 and 5 I explore how simply extending science to incorporate 'alternative sciences', masks a lack of acknowledgement of the existence of incommensurability. Whilst I agree that modernity must be understood as an on-going heterogeneous contribution which includes diverse social groups, I argue plurality assumed as equivalent to heterogeneity theoretically encompassed within modernity, again leads to a process of invisibilization and so marginalization of difference.

1.5 Summary

I use Figueroa's example to demonstrate how the debate over 'intercultural education' appears to be positioned as an epistemological concern in relation to recognizing and incorporating difference, but does not resolve a relational hierarchy between that conceived as 'western/modern' and 'other/nonmodern'. I interpret Figueroa's specific proposal as an example whereby the divergent notion of 'critical subject' intrinsic to the theoretical debate over the conceptualization of intercultural education is masked. I argue this results in an apparent settling of the theoretical debate in relation to a potential vision of an ideal intercultural education practice.

Through my analysis I argue that from a decolonial discourse the danger in conceptualizing epistemologies, in the plural, as 'non-Western knowledge' implies that difference is to be identified in relation to that which it is not, i.e. 'non-Western'. I suggest by identifying alternative epistemologies in contrast to *something* it is not, a binary is inevitably reinstated.

I propose, the inherent tension from both a decolonial discourse similar to a rights based discourse lies in the assumption and association of the 'critical subject' with a particular position of knowledge, which either has to demonstrate difference to reveal plurality or has to get to know difference to incorporate and validate it as knowledge.

Alonso and Macias (2015) raise a similar concern in relation to the conceptualization of 'Buen Vivir/Sumak Kawsay'⁷ at the centre of the current political debate in Ecuador and other countries of the region. These authors demonstrate how in positioning 'Buen Vivir' as an epistemological debate the dispute centres on, to what extent this concept is either intrinsically within modern discourse or intrinsically subaltern. The critique these authors raise citing Walsh

⁷ See, Radcliffe, S.A., 2012. Development for a postneoliberal era? Sumak kawsay, living well and the limits to decolonisation in Ecuador

is the conceptualization that presents 'Buen Vivir/Sumak Kawsay' as valid only when understood as intrinsically from a subaltern position:

“...Buen Vivir or Sumak Kawsay opens and defies modern epistemology – which makes us think *we reach the world from knowledge* – encouraging other epistemological logic which makes sense from the majority. That is – *that we reach to knowledge form the world* – pointing to what I have referred elsewhere as a decolonial epistemology and pedagogy (Walsh, 2008, 146 cited in Alonso & Macias, 2015).

Alonso and Macias (2015), following Latour's (1994) philosophical critique of 'modernity,' consider a decolonial epistemology does not escape modernity as needing to separate the 'knowing subject' to the 'object known'. In this way by considering as Walsh states above, that 'certain subjects can move from knowledge to the world while others move in the opposite direction', the result is the setting up of an intrinsic epistemological dualism, differentiated between a subaltern and dominant subjectivity. The problem here is that a dualism is reinstated as an oppositional epistemological relationship. Alonso & Macias state the following:

“Epistemological debates not only revert to Western binary thought and idealism, but also linked to a certain type of ideological critique associated with transcendental judgement (understanding, judging, and criticizing)...” (Alonso & Macias, 2015, p 321). The proposal is to move away from an exclusively epistemological debate, which is intrinsic to what Latour describes as the establishment of the 'modern constitution' (Latour, 1994)

Within the 'modern constitution' Latour (1994) states: “...the assumption from a cultural relativist position, is that all cultures have a different but equally valid perspective on 'Nature' whereby 'reality' is created relative to cultural coherence, in this way Nature, is therefore 'bracketed off' (Latour, 1994, p 104). In contrast, Latour describes: “rationalists' aim to achieve universal coherence in correspondence with Nature, by bracketing off Culture' (Latour, 1994, p 104). For Latour the modern constitution sets up both 'Nature' and 'Culture' as

transcendental, and therefore the debate over knowledge is set up relative to attempting to 'purify' between these two positions, whilst simultaneously able to shift the argument from one frame to the other (Latour, 1994). Latour philosophical proposition is that of bringing together transcendence and immanence to the same moment stating: "the very notion of culture is an artefact created by bracketing Nature off. Cultures – different or universal – do not exist, any more than Nature does. There are only natures-cultures, and these offer the only possible basis for comparison" (Latour, 1994, p 104).

I suggest, a debate centred on 'whose or what epistemology', is one framed from a liberal philosophical discourse whose central unresolved question revolves around recognizing the capacity over judgement. Following Latour's critique of modernity in externalizing an establishing internal epistemological divide as a universal ontological transcendence, judgement is therefore assumed as lying within the boundary of *either*, 'Nature' or 'Culture' (Latour, 1994). I therefore propose to shift the debate beyond that centred on an epistemological differentiation and theoretical impasse over the critical subject in dispute, in order to consider an ontological diversity, as a possible matter of concern. In chapter 5, I shall contrast the limitations of the theoretical framings in defining what can be seen as 'intercultural education' as I have explored here, with that of my own ethnographic analysis of the unexpected way 'difference' is present in the classroom. I propose a shift in analysis from framing difference as an epistemological concern, i.e. judging the validity of different knowledge in terms of different cultural perspectives on what exists, to that of considering an ontological openness, whereby incommensurability can be acknowledged as a dynamic process in constant interaction across 'radical difference' (Blaser, 2009, de la Cadena, 2010). I conclude this demands a more coherent ethical stance whereby the limits of our power to know the Other is acknowledge, allow for that which is unknowable to exist. From a critical anthropology approach, I develop this argument in chapter 5, addressing the key concern raised, of taking seriously that which is made present as a radical alterity (Blaser, 2014; Holbraad & Penderon, 2017; de la Cadena, 2010, 2015) in the political space of formal schooling.

Chapter 2: The nation, schooling and the expansion of citizenship: Understanding changing attitudes to schooling from a local perspective

As discussed in the previous chapter, recognition as a political concept is intrinsically linked to education through the liberal philosophical debate of expanding the notion of the capacity for acquiring full personhood, by all human beings. As Taylor (1994) describes an inherent tension is raised, since on the one hand recognition is granted on the basis of 'sameness' whilst at the same time requiring recognition of cultural particularity. Taylor also brings to light that in terms of interculturalism the demand for recognition implies recognition of equal worth of cultural difference. This therefore goes further than that assumed by most liberal states of recognition of the right to express one's own cultural identity and so non-discrimination on the basis of cultural difference. Following this argument, the growing influence of indigenous politics in Latin America in the later 20th century demanding recognition of cultural particularity in schooling, must be understood as framed by this liberal theoretical debate. At the core, as described in the previous chapter, the expanding notion of the capacity to acquire full personhood towards all human beings, as part of a liberal philosophical debate generates an inherent tension within the politics of recognition of cultural difference. Continuing to reflect on this tension, as expressed through a concrete example, I turn to a historical and ethnographic analysis exploring the emergence of formal schooling in the particular case of Pumamaki, in the south central Ecuadorian Amazonian region.

In accordance with critical theory on formal education, the notion of formal mass schooling is firmly linked with that broadly defined within the liberal capitalist nation state building project (Ball, 2013; Apple, 2000; Althusser, 1971). In the context of Latin America, the expansion of formal schooling demands attention to the complex historical relationship between expansion and continued marginalization of large sectors of the population on the basis of 'racial' categorization resulting in relative citizenship status (Larson, 2004). The

emergence of state public schooling must be understood linked to building of the Ecuadorian nation state political project occurring within the context of post-colonial rule.

Aurolyn Luykx (1996) critically reflects on the central function of the school in the Bolivian society as the space for consolidating a nationalist culture through nationalist ideologies (Luykx, 1996, p 245). Luykx states that: “Nationalist ideologies are built from the cannibalized remains of other collective loyalties; to speak the national subject is to silence another” (Luykx, 1996, p 243). However, Luykx also demonstrates that though the school in relation to the interests of dominant power elites is understood to function as the principal space for consolidating the legitimization of a national culture and so corresponding subjectivities, this is never fully achieved. In this way, Luykx highlights not only the potential of individual agency in disrupting a determined subjectivity but that the actual nation state of Bolivia is constituted by contradictions, struggles and accommodation of different social identities. Therefore, the school cannot fully be understood as a space of imposition of subjectivities based on a transmission of a monolithic cultural production, because this ignores the existence of active individual and diverse agency.

For Catherine Walsh, the on-going colonial-racial-structure establishes difference as a pyramidal hierarchy with; “whites’ and those “whitened” on the top and the indigenous and afrodescendent peoples on the bottom” (Walsh, 2014, p 4, my own translation). For Walsh, as previously discussed, interculturality is intrinsically linked to the demand by the indigenous movement for a pluri-national state understood as a political process of contestation. That is “based not on the problem of difference but on the colonial-racial-structural problem” (Walsh, 2014, p 4 my own translation). Bret Gustafson (2009) also broadens the debate between schooling and social identities by reflecting on the interrelationship in the ethnic struggle over nationalist political ideologies as a means of radically re-imagining the national state. Against the notion of the co-option of ethnic struggles within neo-liberal multiculturalism, Gustafson threads a deeply complex scenario between local political construction and national forces. Gustafson demonstrates that: “Indigenous resurgence ...is more than a struggle for *inclusion* in the

existing state; rather, it constitutes a historical project that seeks to rearrange relations and symbols of legitimacy, territory, and authority through the *transformation of the Bolivian nation-state*" (Gustafson, 2009, p 8).

The case of Ecuador is no exception in the on-going struggle and tension expressed between incorporating and invisibilizing diverse social identities and agency as the possibilities for imagining the nation state. My attempt here is to privilege a local

perspective contextualizing the relationship between formal education and indigenous political reorganization, as a means of 'articulation' with the state and as a mechanism to demand 'inclusion', borrow from Gustafson's use of these terms. The conceptualization of inclusion is therefore to be understood as the articulation of an inherent tension in the struggle between incorporation and transformation of the existing social order.

2.1 'Educating & Civilizing' the indigenous population of the Southern-central Ecuadorian Amazon region

Studies of indigenous struggles and process of organization in relation to indigenous education in Ecuador tend to refer to the highlands. The case of the independent schools of Cayambe lead by the indigenous leaders Dolores Cacuango, is presented as the prime example of the historical struggle for greater social justice through an autonomous education process. These schools developed and were a significant element of the rural syndicate organizational process in Cayambe, from the 1940s up to their repressive closure by the military junta that came to power in the coup of 1963 (Becker, 2008). Whilst there is no doubt that the case of Cayambe is significant in the history of education and indigenous organization in Ecuador, I consider it importance to turn the gaze towards the Ecuadorian Amazonian region. The reason is not mere preference, but because of the political importance the Amazonian regions signify in the historical process of Ecuadorian nation state-building.

There are important studies conducted from the Ecuadorian Amazon region, including Laura Rival's (2000) investigations of Huoarani territorial displacement from the 1980s onwards and the imposition of settlements established around the building of schools. Martinez Novo (2004) has also explored the Salesiana religious mission in the southern region of the Ecuadorian Amazon in relation to indigenous organization process of the Shuar. Shiela Aikmann considering the Arakmbut peoples of the Southern Amazon region of Peru has studied the long-term relationship between schooling and the changing territory these communities have experienced (Aikman, 2003). These studies have in common the relationship between the school and the changing forms of organization and local livelihoods. What these investigations highlight is the processes of struggle and negotiation of these indigenous communities with the central state. Similarly, though without the advantage of a long-term study, I analyse the historical process of the emergence of schooling as it occurs in relation to the territory of what is now Pumamaki. I also aim to focus on the strategic significance of the presence of the school as part of the nation-building project and the process of negotiation by this group of local communities. Through this analysis I provide further insight as to reasons for changing attitudes towards schooling across time, from the local perspective. This historical analysis enables the contextualization of my current ethnographic investigation of classroom practice and the interpretation of local political discourse that I develop in later chapters.

From community elders' oral histories and Dominican missionary written records, I interpret that the emergence of rural state schooling in the central Amazonian region in the early 1940s as responding to the state's imperative, to demonstrate national sovereignty at a critical moment of territorial crisis. I argue, state schooling forms part of the continued framing of racial distinction between those recognized as citizens, seen as having personhood and those understood as not fully persons and only potential citizens in the future. Focusing on Pumamaki as one of the locations where public state schooling is established in the early 1940s, I evidence how the people of Pumamaki classified as 'Indians', were essentially identified as an excluded social identity from a national citizenship project. However, the issue is not only one sided, the expansion of public schooling to rural Amazonian locations did provide opportunity for demanding

inclusion and recognition of citizenship status, implying that the school inherently signifies a space of struggle and negotiation.

In this chapter, I trace the expansion of the state citizenship project taking place in the 20th century. The emergence of rural state schooling must be historically contextualized within an evangelizing religious education towards the “not quite human” indigenous population. I propose from the perspective of a local agency and distinct (excluded) social identity, ‘becoming educated’ through schooling, is incorporated into the on-going historical struggle for recognition and relative territorial autonomy, translating, if not transforming the ideological function of schooling as that conceived consolidating a uniform and specific national state project.

2.1.1 From the centre of the margins, to the margins of the centre

In the Amazon region, the evangelizing mission started early on. By 1576 the Jesuit missionaries had been granted jurisdiction of the “Mision de Mainas”, by the Spanish crown for evangelization and ‘civilizing’ of the ‘savages’ (García, 1999) that covered what is now recognized as the upper cloud forest and lower central Ecuadorian Amazon region, including currently parts of the Peruvian Amazon basin. As part of this jurisdiction, it was however the Dominican missionaries that entered the region they then named as “Canelos”, establishing the “Mission de Canelos” around 1624 or 1671⁸. The Bobonaza River on whose banks, Pumamaki is currently located was at the heart of this historical designation.

Whitten in 1976 describes the peoples of Pumamaki as belonging to one of the five current territories of ‘Canelos Quichua’ culture. The ‘Canelos Quichua’ as Whitten phrases it, corresponds to the southern Quichua culture and includes “people from east of Cabecera de Bobonaza to Canelos, and from Canelos north to the headwaters of the Villano and Curary rivers, east to Chambira, and south

⁸ The exact date of first entry into the region, appears to be an issue of serious debate in the claim over whose jurisdiction between different church missions, (see Garcia, 1999, the article cited here).

to the headwaters of the Copotaza River” (Whitten, 1976, p 14).

The Dominican missionaries, as from the early 1800s refer to the people in this region as ‘Canelenses’ specifying groups as ‘Pueblos’. For the Dominican missionaries ‘pueblo’ can be understood as describing a geographical location of an established Christian settlement historically created by ‘coaching’ and forcing groups to these locations. From the perspective of the missionaries pueblo references to the notion of an ‘organized settlement’ of family units as opposed to nomadic and dispersed groups of people. However taking into account the historical context, the term pueblo should not be understood as a single term. During my research, in everyday speech, individuals would refer to themselves as ‘of Pumamaki’ always in relation to their territory as ‘Territorio de ‘Pumamaki’’. In the publication written by the community political organization of Pumamaki, they describe their territory and its origins in the following manner:

‘Pumamaki’, reconocido como “Pueblo Originario Kichwa de ‘Pumamaki’” es un pueblo originario kichwa ecuatoriano, ubicado en la Región Amazónica, Provincia de Pastaza, localizado en el curso medio del río Bobonaza. Esta, conformado por cinco comunidades. Fue fundado por Ramón Simón Gualinga hace aproximadamente 200 años.” (Pumamaki, 2003, p 2)

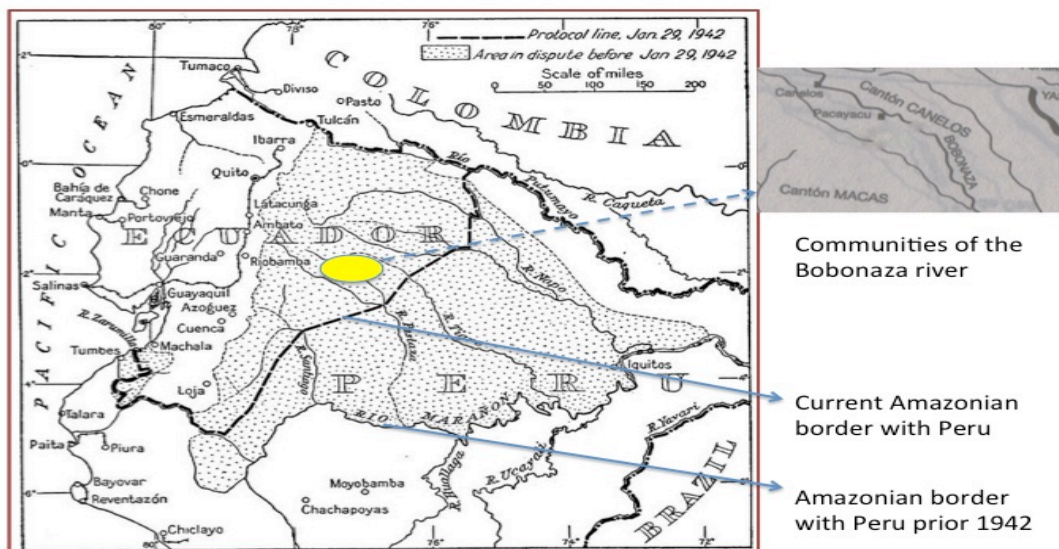
“Pumamaki, recognized as the “Pueblo Originario Kichwa de ‘Pumamaki’” is an original Ecuadorian Kichwa ‘pueblo’, located in the Amazon Region, Province of Pastaza, found mid-course of the Bobonaza River. It is made up of five communities. Founded by Ramón Simón Gualinga approximately 200 years ago.”
(my own translation)

Clearly the current people of Pumamaki identify ‘Pueblo’ in correspondence to their own territorial and historical ethnic origins. This implies a tension between the term ‘Pueblo’ in correspondence to the naming by missionaries and the appropriation of this term as a means of self-identification as currently used.

Since its ‘founding’ in the early 1800s, Pumamaki’s geographical coordinates has not altered, to be found approximately halfway along the Bobonaza River.

However, in relation to Ecuador's political map, Pumamaki's location has changed significantly. In the 19th century the Amazon Ecuadorian region was made up of just one province, the province of Napo and subdivided into three cantones; Cantón Quijos as the most northern eastern region with Archidona as its political and missionary centre, canton Canelos with Canelos as its political and missionary centre and cantón Macas controlled at this time still from Canelos. The territorial region claimed by the Ecuadorian state up until the mid 20th century was much larger than it is now. The Ecuadorian state national territory was seen extending significantly along its Amazonian boundary, into what is currently established as Peruvian national territory. This meant that during the early 19th century, Pumamaki as a settlement along the Bobonaza River was geographical located approximately at the centre of the Ecuadorian national state territory. At this time, as I shall describe below, this geographical centre can also be understood as correlating to the centre of expansion of a missionary civilizing project. The map below shows the extension of the Ecuadorian Amazonian Region before and after the territorial dispute of 1941 and the final border established with the signing of the protocol of Janeiro in 1942.

Figure 1- Map of changing Ecuadorian Amazon border



(Source: Esvertit Cobes, 2008 and <http://files.foreignaffairs.com/legacy/images/20412-1.jpg>)

By the mid 20th century, the communities along the Bobonaza River were no longer geographically at the centre of the Ecuadorian state territory but located towards the geographical margins, close to the Peruvian border. As I shall develop further on, for the then Ecuadorian State, this region becomes a focus for promoting the expansion of a 'modern' urbanized population project. This does not necessarily include the people of the communities along the Bobonaza River, instead firmly categorized as rural, perceived generally as representing enclaves of indigenous tradition.

The Ecuadorian Amazon region becomes politically subdivided into Provinces, Puyo, becomes named as the provincial capital city of the Province of Pastaza and the surrounding areas represents the expanding multi-ethnic urban centre of this region. However, Puyo only came into existence in the 20th century founded in 1909 with less than a dozen indigenous families (Hurtado, 1988). Mera about 20 to 30 km west of Puyo, was the first 'white' settlement in this region established in 1924 (Hurtado, 1988). The early 1900s therefore represents the beginnings of a rapid urbanizing and expanding population project in the Amazon region, where school provision becomes highly significant and symbolic for consolidating the vision representing a unified Ecuadorian nation state building project.

2.2 Schooling provision and the growth of population

Canelos along the Bobonaza river since the late 1800s becomes the permanent and central missionary residence of the Dominican mission in the Amazon region, and as demonstrated in the photo below, the missionary proudly exhibits several formal buildings made of wood and tiled roof. However, though this photograph is labelled as 'children of the school of Canelos', missionary records for this period, mention only 10 boys at the orphanage. Formal lessons of basic reading, writing and maths are described as short complementary sessions to the catequism lessons in parted to all boys. Therefore, this photograph is likely to correspond to the majority of the children of the community of Canelos that in some way or

other are portrayed as receiving education, but not necessarily forming part of a 'school' institution.

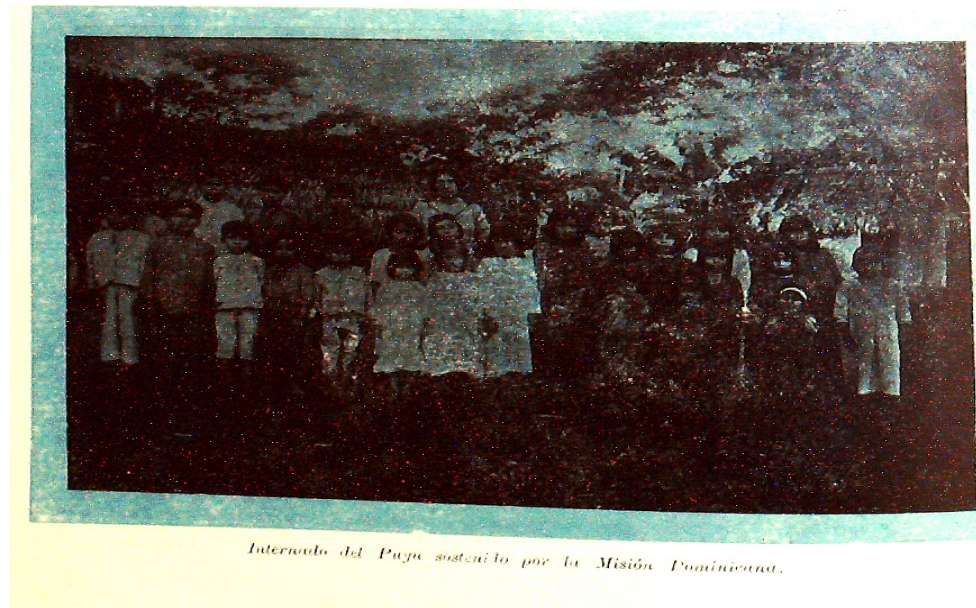
Figure 2 - Children of the 1st School of Canelos



(Source, Revista El Oriente Dominicano, 1936)

The first records of any form of school in the region is claimed as that established by the Dominican Priest Fr. Jacinto Loja, in the newly founded settlement of Puyo in 1914, with 5 'white' boys and 5 'Indian' boys (Gobierno provincial de Pastaza, 2015). The photograph below appearing in the Dominican magazine of 1928 is labelled as 'internado de Puyo', literally translated as boarding school, though more than likely functioned as a type of orphanage for indigenous children.

Figure 3 - Children of the 1st Orphanage in Puyo



(Source *Revista Oriente Dominicano, Misión Dominicana de Ecuador, 1926*)

Whilst the image is not very clear and there is no indication of a year, it is possible to see a small number of clothed indigenous children framed in a small clearing with a hut in the background, surrounded by forest. In contrast, the photograph labelled 'niños de la Escuela de Canelos 1929' (Children of the School of Canelos in 1929) evidences a stark contrast with the photograph above.

What can be deduced by these photographs and in correspondence to the census data, is that up until the late 1920s there was a marked difference between the concentration of population and 'modern' infrastructure between Canelos and Puyo. Canelos rather than Puyo was the centre of the 'modernizing and evangelizing' project. In the early 1900s, it is unlikely that Puyo could have sustained a formal school as such apart from a small orphanage.

The founding of the first school in Puyo in 1914 is therefore open to interpretation, most probably a retrospective symbolical act. Taking into consideration records of travellers and missionaries at the time, it is difficult to recognize any form of permanent population in Puyo until the mid-1930s. Some

records state that in 1932 “Puyo was 4 houses” (cited Hurtado, 1988, p19) and in 1935 a military garrison with their families were brought to the outskirts of Puyo and given land as encouragement to settle permanently (cited in Hurtado, 1988, p 9).

It is not until 1932 that the Dominican mission constructs a specific school building in Puyo. In 1936 school provision mentioned in Dominican records in this region are as follows:

Table 1 - School provision of 1936 in Pastaza

Location	Schools 1936	
	Missionary	Fiscal/State funded
Puyo	1	
Mera	1	1
Canelos	1	
Pacayacu		
Pumamaki		
Montalvo		
Total	3	1

Source, collated from Revista El Oriente Dominicano. (Misión Dominicana de Ecuador, 1935/6)

Teaching activities mentioned as occurring within a formal recognized establishment i.e. ‘escuela’ (school) do occur in other settlements along the Bobonaza River, but some formal teaching is described in terms of private and sporadic activities. For example, in 1930 during a visit to Juanjiri currently known as Montalvo close to the Peruvian border, the Father Apostolic Prefect of Canelos mentions a school taking place under the auspices of the representative civic authority:

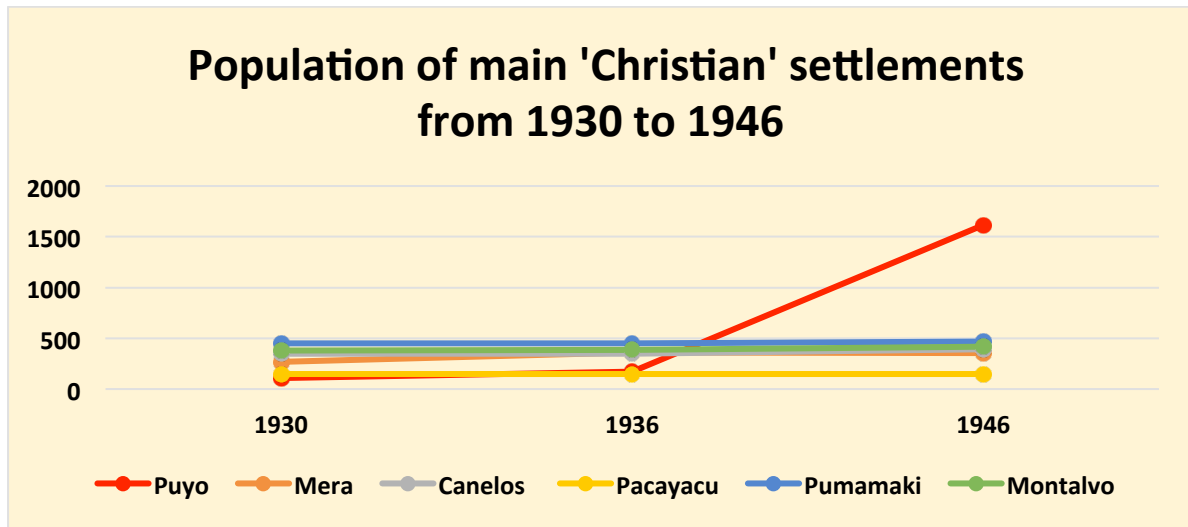
“...el Sr Jefe Político, Capitán Freire, constituido en el pueblo con su secretario y dos celadores, a uno de estos, el Sr. Luis Maldonado le había encargado ensayar una escuelita de primeras letras entre niños indígenas de este pueblo. Efectivamente, la escuelita funcionaba en los corredores del convento con 12 niños indígenas.” (Misión Dominicana de Ecuador, 1935, p10-11)

“...the Political Chief, Mr. Captain Freire, living in the pueblo with his secretary and two overseers, one of these Mr. Luis Maldonado who he had put in charge of starting up a small school to teach the indigenous boys of this pueblo to read. Indeed, the school was functioning in the corridors of the convent with 12 indigenous boys” (my own translation)

This extract provides evidence that although there may have been some form of formal teaching occurring during the 1920s and early 1930s along the settlements of the Bobonaza river, these initiatives were mostly private ones, they did not correspond to a school as a formal state institution in itself, since there was no specific infrastructure and nominated professionals conducting the teaching. Schooling is largely in direct correspondence to an evangelizing mission to ‘civilize the Indians’ as a process of conversion.

It is by the late 1930s that the emergence of formal schooling as sustained and state recognized activities can be evidenced. After 1936 the population of Puyo significantly expands as a new urbanizing centre. The census data collected by the Dominican missionaries over a 16-year period represented in the graph below, shows the dramatic increase in population of Puyo in contrast to the other existing settlements.

Figure 4 - Population growth of 'Christian' settlements from 1930-1946



(Own elaborated graph obtained from data in 'Revista El Oriente Dominicano' Misión Dominicana de Ecuador, 1930 - 1946)

Puyo's dramatic growth in population, can only mean a process of mass immigration. It is not a coincidence that this growth in population takes off at the same time as the passing of the 1937 decree, promoting the colonization and private landownership of 'tierras baldias'. 'Tierras baldias', literally meaning empty lands was the definition for most of the Amazonian region, considered as land that has not been put into productive use. According to state legislation 'tierras baldias' were mostly under state ownership and so could be granted to citizens for production under private ownership by the government. This policy responded to various unfolding events, which contributed to making the Amazon region of vital importance for the unity and viability of the nation-building state project. The Amazon region had always been an important economic source for extraction, most significantly demonstrated by the rubber boom of the 17th century, but included other activities such as gold panning, quinin, local fibres, etc., (Esvertit Cobes, 2008). Following this trend, it is in the late 1920s that international oil corporations start exploring for oil reserves (Acosta, 2009, Cueva, 1997). Also, by the 1930s civil unrest due to cycles of economic crisis, growing population and extremely exploitative conditions of land tenure required the need to promote some form of agricultural reforms (Cueva, 1997). From the perspective of a centralized state the Amazon required populating as an under

exploited reserve, but significantly in the region acted as a pressure valve, in reducing social tension by providing access to land ownership for impoverished highland and costal lowland peasants (Acosta, 2009; Cueva, 1997).

In correspondence, by 1946 school provision has radically changed, in comparison to the previous decade. According to the Dominican census data, in 1946 there existed a total of 7 state schools and 3 missionary schools within the canton of Canelos. Below I have reproduced part of the table of the census data collected by the Dominican mission for 1946 showing school provisions in the settlements of this region:

Table 2 – State (Fiscal) and Catholic (Dominican Missionary) school provision for the Canelos region in 1946

	Población/Population			Escuelas/School		Alumnos/Students	
	Extranjera <i>Foreign</i>	Blancos <i>White</i>	Indios <i>Indian</i>	Misional <i>Catholic</i>	Fiscal <i>Public</i>	Misional <i>Catholic</i>	Fiscal <i>Public</i>
Puyo	25	1300	315	1	1	85	60
Mera	20	349	30	1	1	34	28
Canelos		45	514	1	1	26	3
Pacayacu	1	9	190				
Pumamaki		19	352		1		8
Montalvo	1	50	263		1		12
Total				3	5	145	138

(Source, Misión Dominicana de Ecuador, 'Revista El Oriente Dominicano, 1946' reproduced from the table "Estadísticas Generales De Perfectura Apostolica de Canelos", p 88)

What the table above shows, is that all the settlements along the Bobonaza River with the exception of Pacayacu, had a public state school by 1946. Apart from having a public state school Puyo, Mera and Canelos also continue to have their missionary run schools. A closer look at the demographics in this table shows a direct correlation between the provision of state schooling and the presence of 'white' population. This therefore goes some way towards explaining why even though Pumamaki represented the largest concentration of population up until the late 1930s a school only appears in 1942/3 when there is evidence of 'white'

settlement, here. However, whilst there is evidence of a direct relationship between 'white' population and state school provision, this relationship has its particularities that require exploring.

2.3 The emergence of public state schooling in 'traditional' settlements

Apart from the obvious distinction between religious and public state schools, in terms of the authority in charge of running the schools, an important difference to mention between religious and state run schools was a gender bias. At this time the Dominican run schools were only for boys, whereas public state schools were automatically gender mixed. Looking at the number of students recorded as attending these schools, the dramatic increase in the number of public state schools appears somewhat out of sync. Along the settlements of the Bobonaza River, records of number of children attending the schools are as follows: Canelos has 3 students, Pumamaki 8, and Montalvo 12. It is difficult to extrapolate that the growth of public state schools responds to a local demand for schooling. The political will to establish these public state schools must reflect a different reason to go to such extraordinary efforts, for such small returns. The particular events unfolding at a national level are the most likely reason why these settlements become of strategic interest to central government at this moment in time, warranting the establishing of public state schools, in these considered remote areas.

The 1930s marked a critical point in the growing tensions over the disputed Amazonian national boundaries between the states of Peru and Ecuador resulting in a brief and armed military confrontation, with the declaration of war in 1941. This ended in the signing of the Rio de Janeiro Protocol of 1942, resulting in the loss of a large proportion of the Amazonian disputed territory by the Ecuadorian state. As a direct consequence of this tension the Ecuadorian government deployed military garrisons throughout the Amazon region and especially along important transport routes such as the Bobonaza River. Missionary archive during this period and oral testimonies with elders of Pumamaki from my own interviews, who had experience of this period, confirm

there were military garrisons in Montalvo, Pumamaki and Canelos from the late 1930s to the early 50s including postings of soldiers with their families. It is the establishment of these military garrisons that most closely fits the particular pattern of the emergence of public schools in these locations. It also explains why the school provision does not respond to a direct demand represented in the number of children attending. This also explains why public state schools along the Bobonaza River did not last long, disappearing by the early to mid-1950s. Once the military garrisons were disbanded, so too, do the public state schools, disappear. The only military garrison currently operating in this area, is that of Montalvo, one of the settlements closest to the Peruvian border.

To sum up, the appearance of state schools in these 'far-away' indigenous locations, is most likely a response to the specific events occurring at this time concerning the disputed Amazonian state boundaries, whereby the Ecuadorian state needed to show its full civic presence. What then best represents civic presence than a public state school. It is no great leap to conclude that the small number of children attending these schools is likely to be those children of military families, and not necessarily the local children of the established communities. Elders of pumamaki, who lived through this period, corroborate this hypothesis, as I evidence below.

2.3.1 Local attitudes towards the emergence of formal schooling

At the time of my research Elsa celebrated her 82nd birthday. She is one of the daughters of the first 'blanco-colono' (as she describes her father) to marry a woman of Pumamaki in the early 1900s. Elsa's testimony in particular describes the context of the first school established in Pumamaki. She recalls attending this first school probably around the age of 6 or 7. The school was a classroom close to the central square not far from where we were talking, known as the port, where her father and mother had established and built their home on the edge of the river. Elsa's father, son of an army coronel, was the first 'blanco' (white) man to settle here. The story is told that as a young man, left by his father to travel alone from Peru trading salt, he fell in love with a young and beautiful local indigenous woman, from an original and powerful shaman family. Elsa, was one

of the 7 children of this first 'mixed' and initially prohibited union. Elsa explained that when she was young, most families lived further apart than they did now, and that only the 'colono' families lived relatively close together concentrated around the current central location. She pointed out that the military garrison had been established opposite, on the other side of the river.

When I asked who attended the school, she explained that it was mostly the children from 'colono' families and those of military families who attended regularly. When I asked her if children of the local indigenous families attended, she said that only boys went and none attend very regularly. She also said some of these boys didn't seem to pay much attention and so would often be reprimanded by the teacher. In her view, the local indigenous families didn't much value an education and would insist on taking the boys to the 'purinas', sometimes for quite long periods of time.

'Purinas' are similar to 'chakras' in that they can be describes physically as agricultural subsistence family plots. Purinas and chakras are described by Whitten in his in depth ethnographic research in this region during the 1970s as forming part of the 'llacta' as the place of abode of an 'ayllu', whereby ayllu is an extended family network, including living and non-living ancestors⁹. Chakras in Pumamaki refer to agricultural plots that are at a relatively close distance to the community and permanent homes, whereas purinas are further away and visited less frequently but usually for longer periods of time. Purina unlike chakra in everyday speech is used in two senses, as a noun and a verb. As a noun, as just described, purina is a piece of land in relation to a recognized family 'ayllu', however, as a verb, 'going on purina', it is the action of leaving the central llacta to go to the distant llacta in the forest as hunting grounds and to collect fruits and crops. Most importantly going on 'purina' is related to learning forest knowledge and becoming 'sacha runa'¹⁰ forest person. Purinas are therefore associated with

⁹ See Whitten, *Sacha Runa*, chapter, 2, 1976, for an in-depth anthropological description of familial categorizations.

¹⁰ 'Sacha Runa' literally translates to forest person. This term is explored in depth by Whitten 1976 and 1978, analysed as a significant 'sign-image' of the Canelos Quichua. I develop the significance of Sacha Runa and contextualize this term in relation to education further in chapters 4 and 5, demonstrating a continuity with Whitten's analysis of the complex meaning and multiple function of this concept.

a space for acquiring ancestral know how (knowledge), maintaining traditional practices as a direct connection with the forest. Of significance here, is that purina points to a clash in diverse social practices in relation to forms of living and knowing, with those of dominant 'outside' society, specifically schooling.

When speaking to Don Sergio aged in his 90s who acted as local civic representative in the 1960s and is also recognized as a powerful Shaman, he mentioned that he too attended the first school, but only on occasions. He states that he went to school only to learn his letters and to learn Spanish. Once he had a basic knowledge of letters said he no longer thought it relevant to attend school and he mentions that he learnt to speak Spanish properly when he went to work in the coastal region as a young adult. He describes that most local boys did not bother to go to school and if they went, they attended intermittently when convenient, continuing to go away from the main settlement on purinas for extended periods. Don Sergio also mentions the strictness of the teachers who came and how it was difficult for them as boys to sit quietly and listen. Don Sergio mentions that since the lessons were imparted in Spanish they did not understand what was being taught. Therefore, it is likely that the school apart from contrasting in a physical sense over these boys common practices, neither did it make much sense apart from symbolically representing a space to 'learn to be more civilized'. It is interesting to note that according to Don Sergio only when a local member of the community trained by the missionaries to become a priest and not having achieved this, became the first indigenous teacher locally, did he start attending more regularly. According to Don Sergio, this teacher translated the letters and words for them so that it made sense.

2.3.2 Clash of visions

From the perspective of the missionaries, it can be understood that the people of these settlements, were important in terms of a potential for their 'becoming proper Christians', key to the legitimization of the missionaries' role and presence. As expressed in a letter by the Apostolic father of the Canelos mission

in 1927, the ‘traditional’ activities and attitudes of the local indigenous populations, were both negative and harmful:

“Triste es decirlo, pero la verdad se impone; en el tiempo que vagan en las purinas olvidan mucho de lo que aprendieron del Misionero, de tal suerte que una reunión a otra el adelanto es poco o nada. Mientras está arraigada y pésima costumbre de las purinas no desaparezca, ningún progreso de civilización será efectivo en estos pueblos” (Misión Dominicana de Ecuador, 1927, p16)

“It is sad, but the truth must be said; during the time that they [local indigenous population] wonder in the purinas they forget all they learnt from the Missionary, with such luck that from one meeting to another the advancement is very little or nil. Until this terrible and entrenched custom of purinas does not disappear, no progress in civilizing will be effective in these pueblos” (Misión Dominicana de Ecuador, 1927, p16, my own translation)

The imperative of educating the ‘Indian’ is not only expressed at an ideological discursive level, but is enforced as far as it is possible, by the Missionaries and civil authorities. This same letter provides an example of the use of force between the mission and civic regional authorities to control and regulate the activity of abandoning the settlements to go to the purinas:

“...la noticia de esta determinación del P. Misionero, corroborada por la Autoridad civil, llegó a oídos de los canelenses, quienes han afirmado que no es ahora cuando van a dejar sus antiguas costumbres y que más bien abandonarían el pueblo. El indio aferrado en sus costumbres, idólatras de una mal entendida libertad, nacido y criado en esta vida nomada, ni aprecia, ni ve las ventajas que le reportaría un pueblo estable con sus escuelas, sus talleres y variadas industrias” (Misión Dominicana de Ecuador, 1927, p 16).

“...the news of this decreed regulation by P. Missionary, collaborated by the civic Authority, reached the ears of the canelenses, who have affirmed that it is not now when they are going to leave their ancient customs and that instead they will abandon the settlement. The indian entrenched to his idolatry customs, wrongly

understood as freedom, born and raised in this nomadic life, neither appreciates or sees the advantages that a stable pueblo would provide, with schools, workshops and varied industry” (Misión Dominicana de Ecuador, 1927, p 16 my own translation)

Though it is the voice of the missionary here that can be heard, what lies behind is also the organized collective agency of the people of Canelos and most likely other settlements, that threaten to permanently abandon the central settlements. This threat expressed by the local community is exactly what the missionaries aimed to prevent. This letter clearly expresses the clash in vision between the civilizing mission in accordance with reproducing an organized economically productive urbanizing settlement, in relation to advancing a modern capitalist nation state project and that of the ‘canelenses’ who resist and negotiate the level of imposition. The contrasting conceptualization of ‘freedom’ here points directly to the struggle over sustaining autonomy at a local level in contrast to top-down control by socially dominant authority.

Since the colonial period and through the republican period the relationship between centralized control and the Church was of the later in ‘tutelage’ of the ‘Indian’ populations, in far to reach areas. My analysis of the emergence of schooling in this region shows, this structure remains fundamentally unchanged during most of the 20th century. The civil state only becomes directly present in terms of schooling, when immigrant ‘white’ citizens appear. ‘Educating’ the ‘Indian’, is of state interest, only indirectly through missionary presence. As discussed above, records evidence that the first schools established are the missionary schools in Canelos and Puyo, these are described as orphanages and it is only with the wave of immigration and the national territorial concerns that regular schools are concerted.

However, there is evidence to suggest that the Dominican mission had ambitions to expand school provisions as part of a long-term civilizing project and was in competition with state fiscal schooling. Again, from missionary records there is mention of the need for a school in Pumamaki as the largest ‘Christian settlement’ prior to the 1940s:

“Es una población solo de indios, indudablemente los más listos de la región oriental: su numero asciende a 450 todos ellos cristianos...Hay aquí una casa e iglesia pequeñas, de cañas silvestres y cubierta de paja. Se piensa en establecer también aquí una escuela al estilo de la de Canelos: su realización es justicia por parte de los misioneros y rendirá enormes ventajas a la civilización del indio” (Vargas, 1932, p 160 in Misión Dominicana de Ecuador, 1934).

“It is a local population made up of only Indians, undoubtedly the cleverest in the oriental region: its number ascends to 450 all of them Christians...Here, there is a small house and church made of wild bamboo and covered by a straw roof. We think of also establishing a school in the style of Canelos: its realization is a form of justice by the missionaries and would provide enormous advantages for the civilizing of the Indian” (Vargas, 1932, p 160 in Misión Dominicana de Ecuador, 1934, my own translation)

From the testimonial text above, it was the missionaries' intention to build a formal school in Pumamaki well before the state school is established, for reason of advancing the civilizing mission of the 'Indian'. Therefore, it was not a lack of will on behalf of the missionary order, that a missionary school in Pumamaki did not exist at this time. It could be supposed, and Dominican reports suggest that the central limitation may have been due to a lack of resources to do so. However, as suggested above, material resources may not be the only reason a school did not appear in Pumamaki until 1942/3 coinciding with the appearance of a military garrison. I propose, that by considering the hidden local voice, there is no school in Pumamaki before the 1940s because those living in these settlements by and large did not want or see the need for a school within their territory.

The testimony of Doña Elsa corroborates this suggestion since even in the 1940s when a school was present in Pumamaki priority by local families was given to going to their purinas and not necessarily attending school. I propose two opposing visions clash at the interface of formal schooling: that of the missionaries to develop a civilizing project conceptualized in terms of become a

Christian, equivalent at this time to acquiring 'personhood', and the need for recognition of agency by local people as a means of maintaining relative autonomy. As the missionary Father above states, local communities do not seem to see the advantages of becoming a 'stable community with schools, workshops and industrial activity', even if these 'Christians' have for several generations been negotiating being recognized. Father Pierre¹¹, (1988) in his published diary of travels in this region, draws the distinction between Canalenses as potential subjects described as 'Christian Savages' in contrast to 'Jivaros' as 'Barbarian Savages'. I suggest that during the early 20th century, from a local perspective further formal instruction in the shape of a permanent school, is for the most part rejected as a step too far in the imposition of 'becoming', in terms of acquiring a specific type of personhood.

2.4 School provision as a citizenship project

Tracking demographic change with growing school provision from the early 1920s through to the late 1940s demonstrates that school provision responds to the growth of immigrant 'white' population in the region. Unsurprisingly this is mostly concentrated in and around new expanding urban centres. These newly arrived 'white' immigrants, whilst geographically marginalized, are ideologically and politically at the centre of the nation-building project. Provision particularly of public state schooling responds to the conceptualization and political discourse whereby these individuals are perceived as valued pioneering citizens¹². Policies of colonization and investment in public state schooling, as well as the sudden provision of public schools within historically indigenous settlements in the early 1940s can be seen as pragmatic responses to the critical threat to the viability of the Ecuadorian national state project.

¹¹ Father Pierre a French Dominican Missionary travels to the South and Central Ecuadorian Amazon region in 1887-1888 as a reconnaissance mission for the viability of establishing permanent Dominican Missionary Apostolic headquarters, in the Amazon region after the expulsion of the Jesuit missionary order, from Ecuador and much of South America. The published diary of these travels in French, is later translated into Spanish in 1983. The book provides a detailed description of the constituting of 'other' from the perspective of the Christian evangelizing mission at the time. See also Muratorio, B. (editora) 1994. *Imágenes e Imagineros: Representación de los Indígenas Ecuatorianos, Siglo XIX y XX*

¹² For a discussion of the vision of the 'pioneering citizen', See William T. V. 1984. *Indian Policy in Amazonian Ecuador in Frontier Expansion in the Amazon*, also Whitten, N. E. 1981., *Cultural transformations and ethnicity in modern Ecuador*.

It would seem that from the perspective of the central government at this time, there is no specific need to consider or provide schooling for the indigenous population, since this continues to be the work of the 'civilizing' mission of the Church. Before the 1940s the school as an 'institutional sites of intentional training' (Levinson & Holland, 1996) authorized and acknowledged by the central state took the form of 'orphanages' in this area established by the Dominican mission. It is described by missionary records that *some* general formal lessons were conducted but the emphasis of 'educating' seems to correspond to that of conversion, changing traditional practices and habits, i.e. values and norms understood as inferior and uncivilized. For the central government, whose aim was the development of a national citizenship project through the expansion and colonization by its *recognized* citizens of what is perceived as an under productive regions, the indigenous population of this region was therefore of little consequence.

During the colonial period and throughout much of the republican history the indigenous populations are constituted as 'other' by governing authorities and positioned under the 'tutelage' of the Church missions. This means that indigenous people as individuals are not perceived as autonomous agents and not recognized as subjects, in essence defined as 'not fully human'. Under the tutelage of Christian missions, a large majority of the population is recognized at best only in terms of a potential, in relation to the possibility of acquiring personhood through conversion and teaching efforts. During most of the 20 century therefore those classified as 'Indians' are understood as in the process of 'becoming' still not achieving 'full personhood' and therefore not recognized as legitimate subjects, i.e. not recognized as full citizens. In the Dominican records 'colonos' are automatically categorized as 'white' in contrast to the existing 'Indian' population. 'Colonos' represent the spearhead of a modernizing and continued racialized national project of citizenship expansion across the national territory. This can be seen clearly reflected in the words spoken by President Guillermo Rodriquez Lara in a public speech pronounced in Puyo in 1972 where he states: "There is no more Indian problem...We all become white men when we accept the goals of the national culture" (cited in Whitten 1976 p 268). The name

given to the first school in Pumamaki clearly reflects this ideology, “Escuela Gonzalo Diez de Pineda”; name of first Spanish Conquistador in 1538 to venture into the northern Amazon region currently recognized as part of the Ecuadorian territory.

The school during this period can be seen to represent two parallel though ideologically linked projects on the basis of continued racial categorization. On the one hand, schooling during most of the 20th century represents ‘educating’ the ‘Indian’ as an on-going civilizing mission and therefore functions to invisibilize a large part of the population as subjects, within the civilizing/modernizing nation state project; On the other the hand, the school represents both presence and access to the state for its recognized citizens as part of the expanding citizenships project. In conclusion, from the perspective of the central state government for large part of the 20th century, the local indigenous population is quite literally invisible and so requires no specific accounting for in terms of public state school provision.

By the 1960s the scenario from a local perspective changes radically. According to local testimonies after the public state school disappeared an improvised school was set up by the evangelical protestant missionaries. Elders describe how a previous member of Pumamaki married to a ‘mestiza’ converted to Protestantism came back and offered to continue formal instruction lead by his wife. This apparently was controversial and eventually lead to the expulsion of this family for various different reasons. In 1960/61, Don Sergio part of the local leadership of Pumamaki explained that a commission was organized to request the help of the Dominican mission to establish a permanent school. The building of this school named ‘Simon Hurtado¹³’ forms part of common local history. The majority of older adults I spoke to, express pride in being part of the collective effort of building the school located behind the central square under the auspices of the Dominican mission. This raises the question as to why such a radical change of attitude from the local perspective towards schooling? In other words,

¹³ Simon Hurtado was one of the first Dominican Fathers to permanently reside in the Apostolic headquarters of Canelos arriving in the early 1900s. The names given to the schools in Pumamaki therefore closely reflect the ideology over schooling of the respective authorities in charge.

what happens between the 1920/30s to the 1960s, to bring about such a change of attitude? Again to explore the reasons behind this change of attitude it is necessary to contextualize what occurs at the local level with the broader picture of regional political transformations.

2.4.1 Changing local attitudes to schooling

Officially, the passing of the first Law of Agrarian Reform and Colonization did not take place until 1964, however migration and colonization were already well under way, by the 1930s. It is in 1936 when lands not under formal production are declared as 'tierras baldias'¹⁴ that the start of what becomes a wave of Agrarian reforms in Ecuador can be identified as initiating. This declaration results in the lands of the Amazon region seen, as up for grabs. This started the permanent and increasing flow of migration into the region as described above in correlation with the growth of migrant population establishing new settlements such as Puyo and Mera. This first official law, goes through two reforms known as the 2nd law of Agrarian Reform and Colonization in 1972 under the presidency of Rodriguez Lara and finally the 3rd Law of Agrarian Reform and Colonization in 1976 again under the second military dictatorship governed between three army generals. The expansion of the agrarian frontier framed in this form, continued through to the 1990s, and arguably still continues to be at the centre of political debates today. The agrarian reforms of the 20th century, though driven by contesting political interests and ideologies can be understood to be implemented under the dominant political imperative of redistribution, in terms of greater access to private land ownership for market production. This is evident in the official discourse, as I analyse below.

The central justification for the promulgation of the first law of agrarian reform and colonization in 1964 was stated as the inherited unequal distribution of land ownership, requiring a historic transformation for economic modernization and to promote greater social justice:

¹⁴ The literal translation of 'Tierras baldias' is 'empty lands'

“45% of the total of exploited agricultural land was in the hands of less than 0.4% of producers, whilst only 7.2 % of the total of exploited agricultural land was in the hands of 75% of agricultural producers” (Ley de Reforma Agraria y Colonización, 1964, p 4-5, Ecuador, my own translation).

The facts presented in this paragraph, demonstrates that a very small percentage of individuals had ownership over vast swaths of land, whilst in contrast the majority of agricultural producers were small holders on very small plots of land. As part of the new law, a new institutional body IERAC (Instituto Ecuatoriano de Reforma Agraria y Colonización) was created to administer and most importantly conduct the legalization of new private land ownership. The fact that this law is one of agrarian reform as well as *colonization* is highly significant for the Amazonian region. The evidence shows that the greatest impact in terms of land acquisition was as a direct consequence of colonization and not land redistribution. A study conducted by Gondard & Mazurek (2001) shows that from 1964 to 1994 the total amount of land affected by the agrarian reform was 9.026 km², i.e. 3.4% of the total national territory. In contrast 63.631km² of lands were legalized by means of colonization, equivalent to 23% of the national territory (Gondard & Mazurek, 2001, p 22). By far the brunt of the processes of colonization took place in the Amazon provinces, meaning that it is the historical populations settled in these regions who were most affected by these policies. Whitten (1976) for example provides insight from a local perspective through an in-depth account of the struggle to maintain land rights by indigenous communities who had recently settled around the urbanizing centre of Puyo. Whitten describes the ensuing conflict with the newly arriving migrant ‘colonos’ in the early 1970s, as a direct consequence of the agrarian reforms and corresponding laws (Whitten, 1978).

The depth of impact as a consequence of the agrarian reform is directly linked to the concept of colonization aimed at distributing the Amazon national territory not held under powerful landlords into individual small-scale private land ownership. Even when land ownership could be granted in the form of collective associations, this was still conceptualized under the regime of individual allocation as is stated in Art 54 of the law:

“Las adjudicaciones serán individuales aun cuando se trate de miembros de cooperativas o otras entidades agrícolas. Sin embargo, el IERAC, en casos especiales, podrá hacer adjudicaciones colectivas, de acuerdo con sus reglamentos, debiendo regir para cada miembro las obligaciones establecidas en el Artículo 46. (Ley de Reforma Agraria y Colonización, 1964, Art 54)

“Adjudications will be individual, even when it involves members of a cooperative or agricultural entities. However, IERAC, in special cases will be able to make collective adjudications, according to its own regulations, having to ensure compliance by every member with the obligations established in Article 46” (my own translation)

The conceptualization of land is therefore that of private ownership as a resource for commercial production. This meant, as Whitten describes that ‘Indians’ not recognized as citizens, were in direct disadvantage to the growing ‘colono’ immigration population for access to land rights.

This dominant ideology continues to be made explicit even up to 1975, expressed at the core of regional international policy. In the report of the technical Andean regional meeting held in Ecuador in 1975 to analyse the progress of colonization the definition of colonization is given as:

“La colonización es un proceso económico-social mediante el asentamiento de personas que persiguen elevar su nivel de vida, teniendo por objeto el racional aprovechamiento de los recursos naturales en tierras baldías, para la incorporación a la economía nacional” (IICA, 1975 p 17)

“Colonization is an economic-social process via the settlement of people that aim to elevate their conditions of life, with the objective of rationally taking advantage of the natural resources in ‘tierras baldías’, for the incorporation into the national economy” (my own translation).

Clearly this conceptualization is not only one that persisted at a national level but was shared across the region internationally. The central objective of the process of colonization was also clearly stated as:

“...los países de la zona Andina pretenden mediante la Colonización, aumentar su frontera económica ocupando su respectiva territorio, para ello lograr el incremento de producción y la integración de áreas vacías en el contexto nacional” (IICA, 1975, p18).

“...the countries of Andean zone via Colonization aim to increase their economic frontier, occupying their respective territory, and with this increase the production and integration of empty regions in the national context” (my own translation)

Official discourse across the region therefore coincides in continuing to perceive the Amazon region as ‘empty’, needing to be filled both in terms of presence of citizens and in relation to its utility as part of the national territory. This clashes with the reality on the ground, of the actual presence of diverse ethnic groups, historically living and producing diverse forms of livelihoods in this region. Perhaps what is more important is that as described by indigenous organizations, territory is understood as a cohabiting relationship, expressed in political demands for recognition of territorial autonomy (see CONAIE, 1994). The process of colonization drives, diverse conceptualizations of ‘land’ and ‘territory’ on a collision course in time and space, expressed in the continuous struggle for recognition of cultural difference and collective identity, in terms of sustaining sovereignty in this region. In my analysis below, I develop the argument, that the expansion and implementation of the agrarian reform resulting in the potential loss of access and claim to a territory consequently seriously threatening the possibilities of continued collective social cohesion, that can explain the change in relationship with formal schooling from the 1960s onwards from a local perspective.

2.4.2 Organization, voice and territory

What follows is part of a conversation I had with Nadia, a woman elder of Pumamaki in her late 60s early 70s, who describes her lived experience of the highly conflictive period of the 60s and 70s. The conversation took place in her kitchen, whilst she was busy peeling yucca. It appeared to me, that Nadia agreed somewhat reluctantly or maybe with a sense of inevitability to my request of intrusion to converse about her life story. I was clearly not the first to interview Nadia and would probably not be the last researcher to do so. In this sense I also felt conscious of Nadia's reluctance in having to explain what I would probably have difficulty understanding. Never the less Nadia did agree and did explain with much patience.

In this section of my conversation with Nadia, she describes her experience as a young married woman and what she identifies as the beginnings of the new political organization of the Pumamaki emerging in the late 1960s:

Nadia - "...para hacer como ahora, ahorita estamos con colegio, muchas cosas, esto trajo la organización. Nos organizamos. Pero sin la misión. Nos impidió... todas misiones nos impidieron...que nos organicemos, que no contemos... Y nosotros nos organizamos. Y así, este hablando en contra, porque decían que éramos comunista. Allí pues que yo entiendo que cuando era pequeña me hacían hincar, [las monjas hacían arrodillar y rezar] y cuando el otro hombre, que hasta ahora vive el viejo Fidel [Castro], que no era tan diablo como ellos dibujaban. Entonces allí que entiendo. Entonces yo me puse, como mi esposo fue el primer presidente de la organización, yo le ayudé conversando todas estas cosas...no había nunca igualdad, éramos tratados como esclavos. Entonces solamente la organización [va cambiar esto]. Ahora nos dicen a nosotros, antes solo comadres nos decían, ahora nos dicen tal persona, los que nos conozcan...Ahora si hay igualdad, nos llevamos con todos, nos peleamos también, antes no podíamos ni discutir."

Antonia - "Y, ¿que les motivo para organizar?"

Nadia - “Porque nos enseñaron nuestros hombres...y también en ese tiempo Che... Che Guevara, pues cuando estaba junto con Fidel. Entonces mi esposo no sé dónde era esas cosas vino a aprender, porque está en Colombia, por allí. Mi esposo había estado trabajando por allá, entonces vino a decir que la misión nunca va a hacer respetar, solo nos hacer temer. Que tenemos que vivir bien, sin hablar a ellos nada. Porque si discutimos ellos nos tratan de mala gente. Pero no es así, nosotros tenemos derecho de defender la tierra, ellos no nos van a ayudar, ¿cuando?...Así como está pasando ahora con el petróleo. “No nos van a defender ellos”, decíamos. De allí nos organizamos, así hablando a la gente. Y la gente entendió, algunos. (Interview, Nadia, 11th January 2014, (See Annex 1 for translation))

Through Nadia’s testimony, it can be seen how the competing political ideologies playing out in South America are drawn in and become present in this supposedly distant and relatively isolated Amazonian location. Political discourse at a local level is identified with the Cuban revolution. Here Nadia tells how the missionaries vilified Fidel Castro and the Cuban revolution, whilst young men travelling to other regions were clearly hearing opposing political interpretations.

In terms of ‘inside/outside’ relationships, it is worth highlighting Nadia’s description of the lack of recognition by the missionaries towards the people of Pumamaki as individual subjects. Nadia states “Ahora nos dicen a nosotros, antes solo comadre nos decían, ahora nos dicen tal persona”, implying that those from outside, in this case the missionaries, didn’t identify them individually, labelled them all as ‘comadre or compadre’. ‘Comadre or compadre’ is a name given to a type of relationship; it is the explicit recognition of a bond between somebody from ‘outside’ with a family from ‘inside’. It implies a certain level of reciprocity whereby each recognizes the other and is supposed to lend a hand when needed. The fact that the missionaries are applying this label to all individuals within ‘Pumamaki’ would imply a form of homogenization of individuals, and is something Nadia quite obviously takes umbrage to. Nadia, then says how things are now different, by stating; “hay igualdad”, “nos llevamos con todos, nos peleamos también, antes no podíamos ni discutir”. I interpret that Nadia is making reference to the missionaries’ misrecognition of them all simply

as 'Christian Indians', implying a homogenous entity that did not have an own voice, either to agree or disagree. Currently, recognition is both demanded and expected as a voice able to agree or dissent, which is how Nadia describes equality. However, as Nadia explains this was a difficult and fraught process, that meant that the form of internal social and political organization at the time, had to readapt to the changing circumstances that threatened the continuity of collective social cohesion and identity; As Nadia continues to tell it:

Nadia - "Esto hubiera sido, si no hacemos, esto era de los colonos. Solo sabíamos que la misión, la tierra de misión católica donde está la Iglesia tenía que ir hasta xxxxx que es decir de ellos, y de allí para ya nosotros hasta Rotuno, y este lado Colonos." (Interview, Nadia, 11th January 2014, (See Annex 1 for translation))

Pointing to the surrounding area, what Nadia explains is that the right side of the river was aimed at being parcelled off for colonization, whilst the left-hand side of the river was to be granted as private property under the Catholic mission. The remaining area further afield, supposedly left unclaimed, was for them. She then goes on to explain how the catholic mission was directly involved in this process of land grab:

Nadia -"Así estaba este curso, la misión había estado ayudando eso. En la Iglesia, indicando "que ustedes van a ser organizados [por] el Estado con la misión van a dar ganados porque esta tierra baldía el gobierno va a quitar todo. Diciendo que no hacen nada." (Interview, Nadia, 11th January 2014 (See Annex 1 for translation))

Nadia's testimony above, tells of the profound invisibility on behalf of 'outside' authorities, both in terms of missionaries directly and the central state indirectly, towards the local people as autonomous agents, acting as social and political subjects. Nadia explains that priests told them the central state was going to 'organize' them since these lands were considered empty because 'they', i.e. the people of Pumamaki, were not doing anything with it. This replicates the official discourse as described in the laws and documents analysed previously. What is

perhaps somewhat incoherent is that the missionaries speak to the people of Pumamki telling them, that they are of no account. Nadia, however clearly specifies that if outside authorities were blind to them, there was nothing wrong with their own ability to see, hear and act, in other words, having agency:

Nadia – “Entonces preparado ellos [la misión] para coger la tierra. Por allí están unos mojones que habían puesto. Entonces para organizar eso no hicimos valer pues. ¡Como vamos a dejar pues! Algunos nuestros abuelos han vivido todo esto. Y porque vamos a ir para allá.” (Interview, Nadia, 11th January 2014, (See Annex 1 for translation))

Nadia continues by telling of her experience of the process of local organization becoming integrated into a regional process that officially appears through the late 1970s and early 1980s:

“Diciendo así la organización si nos apoyaba. Nos ayudaron, los primeros organizadores fueron, Limoncocha y el Napo, FUIN, se llamaba. Y otras organizaciones de los Shuaras era Federación Shuar. Todos ...vinieron a apoyarnos a decir la misión es el que anda haciendo eso, porque no nos ayuda solamente nos hace creer del Señor de la vida del Señor, después tenemos que ser humilde y no tenemos que pelear por la tierra. De gana. Entonces porque ellos quieren coger decíamos...”(Interview, Nadia, 11th January 2014, (See Annex 1 for translation))

Nadia describes a significant moment of changing political organizational process, supported and influenced by broader changes and contesting political ideologies occurring at a regional and international level. This demonstrates Pumamaki was never really ‘far-away’ or ‘isolated’ but in constant and dynamic relation with what is represented and constructed as ‘outside’. Significantly, Nadia expresses the depth of incoherence at being seen as incapable and needing to be ‘organized’ by others. If the state and church had their plans to ‘organize’ what they clearly continue to identify as ‘not quite persons’, the people of Pumamaki had other ideas, and as Nadia states “no hicimos valer pues” (we did not make it count). According to Nadia, the collective organization of Pumamaki, were not

going to let this 'outside' plan happen. The reason given is that their elders had lived in this place and so had no reason to be moved away. The struggle, can be understood, not only in relation to access to land as a resource, though surely this too, but is also about the concept of land as the possibility of territory. Territory perceived as an on-going relationship between humans and non-humans for the possibility of reproducing ways of living and social cohesion, which is not simply prior to but conditioned by the whole process of the on-going encounter with the 'outside' other.

2.5 Summary

As Nadia attests to, the fact that the people of Pumamaki are still cultivating their chakras and have a strong sense of being part of the territory of Pumamaki, cannot be taken for granted. From the analysis I develop, the evidence of the continued existence of Pumamaki conceptualized and legally recognized as an ancestral territory, can be understood as the direct consequence of a continued historical process that required a sustaining and adapting the social political organization. Sustaining and adapting social political organization enabled the maintainance of 'inside' agency, whilst serving as a means of representational recognition by 'outside' authorities. This process is therefore intricately woven with access to formal recognition, i.e. recognition of 'personhood' for citizenship, which as seen by the state, is acquired through formal schooling. I propose that struggle for recognition from the categorization of the 'Indian' as 'other', through to formal conceptualization of becoming educated, implies a continuation of the evangelizing project of 'becoming' through a process of conversion, i.e. the 'civilizing of the Indian'. It is in this sense that a link can be made between the process of adaptation of the political social organization and the need for a school in the territory. From this perspective, it can be understood why by 1960 a school becomes a necessary local demand.

Before the 1900s the possibility of a territorial claim relied on negotiating between becoming a 'Christian Indian' and maintaining relative autonomy and internal social cohesion. Among other things this relied on the possibility of reproducing

'internal' forms of livelihoods, i.e. going on purina. From the 1900s onwards, autonomy is directly threatened by missionary permanent presence. The aim of these missionaries to extend evangelization to permanent continuous instruction was a threat to the ability to maintain relative autonomy and internal social cohesion. Not surprisingly, further imposition by imposing formal instruction through schooling in the region appears to be actively rejected by local collective groups. However, from the 1930s onwards the wider context starts to change and again impinges on the ability of sustaining social cohesion and territorial control with the added threat, of loss of direct access to traditional lands. In this way, I suggest, being recognized as a "Christain Indian" becomes insufficient to combat and continue to negotiate recognition from outside authorities to sustain relative autonomy. At this point I suggest, recognition implies also becoming 'educated' in the formal sense of a state citizen project. Becoming 'educated' can be understood as a doubly pragmatic strategy. Learning to read, write and speak Spanish is necessary in order to have direct access to interpellation with the wider changing political scenario. Being able to read the law and political propaganda of various forms is necessary in order to make use of them with the possibility of interpreting and 'translate' them locally, as Nadia describes in relation to her husband's own learning whilst working away. In pragmatic terms, being 'educated', understood as being schooled, becomes a necessity as an imposed criterion for recognition of citizenship, the only form of personhood visualized by the state within the given relations of power. As from the 1960s becoming *seen* as a citizen becomes imperative, since only citizens have legitimate access to land claims.

These events narrated from a local perspective were occurring across the Amazon region of Andean countries and Pumamaki was not politically or socially isolated. As Nadia describes making explicit reference to the ideology of the Cuban revolution¹⁵ and how this translated into her own and her community's

¹⁵ See Mark Becker, 2008, for a discussion of the influence and relationship with left wing political ideology in the conformation of the indigenous movement in Ecuador. Leon Zamosc, 2007, also describes the emergence of the indigenous movement linked and contrasting with class based political ideologies. Xavier Albó, 1987 in the case of Bolivia, provides an in-depth discussion on the influence of communist ideologies at play with capitalist politics as translated into local political process in relationship with the State.

experience. The conflicts between socialist and capitalist political ideology not only influenced but framed how political local discourse emerged and became translated, at this historical moment in time. However, I think it is important to note that without political organization in the form of social cohesion and 'internal' norms of discourse, there would have been nothing to frame, nothing to translate into a discourse able to be recognized in the dominant 'outside' political arena (see Tsing, 2007). If the 1960s was perhaps a point in time of readapting forms of organization to face the new serious threat of 'modern colonization', this must be understood as part of a historical continuum that necessarily involves the concept of internal agency. I shall explore this further in chapter 4.

Nadia's narrative summarizes the struggle, as she experienced as a young indigenous woman and member of an 'invisible' social ethnic identity as envisioned by a nation state project. The demand for a school and becoming 'educated' can be understood as part of the struggle to be 'seen', i.e. recognized and included as citizens with an own voice.

I interpret Nadia's testimony as a clear example of the political process from the local context, within the wider struggle of what Albó, 1991 coins as the breaking of the 'ventriloquist' representation of the 'Indian' voice by others. I conclude, reflecting from the particular context of Pumamaki, if this becoming visible did not transform the nation state building dominant ideology, it must be read as opening a space of translation for the continued demand for inclusion to a *different* nation state. In the following chapter I continue to explore this theme considering the role of political actors at the national level analysing the context of the emergence of Intercultural Bilingual Education (IBE), from the 1980s to the current period.

CHAPTER 3: Past and current struggles in determining Bilingual Intercultural Education in the national context

In the previous chapter I demonstrated from a particular location, how the emergence of schooling is understood as a civilizing project to maintain the national state project. I argue that historically, the 'other' is denied agency and is understood as a 'passive' rather than an 'active' subject by state authorities. From the perspective of the subaltern, as an 'other', becoming 'educated' is perceived as a mechanism to demand relative recognition, therefore for them the school functions as a space to negotiate recognition as a subject. By tracing the process for recognition from the historical perspective of the communities that make up Pumamaki, it is possible to show the intrinsic link of the claim to recognition, articulated within the notion of 'becoming.' In other words, 'recognition' here is the acknowledgement of the universal capacity of acquiring a type of personhood as a unique characteristic of what it is to be a being human. I developed the argument that State schooling was part of the continuum of this logic, representing a legitimate space for 'becoming educated.' Evidence obtained from an examination of archival documents and recorded oral histories of the Pumamaki elders, reveals how members of the community have been involved in a constant struggle to achieve recognition and relative autonomy to sustain their forms of livelihood and social cohesion.

Through my analysis, I contended that the emergence of the School within this territory represented a site of negotiation with the State as part of an on-going struggle for recognition as subjects, in order to retain possibilities for relative autonomy. The emergence of formal schooling as conceptualized from the perspective of official state authorities vs community members meant, in the first instance a process of integrating the historical 'other' into the nation-state by assimilation, whilst from the later perspective, it became a space for negotiating recognition of agency in order to continue to sustain relative autonomy within the nation-state project. At stake here is the articulation of a type of 'personhood' as part of an on-going struggle to assert recognition of internal agency. Pumamaki's school system can therefore be understood as a continuous expression of a

dynamic and complex relationship with the state in the struggle for recognition in difference. I construct the argument that the late 1960s marked a critical moment in time for the indigenous communities on account of the on-going agrarian reforms and the consequent threat of losing their ancestral claim to territory.

Having identified the 1960s as a significant period of social organizational change at the local level, in this chapter I turn my attention to the national sphere to explore the emergence of 'Educación Intercultural Bilingüe' (Intercultural Bilingual Education, IBE) as part of positioning of an indigenous political project challenging the dominant assimilationist ideology of education. Here, I shall contrast the historical moment of the late 1980s and early 90s, with the highly contentious scenario that has unfolded more recently, disputing who and how IBE is defined and implemented. I conclude by analysing the implications of policy changes in relation to defining and representing 'indigenous/cultural' knowledge.

3.1 Indigenism and the framing of a political actor

The term 'indigenous' in the Ecuadorian context is usually rejected as a form of self-identification; most people refer to themselves in relation to a specific ethnic identity (Kichwa, Shuar, Cofan, etc) or territorial location (Saraguro, Otavaleño, etc). 'Indigenism' and 'indigeneity' as part of critical academic and decolonial political discourse is positioned in relation to the political and social expression of 'indigenous' identity. In this sense, indigenism and what constitutes indigeneity, is for the most part a discourse that aims at problematizing the historical legacy of 'indigenous' as an essentialized and/or simply imposed identity as the historical construction of the 'other'. I use the term 'indigenous' following this critical conceptualization, as an expression of a common dynamic and diverse lived-experience of a social identity, historically imposed as a means of exclusion and exploitation, in contrast to a fixed essential identification (De la Cadena & Starn, 2007; Tsing, 2007; Van Cott, 2001).

According to Anna Tsing 'indigenism' is the 'public articulation of indigeneity' (Tsing, 2007 p 38-39). It is a 'voice' recognized as 'indigenous' in the public

sphere, articulated in the context of the nation-state. Tsing notes that to gain a 'voice' requires the articulation of demands and complaints within a recognizable genre, to be heard by a particular audience (Tsing, 2007, p 38). However, the 'public' as an imagined collective and a recognizable genre, are to be understood as dynamic: "What can be heard changes. No voices claim all audiences" (Tsing, 2007, p 39). 'Indigenism', from this theoretical analysis, is understood as a public articulation in relation to both that which can be heard i.e. *recognized* as representing 'indigenous' and that which can be *recognized* as a legitimate political demand, and so must be understood as highly contextualized. 'Indigenism', which here I use synonymously with indigenous politics, I therefore interpret in relation to the broader framing of the politics of recognition (Taylor, 1994) described previously, as neither fixed nor uniform across time or place. From this perspective, indigenous politics relates to the contingent representation of 'indigenous' as expressing demands and complaints in specific genre(s) that take form within the sphere of national politics.

It must be noted that Tsing defines indigenism in terms of an analytical tool "to separate diversity in the public voice of indigeneity from other kinds of indigenous diversity" (Tsing 2007 p 38-39). Indigenous people historically constituted as 'other' have thus been denied existence as political subjects. At the core of indigenous politics in Ecuador, and similarly across the region, there has been a challenge to the historical process of 'othering' that assumes 'indigenous' to mean 'passive subjects,' which has been effectively challenged by the emergence on the political scene of an indigenous actor, representing of a legitimate subject. Here I directly link indigenous politics with the emergence of a distinct and dynamic political actor representing the indigenous political subject within the context of an on-going negotiated process for insertion into the nation-state (Ramos, 1998; Pallares, 2002). Focusing on the context of formal education, I consider the emergence of a dynamic indigenous 'voice,' that represents the recognition of a specific type of political subject, with the possibilities of participation in defining an intercultural and bilingual education. I argue that the 'indigenous' political subject, under the Presidency of Rafael Correa, has witnessed a process of being re-exclusion from the political scenario, specifically over the formulation of IBE policy and its implementation on the

ground. Which way the pendulum will swing, with the recent changes in government, is yet to be seen.

3.1.1 The indigenous political actor at the national level

The emergence of indigenous politics in the national scenario, positioned as disrupting the political order with the aim of transforming it, can be identified as a relatively recent occurrence, taking form in the latter part of the 20th century. However, as Lucero (2003) notes, 'indigenous' peoples were "never beyond the politics of representation, understood as a set of cultural and political processes that make visible, institutionalize, and articulate certain kinds of political subjects and communities. Rather indigenous peoples were part of hybrid political systems constituted by democratic and nondemocratic representative institutions." (Lucero 2003 p 26).

The literature analysing the formation of indigenous organizations make reference to the emergence into the national political scenario of the indigenous subject initiating in the highlands in the 1930s (Postero & Zamosc, 2004; León, 2001). According to Zamosc (2003) the Highland processes of political organizations were framed by a class-based, ideologically-dominant political discourse and therefore identified as 'campesinos' (peasant-farmers) and not within ethnic identity politics. The first recognized regional organization that claimed an ethnic basis of representation was the Shuar federation in the Ecuadorian Amazon region, formed in 1964 and supported by the intervention of the Catholic Salesian mission (Martinez Novo, 2004). It is interesting to note how it is this period that members of Pumamki also define a change in their own form of political organization and become inserted into the broader context of indigenous politics. The change in political organization alluded to in the previous chapter, is one marked by the demand for collective territorial recognition, in order to hold back the very real threat of land-grab taking place as a consequence of the agrarian reforms. In this way, the local, regional and national

context become more closely articulated, with particular individuals moving between these political and geographical boundaries.

In 1978 various indigenous territorial organizations came together to create the 'Union de Nativos de la Amazonia' on the outskirts of Puyo, later becoming the Confederation of Indigenous Nationalities of the Ecuadorian Amazon (CONFENAIE). According to the literature it is these regional organizational processes that are consolidated in 1986 at a national level as the Confederation of Indigenous Nationalities of Ecuador (CONAIE), bringing together traditional class-based political demands with ethnic-based political territorial claims (Zamosc, 1994). From the 1970s to the current date, the political leadership of Pumamaki can be recognized as becoming a significant regional political actor in this process and is representative of a key indigenous political territorial organization.

During the last three decades, it has been widely-acknowledged that CONAIE and the regional indigenous organizations have become an influential political actor in shaping the national political scenario (Whitten & Whitten, 2011; Colloredo-Mansfeld 2009; Pallares, 2002; Zamosc, 2007). However, this process has not been achieved without significant confrontations¹⁶, starting with the first mass indigenous mobilization in opposition to the expanding neoliberal economic policies of the 1990s, which almost paralysed the entire country for several days (Whitten & Whitten, 2011; Zamosc, 2007). The political and symbolic significance of this moment in Ecuador, whereby a mass protest movement composed of indigenous peoples was publicly visible on the streets of Quito and other urban centres meant that that the indigenous political subject could no longer be ignored at a national level (Whitten & Whitten, 2011). However, the indigenous movement, as De la Cadena and Starn (2007) state "is not a homogenous entity without conflicting voices and struggles within for representation" (De la Cadena & Starn, 2007, p 4) which also applies to the context of Ecuador.

¹⁶ X, Albó (2013) describes this process as the strategical combination of the 'Indio permitido' the 'obedient Indian' and the 'Indio alzado' the 'disobedient Indian' that reflects the parallel realities of social unrest through civil protest and that of aiming to influence legal reforms

After the 1990s the Ecuadorian indigenous movement became increasingly weakened by a complex mixture of party politics and neoliberal institutionalization of ethnic demands (Becker, 2008; Zamosc, 2007). Martinez Novo also points to problems created with the distancing between indigenous leadership and local communities (Martinez Novo, 2014). As Martinez Novo notes, whilst acknowledging the complexity and dynamic nature of legitimacy over representation, CONAIE and the various regional organizations have continued to play an active role in the politics of contestation in relation to dominant socio-economic models (Martinez Novo, 2014, p 106). Significantly, indigenous organizations have been a key player in bringing to the centre indigenous political demands, leading to profound constitutional changes in the region (Escobar, 2010).

Over the last decade, self-proclaimed left-wing-leaning and progressive governments labelled as 'post-neoliberal regimes', have adopted much of the discourse formulated as part of indigenous politics, into government mainstream political discourse (Escobar, 2010; Gustafson 2010). In the case of Bolivia, under the presidency of Evo Morales (2006 -), and Ecuador under the presidency of Rafael Correa (2007-2017), both regimes were seen to strongly reject neoliberal and imperialist ideology in favour of reasserting national state sovereignty by promoting a change in the economic and social models (Gustafson, 2010, 2014). In both cases, the respective presidents initially came to power with support from a wide sector of organized civil society, including trade unions and indigenous organizations. As part of the recognition of a 'Plurinational state', the new guiding principal for development was declared to be 'Sumak Kawsay' or, an alternative indigenous Andean perspective for 'good living,¹⁷ in harmony with nature, in contrast to capitalist economic exploitation (preamble of the Ecuadorian constitution, 2008). With strong popular support, the governing party of 'Alianza Pais', under the presidency of Rafael Correa (2007-2017), claimed to lead a "Citizens' Revolution" under the ideological principal of "21st century socialism" (SENPLADES, 2009). In order to implement the 'Citizens' Revolution' under the guiding principle of 'Sumak Kawsay' – or 'Buen Vivir', a relatively large number of

new ministries were set up, including a ministry (SENPLADES) for elaborating specific strategic five-year development plans (SENPLADES, 2009 and 2013). The government of Alianza Pais has strongly claimed to have advanced indigenous collective and civil rights and achieved greater distribution of wealth by moving away from a primarily extractivist industry, towards greater national production by developing an “economy of knowledge” (SENPLADES, 2009).

In the case of Ecuador, a national assembly was elected to draw up the new Constitution of 2008, in which civil society groups were said to have played a principal role, contributing to the formulation of a progressive political agenda (Acosta, 2009; Becker, 2011). The constitution itself received overwhelming approval through a national referendum. However, from this point onwards, relations quickly soured between central government and organized civil society groups. By January 2009 the first indicators of discord were evident with protests called for by CONAIE against the proposed new ‘water laws’ (Gustafson, 2014; Martinez Novo, 2014; Becker, 2011; Dávalos, 2013). It is worth noting an apparent contradiction whereby a progressive post-neoliberal regime claiming to have adopted radical policies to accommodate the demands of the indigenous communities, has also generated a more centralized and bureaucratic system that limits the opportunity for more diverse political participation (Escobar, 2010; Gustafson, 2014; Canessa, 2006). Similarly, in Ecuador, the emergence of a left-leaning, post-neoliberal regime has given rise to increased tensions between government and civil society organizations, leading to growing political polarization.

Martinez Novo brings this contradiction to light in a recent article analysing the Ecuadorian case, stating, “The regime is appropriating indigenous symbols and demands, but in not recognizing indigenous peoples as actors...there has been a resurgence of prejudice against indigenous peoples” (Martinez Novo, 2014, p 108). The indigenous movement, trade unions and other sectors of society in Ecuador which protested against government proposals were subsequently subjected to a political campaign of de-legitimization and criminalization, in some cases with imprisonment, evidencing the deepening struggle for recognition, participation and relative autonomy (Álvarez, 2013; Martinez Novo, 2014;

Gustafson, 2014; Walsh, 2015). Bitter disputes and protests over the formulation and implementation of new laws have been a regular feature of Ecuadorian politics, often leading to fraught confrontations that continue at the time of writing. My particular focus here is to consider the changing context of indigenous political participation in decision-making over education and diversity by analysing the production of official discourse. I shall consider the implications of current education policies in relation to the potential for conceptualizing and constructing plurality through formal schooling.

3.2 Intercultural Bilingual Education as part of a political project

In stark contrast with the political context of the 1980s and 1990s the period from 2009 onwards is that of increasing political tension between indigenous organizations and the government. Though this earlier period was one of political instability it was the period in which the rise in influence and legitimacy of the indigenous political actor took place. As I suggest below, comparing the presidential decrees over intercultural and bilingual education in these two moments in time reflects the difference between these periods.

On the 15th of November 1988, by presidential decree 203, an educational directive was added to the education law, creating a national directorate for Indigenous Intercultural Bilingual Education ‘Dirección Nacional de Educación Indígena Intercultural Bilingüe (DINEIB). The newly elected Rodrigo Borja dictated the decree and towards the end of his presidency in 1992 and subsequently a reform to the education law was approved that enabled the decentralization of the DINEIB from the Ministry of Education. DINEIB, in this way, was granted relative autonomy:

“La DINEIB, especializada en culturas aborígenes, funcionara como una organización técnica, administrativa y financiera descentralizada, tendrá su propia estructura orgánico-funcional, que garantizará la participación en todos los niveles e instancias de la administración educativa de los pueblos indígenas, en función de su representatividad” (Ley 150, 1992, Art, 2).

“The DINEIB, specializing in aboriginal cultures, will work as a decentralized technical, administrative and financial organization with its own organizational-functional structure, that guarantees the participation at all levels and instances of the educational administration of indigenous peoples in terms of their respective representation” (my own translation).

In contrast, in January 2009, by Executive Decree 1585, the DINEIB was to lose its administrative and political autonomy and became incorporated under the direct governance of the Ministry of Education. The official position stated, that education under neoliberal doctrine had been undermined and had become a space for political party “clientilism”, therefore requiring a single strong and legitimate representative authority:

“La educación pública ecuatoriana debe estar libre de toda injerencia corporativista, ya sea de movimientos político, de gremios o de organizaciones étnicas de diversas naturaleza que se arrogan la representación del conjunto de la sociedad [...] De esta manera la DINEIB dejara de actuar aisladamente y de responder a los intereses políticos de una cupula de dirigentes indígenas, que ya no podran, bajo el viejo esquema corporativista, imponer autoridades ni visiones políticas racistas y sesgadas, ni utilizar el espacio educativo para sus tareas de adoctrinamiento” (Ministerio de Educacion, febrero 2009 cited in Walsh, 2014, p 19)

“Ecuadorian public education must be free of all corporatist influence, be this of political movements, trade unions or of ethnic organizations of various forms that grant themselves the authority of representing society at large... In this way the DINEIB will stop acting in isolation and in response to the political interest of an elite indigenous leadership, and will no longer, as under the old scheme of corporatism, be able to impose neither authorities of racist and biased political visions, nor use the educational platform for its task of indoctrination” (my own translation)

This statement leaves no doubt that indigenous leaders and their organizations are perceived by the government to have failed to deliver a 'real' intercultural education, preferring instead to use this public institutional platform as a space to advance their own political interests. The language demonstrates a clear animosity towards indigenous leaders and organizations, thereby delegitimizing them as political actors. By contrast, in the earlier period, indigenous leaders were able to mobilize wider political participation, generating a new, legitimate political actor that represented their interests and allowed them to gain direct influence over formal education, an important part of the state institutional body.

In 2014, I was able to carry out an informal interview with the former vice-Minister of education during the 1980s. I was intrigued to discover how at this time, when the DINEIB was first being formed, it had been possible to hand over political control to indigenous organisations and teachers. I asked the ex-minister, if from his perspective, the confirmation of the DINEIB by indigenous leaders had been politically contentious? Whilst acknowledging the benefit of hindsight, he expressed his view that at the time, priority was placed in terms of providing access to state schooling and was not concerned with who was delivering public education on the ground. He explained that contrary to the current context, many provinces were not easily accessible and coordination from central government was difficult, not least because resources in all forms were very limited. He stated that in relation to very remote areas, the expulsion of the Summer Institute of Linguistics¹⁸ (SIL) in the early 1980s had created a gap in the provision of education nationally (which the state did not have the resources or know how, to close). He also assented that whilst some groups highlighted contention and that some within the education system did not want to concede any political space, values were quite rightly moving towards a greater democratization of society, which included an acknowledgement of the rights of indigenous peoples to be

¹⁸The SIL has a history of extensive research of minority indigenous languages. During the 20th century SIL strived to evangelize and convert indigenous groups to Protestant Christianity, mostly in remote areas, where the State and other Catholic mission presence was minimal. Its role in evangelical indoctrination by translating the Bible into local indigenous languages has been contentious and some civil society groups and left-political organizations have accused SIL of a serious conflict of interest by being financed by oil companies with interests in exploiting these remote areas. In 1980 SIL was formally expelled from Ecuador as a consequence of the return to democratic rule in 1979.

able to reproduce their own cultures. Therefore, the creation of a separate education system for indigenous education during the 1980s, in his opinion was a result of mutual, rather than conflicting, interests between the Ministry of Education and Culture (MEC) and the leadership of the DINEIB. (Interview, ex-vice Minister of education, 9th February 2014). A concise analysis of his account would be that the most important priority for the Government was to extend public education to everyone, whilst simultaneously moving forward in developing more harmonious and participatory relations between the mestizo and indigenous communities, in accordance with democratic values¹⁹. In this sense, public policy can be understood as having been driven by pragmatic needs relating to who had the capacity on the ground to deliver public schooling.

It was during this early period that CONAIE institutionalized the redefinition of 'modern indigenous groups' as *nacionalidades*, *i.e.* ethnic nationalities (Lucero, 2003, p 31), and consequently DINEIB in 1992 drops the term 'Indígena' from its title to become the National Directorate for Bilingual Intercultural Education, DINEIB. The newly-named organization operated DINEIB as an additional stratum within the education system with independent administrative control of education relating to of ethnic recognition of the indigenous population as 'nacionalidades and pueblos', for almost 30 years. According to Lucero, 'nationalities' and 'pueblos' were positioned by the indigenous movement as a kind of political subject to disrupt the imagined 'communities' of the state (Lucero, 2003, p 31-33). The notion of a plurality of nationalities under a single state disrupts the one-nation, one-state political discourse that tended to dominate from the beginnings of the republican period. According legitimacy to ethnic nationalities made up of multiple languages and cultures makes unviable the conceptualization of the state that is based on the objective of creating a

¹⁹ It is worth noting that in 1979 Ecuador held democratic elections, after a series of military dictatorships. The widely-supported elected president Jaime Roldos (1979-1981) pushed an extensive participatory government development plan (1980-1984), legitimizing and promoting the formation of civil society organization as a means of upholding democratic values, as stated in Art 3: "La organización y la participación popular conjuntamente con las medidas económicas y sociales contenidos en el Plan de Desarrollo, van a constituir los mecanismos que posibiliten la consolidación de una sociedad auténticamente democrática" (Consejo Nacional de Desarrollo (Ecuador), 1980, Art 3, lit.i).

monocultural national identity.²⁰ In terms of education, this too corresponds with Enrique López's analysis of this period, described in chapter 1, as an ideological shift in the conceptualization of bilingual and intercultural education from an assimilationist model to that of a maintenance model, aimed at preserving indigenous cultural specificity including ethnic languages (López, 2010, 2014). Most importantly, the alternative political project proposed by CONAIE, now required that a state-national project need acknowledge the legitimate participation of the various 'nationalidades' that composed it:

“La CONAIE tiene como máximo objetivo el establecimiento y la construcción del Nuevo Estado Plurinacional...[que] permita la participación política en al toma de decisions a las Nacionalidades Indigenas y diferentes sectores sociales organizados en todo el proceso de construcción de la Nueva Sociedad Humanista, partiendo del reconocimiento de la diversidad y pluralidad de Nacionalidades.” (CONAIE 1994)

“CONAIE has as its principal objective the establishment and construction of the New Plurinational State...allowing the political participation in decision making of the Indigenous Nacionalidades and diverse sectors of organized society through the process of constructing a New Humanist Society, based on the recognition of the diversity and plurality of Nacionalidades”. (my own translation)

Currently Ecuador recognizes fourteen ancestral 'nacionalidades'²¹ and eighteen 'pueblos' established within the Constitution of 2008 that declares Ecuador to be a 'Plurinational state and an intercultural society.' Significantly, as suggested by Lucero (2003) the terms 'nacionalidades' and 'pueblos' are the products of politics contributing to the articulation of an alternative political project. Throughout this thesis, I interpret the terms 'nacionalidades' and 'pueblos' is open-ended, and not

²⁰For a greater specific discussion on the political implication of recognition of ethnic nationalities during this period, from the perspective of Ecuadorian academics see Ibarra, 1999; Sánchez Parga, 1992.

²¹ For an in-depth discussion on the genealogy of the term 'nacionalidad' in the Ecuadorian context see Lucero 2003, in the article being cited. See also Almeida 1991, who describes the theoretical tension in the self-naming as 'nacionalidades', recognizing the political significance, p 302-304.

categorical definitions of nationhood that might circumscribe all that diverse ethnic identity can be. Before the Constitution was reformed in 2008, the Ecuadorian 'Plurinational state and an Intercultural society', was articulated in relation to the construction of an alternative national political project by CONAIE, as nationally representative of indigenous organizations.

In this context, DINEIB's relative independence from the Ministry of Education opened up opportunities for individuals previously excluded from public institutions. As Gustafson describes: "the DINEIB created a space of relative power, leverage and access to public resources for Indigenous leaders" (Gustafson, 2014, p 83). The institutionalization of indigenous education in Ecuador, under the governance of indigenous organizations, is therefore intricately related with a broader political process of negotiating state relationships. However, as Gustafson notes, over time the DINEIB was criticized for distancing relations between CONAIE and itself "with the conversion of DINEIB into a kind of jobs program for Indigenous leaders" (Conejo Arellano, 2008, cited in Gustafson 2014 p 84). Part of this criticism is that educational concerns became ever more decontextualized from structural political issues of resource distribution and control (Carces, 2006; Moya, 2005 cited in Gustafson, 2014). The claim expressed through official discourse, from 2009 onwards has been that the creation of a separate education system, has resulted in a "second-class school system" for the rural indigenous populations (Gustafson, 2014). It is worth noting that according to one of the founders of the DINEIB, the government's argument in 2009, reflected that expressed by the teaching union and those in opposition to the creation of the DINEIB in 1988 (interview with DINEIB founding member, Quito, December 2014).

In discrediting leaders and organizations of indigenous subjects, central government was going beyond giving its response to local concerns and was in fact delegitimizing the public articulation of an indigenous voice, and therefore the representation of a legitimate political actor. This I argue reflects that at the core of this argument lay the struggle over positioning possible conceptualizations of pluri-nationality. In 2010 Correa stated "Pluri-nationality is not about creating independent institutions but strengthening institutions so that they work together

in favour of all sectors of society...if we want to help our ancestral pueblos we cannot continue with these institutions” (Rafael Correa, 2010, my own translation)²².

It is in this sense that the government is implicitly accusing the indigenous movement of harbouring notions of separatism, something CONAIE has been concerned to reject since its inception.

At the international level, discourse on intercultural education tends to focus on language and cultural knowledge in the curriculum and how it this is used by teachers and students (Aikman, 2012). The unfolding scenario over IBE in Ecuador demonstrated that it should also be understood as a relationship between different political actors. Significantly, this involves the possibility for mobilization and transformation of discourse of these actors within the national context, determining therefore types of pedagogic relationships that can be established.

3.3 Measuring the success or failure of IBE?

As discussed above, the justification by the government for centralized administrative and political control over the entire education system is two-fold. Firstly, it is ostensibly in response to an indigenous political demand towards a decolonizing education system whereby an intercultural approach is to be installed throughout the education system. Secondly, the government accuses the indigenous movement of failing to deliver a pertinent and adequate education system for those whom the indigenous leadership claim to represent, establishing a second-class school system, reproducing rather than challenging social and

²² <http://www.elpueblosoberano.net/2010/10/el-debate-de-la-educacion-intercultural-bilingue-en-ecuador-varias-noticias/> (accessed 11th of January 2014)

economic marginalization. It is therefore understood that IBE schools are of a lower standard than Hispanic²³ schools.

While the recriminations continued, and the political debate became more heated, it is important to take a step back and consider whether it is indeed possible to find more objective methods of measuring the relative success or otherwise of IBE under the current system. To begin with, how viable is it to compare specific 'outputs' between monolingual and bilingual schools as an accepted model for assessing overall performance? If the IBE system with its form of governance and promotion of indigenous languages compares unfavourably in some areas with Hispanic schools, has it failed in general to provide an appropriate standard of education? I propose that the failure or successes of IBE need to be appraised in wider terms that meet the particular needs of the indigenous community, by, for example, its ability to provide and promote spaces for greater participation and political articulation of their needs and to enhance their visibility as political subjects.

I further develop the argument that these aspects cannot be systematically 'measured' by universal indicators. Therefore, rather than attempt to find a one-dimensional solution to resolve the "failure" of IBE, I suggest a meaningful analysis needs to adopt a historical contextualized approach, which cannot be carried out from the top-down. However, the implementation and role of IBE education has of course been studied and critiqued over the last 30 years, which presents an opportunity to problematize, rather than resolve this complex issue.

3.3.1 Parental choice: a measure of quality, or relative access to resources and higher social status?

A key concern that various authors frequently draw attention to, is the rejection of intercultural bilingual schooling by indigenous parents who often send their children to Hispanic, rather than bilingual schools, where such an option is

²³ 'Hispano' was the official term used for monolingual Spanish speaking schools until the change in law of 2010 to an intercultural education system. Hispano is still used regularly though in non-official spaces.

available (Aikman, 2003, 2012; Howard, 2007; Hornberger & King, 1996). When discussing this issue with the former director of the DINEIB and another long-term official within the organization, they explained how in some cases, there was a lack of awareness of the political project at the local level, due to insufficient coordination between CONAIE, DINEIB and local Indigenous leaders (Interview with ex-director of DINEIB, February 2014; Interview with long-term DINEIB official March 2014). They also drew attention to the protracted and difficult task of reversing colonialism as playing a significant part. However, I interpret this line of argument as controversial in light of the fact that many indigenous leaders and teachers of IBE who could not claim political ignorance, were also tending to send their children to Hispanic schools when they had the option to do so (Howard, 2007). This revelation is supported by a collaborative study by Martinez Novo of 2007-2010, which identified a similar pattern among indigenous leaders and families of supporting Hispanic over bi-lingual schools (Martinez Novo, 2014).

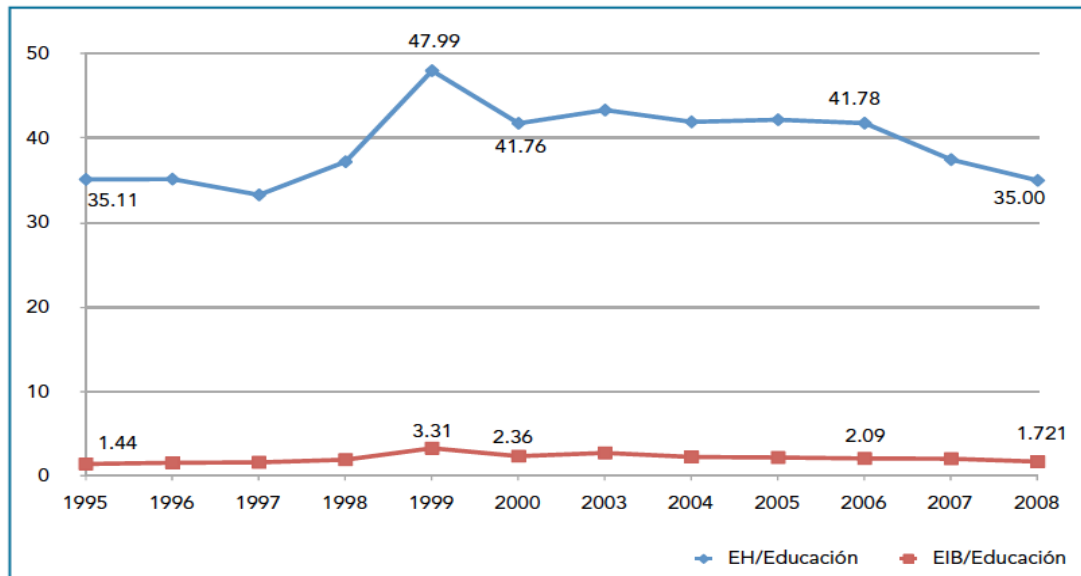
According to Martinez Novo, a universal factor that influences parent's attitudes was the better resourcing of Hispanic schools. In this study, a recurring justification given by parents was the availability of English and computer studies which were entirely absent in small rural schools (Martinez, Novo, 2014, p108). How these findings should be interpreted in terms of assessing the overall competence of schools is therefore not straightforward. On the surface, these findings do support the view of some parents that IBE provides fewer opportunities for academic achievement. However, whether this is a result of poor management, a lack of understanding and consolidation of an alternative political project and/or imbedded structural inequalities, is difficult to tell. If, as the studies suggest, there is clear indication that the priority for most parents is improved access to better resourced schools for their children, parent's choice of Hispanic and urban schools over rural and IBE schools, would suggest an imbalance in the overall funding between Hispanic and intercultural bilingual schools.

A study published in 2010 as a joint collaboration between UNICEF and the Ministry of Cultural Patrimony evaluating the distribution and efficiency of

economic investment of Bilingual Intercultural Education shows that IBE grew rapidly during the 1990s and then started to slowly decline thereafter:

Figure 5 - Percentage public school provision in Hispanic and Intercultural Bilingual Education in Ecuador from 1995 to 2008

Ilustración 29. Participación de Educación Hispana e Intercultural Bilingüe en el Sector Educación (porcentaje) Ecuador, 1995 – 2008



Fuente: Ministerio de Finanzas

Nota: 1/ No se presentan los años 2001 y 2002 debido a que durante dichos años no fue obligatorio el envío de información de las unidades ejecu-

(Source, Ministerio Coordinador de Patrimonio Ecuador & UNICEF, 2010, p 38)

IBE, marked in red squares (EIB/Educación), spikes in 1999 and represents 3.31% of the national education system. By 2008 there is a significant decline, where it is almost halved to 1.721%. However, a closer look at the graph shows that, similarly to Intercultural Bilingual Education (EIB), Hispanic (EH) education also peaks in 1999 and is followed by a decline thereafter. Most revealing is that EIB and EH together make up the entire public education system and represent only 36.7% of the national education system. The implication is that the other 74.3% of school services is represented by the private the sector. In the context of Ecuador, the private sector is almost entirely Spanish and bilingual education refers to English or other high-status European languages such French or German. Therefore, what can be concluded in the statistics from 1999 to 2008, is that the overall reduction of school attendance in the public education system, though of greater proportion in IBE, cannot only be a reflection of a decline in this

particular part of the education system, but appears to indicate a crisis in the entire Ecuadorian public education system.

A comparative regional study carried out in 2006 of private-verses-public school coverage for twelve Latin American countries, positions Ecuador as representing one of the countries with the highest proportion of private sector schooling. For primary education, Ecuador's urban private sector serviced 38.6% of the population and for secondary education it was 32.9% (Pereyra, 2007). This puts Ecuador in third place among the twelve Latin American countries with the highest proportion of private sector coverage (Pereyra, 2007). The article also reveals that Ecuador's private school system is not only targeted at the high-income sector of society such as occurs in other countries (Mexico, Brazil or Argentina), but is represented across a wide range of the social economic spectrum (Pereyra, 2007).

Taking all the above into consideration, the greater decline in student attendance of IBE in comparison to that of 'Hispanic' schools is not surprising since IBE schools are disproportionately represented within the rural sectors and therefore will have been more greatly affected by the growing trends in urban migration. What appears to be the major driving force over parental school choice therefore, are the demographic changes within the population. More people are moving to urban centres to take advantage of the relative social and economic opportunities and better-resourced schools which during this period were more likely to be in the private sector. I propose therefore, contrasting simply between 'Hispanic' and 'Bilingual Intercultural' does not appear to be an appropriate measure of the 'failure' of IBE in relation to the type of governance. The studies that have been carried out into this question, suggest that it is public education as whole that has been in crisis.

3.3.2 Cultural pertinence and language use

Another controversial issue has been the extent to which IBE has been able to deliver a culturally-pertinent education through appropriate bi-lingual teaching

methods. In a study conducted in 2001/2003, by Abram (2004), whilst there is general appreciation of the pedagogic work conducted in many IBE schools, the critique is made that at primary school level, Spanish and Kichwa are not taught systematically but mixed at random (Abram, 2004, p 22). Also, that Kichwa as a mother-tongue language beyond early primary school appears as a subject lesson, while all other lessons are conducted in Spanish (Abram, 2004, p 22). This assessment is corroborated by Martinez Novo's collaborative study on language use in IBE, stating: "all education takes place in Spanish and native language is only a special class that typically happens from an hour once or twice a week" (Martinez Novo, 2014, p 111).

The main reason given by proponents of IBE over difficulties in delivering an adequate bilingual education is the lack of written texts in Kichwa and a shortage of experienced teachers. According to the ex-director of the DINEIB, these issues are mostly a consequence of chronic underfunding but that nonetheless, significant achievements under difficult circumstances were made but are rarely acknowledged (Ex-director of DINEIB, February 2014). The UNICEF study, described above also reported on the distribution of funds to the IBE system, concluding that at times the DINEIB system received proportionally greater levels of investment than the Hispanic system (Ministerio Coordinador de Patrimonio Ecuador & UNICEF, 2010, p 53). However, the study also acknowledges that there was no corresponding assessment during this period as to what levels of funding and support were required to cover the diverse needs on the ground.

Although some studies have highlighted issues of concern in relation to the governance and implementation of IBE education over the last 30 years, I would argue that it is highly problematic to describe IBE as failing in its entirety as an educational system.

3.4 Current education policies and the evolving scenario

Under the presidency of Rafael Correa, increased public investment for education was one of the first actions of the Government. According to official figures

“investment in education has increased more than three-fold from 1083,5 million dollars in 2006 to 3289,8 million dollars in 2013” (MNC/EI Ciudadano, 2014, my own translation). In terms of IBE, the government states that there has been an increase of over 30% entry of students into BI schools; from 95.471 in 2006 to 148.956 nationally by 2014 (El Telégrafo Ecuador, 2015, my own translation).

In 2011 all educational law was incorporated within a single national Intercultural Education System which meant that the Ministry for Education now became the highest authority across the whole education system. This included direct governance over jobs and posts, as the article 22 states:

“La Autoridad Educativa Nacional, como rectora del Sistema Nacional de Educación, formulará las políticas nacionales del sector, estándares de calidad y gestión educativos así como la política para el desarrollo del talento humano del sistema educativo.” (Ley Orgánica de Educación Intercultural, 2011, Art 22)

“The National Education Authority, as governor of the National Education System, will formulate the national education policies of the sector, quality standards and educational administration, including policies for the development of ‘human talent’ of the education system” (my own translation)

In relation to structural changes, Bilingual Intercultural schools were also affected by changes in national territorial circumscription. So, whilst many schools continued to function as individual establishments they were constituted into administrative ‘circuits’²⁴ as a tertiary local level of governance. However, these administrative circuits do not have any decision-making power, their function being to implement regulations have already been decided upon and handed down from the centralized level. This whole scale structural and administrative redistribution, has been described as ignoring and breaking local and historical

²⁴ As part of government policy, territorial administration of public civil services was changed to a three-tier system. This was initiated in 2010 and described in detail under each respective ministry as part of the ‘Plan Nacional de Buen Vivir’. In brief, the Ministries as centralized bodies are in charge of policy decision, however the administration department that is responsible for implementing the policy has been decentralized in the form of regional offices, further subdivided within the regions to local level administrative circuits.

sociological, anthropological and geographical relations, superimposing a top-down satellite territorialisation scheme (Mena & Terán, 2015).

One of the most significant policies of this Government's education policies has been the building of large flagship schools, intended to be well resourced in terms of modern technology as well as highly trained human capital. Whereas there can be no doubt there has been a dramatic increase in the level of funding up until 2014, educational policy has created a highly standardized system, founded ideologically on the concepts of meritocracy and equal access for all to a 'quality' education. For example, in relation to bilingual intercultural schools, the Ministry's priority was to create one flagship school for each corresponding ethnic nationality, as stated below:

“La prioridad es que haya una Unidad Educativa Guardian de la Lengua por cada una de las nacionalidades que existe en el país (14) y 7 Unidades Educativa del Milenio (Interculturales Bilingües)” (El Telégrafo Ecuador, 2015b)

“The priority is that there be one Education Unit Guardian of the Language for each nacionalidad that exists in the country (14) and 7 Education Units of the Milenium (Intercultural Bilingual)” (my own translation)

This translates to one large school unit (combined primary and secondary) for each indigenous nationality on the basis of language identification, understood as spaces of guardianship. The vision of what these flagship schools represent is expressed as:

“Estos espacios van a custodiar las cosmovisiones de las nacionalidades y establecer un diálogo constante entre los saberes ancestrales y el conocimiento occidental. Aquí se forman los profesionales que dominan estas lenguas” (El Telégrafo Ecuador, 2015)

“These spaces will act as custodians of the nacionalidades cosmovisions and will establish a constant dialogue between ancestral wisdom and western knowledge. Here professionals are formed that have correct use of these languages” (my own translation)

What can be clearly interpreted from these statements is that public funding is to be prioritized towards creating a standardized school system with flagship schools in locations assumed to correspond geographically to particular ethnic populations. I argue the underlying ideology of this discourse portrays a highly essentialized notion of ethnic identity relating to a bounded and fixed notion of culture and language.

The new Constitution and educational law declared the whole educational system intercultural; an important aspect of this was the stipulation that at least one ancestral language should be taught in all schools. Article 5 of the Education Law of 2010 declares an obligation of the state is to “progressively include in the curriculum the study of at least one ancestral language as well as the systematic study of non-official national realities, histories and local knowledge” (LOEI, Title I, Article 5, Letter 1, cited in Martinez Novo, 2014, p 115). In an interview I conducted in 2014 with the then director of the DINEIB as a sub-Secretariate of the Ministry of Education, I queried why, then, were ancestral languages a key focus only in the flagship bilingual intercultural schools and were not being taught in all schools? In response he emphasised that this was not due to a lack of political will, but was a technical issue, that simply required more time to resolve:

“Cual es el problema aquí? Si al interior del SEIB (Systema de Educación Intercultural Bilingüe) no hay los profesionales del caso, más aún para todo el sistema nacional, es un problema de profesionales, no es un problema voluntad o de querer hacer. El hecho es que para yo formar un docente en lengua ancestral me voy a demorar cuatro años” (Interview, Director of DINEIB, April, 2014).

“The problem is that, considering that there are insufficient indigenous professional teachers to cover the IBE system, therefore to cover the whole of the national system is impossible. The problem is insufficient professionals who can teach indigenous not of will or of wanting to do. The fact is that if I have to train a teacher of an ancestral language it is going to take four years”. (my own translation)

This official discourse clearly positions the problem, and therefore the solution, as a technical issue concerning a shortage of ‘proper’ professionals. What is problematic about the official discourse at a conceptual level is that it portrays a highly essentialized notion of cultural difference. Culture is being redefined in terms of specific ethnic languages and as geographically bounded, in other words, as if ‘a culture’ physically maps onto a particular location, assuming an ‘origin’ for each ethnic nationality. This is reflected in the policy, prioritizing specific ‘guardian schools’ in particular locations corresponding to each one of the ethnic nationalities. In this way, cultural diversity is projected as historically fixed, ignoring the political and historically dynamic process of identity construction. Aikman (2012) raises a similar concern in her analysis of UNESCO’s ‘Global Monitoring Report’ of 2010. Aikman reflects that: “While characteristics such as identity, culture and language are recognized as being intersecting, and thus interacting differently for differently situated individuals or groups, they are nevertheless presented as themselves static and bounded characteristics. The discourse of ethnicity and culture – used interchangeably – implies that ethnicity is bounded and culture static -...”(Aikman, 2012, p 250). What is also self-evident, as highlighted by Gustafson (2014) is a preferred techno-bureaucratic approach for resolving the ‘education problem’ (Gustafson, 2014, p 85). Whilst it is true that essentializing discourse can still be expressed through indigenous politics, the implementation of top-down policies is marginalizing possibilities of contestation by other political actors, which has serious implications.

3.4.1 Implications and effects of flagship schools

The construction and implementation of flagship schools has corresponded with a reduction in the total number of schools, especially of small, poorly-resourced schools which will likely have a disproportionate effect on indigenous rural communities. The target, as stated by the Ministry in 2014, was to reduce the total number of individual public schools from 18,247 to 5,564 by 2017. The aim has been to increase access to well-resourced state schools and educational services by pooling and centralizing resources. This has been realized in the form

of an ambitious construction programme that has resulted in new, much larger schools being erected across the country. At the time of writing two 'Guardianes de la Lengua' schools have been opened and eight bilingual flagships 'Escuelas del Millenio' school units. Official figures recorded 1,912 bilingual intercultural establishments were still in existence in 2015 (interview, published in El Telegrafo, 31st March 2015 with the Minister of Education). However, there are so far no clear figures available as to how many schools have been closed down so the proportion of intercultural bilingual schools that have been shut is still uncertain. A call by the leaders of ECUARANI¹⁰ for a study to be carried out into the number of school closures and the impact of this on highland communities has not yet been conducted.

At the 'Andean Indigenous Forum' held in Quito in March 2015, one of the declarations of the manifesto was directly concerned with: "the closure of more than 500 community schools." (Mesa de Educación, Foro Andino Indígena, 2015, my own translation).

A recent collaborative study conducted by the Universidad Andina Simon Bolivar also raises concerns as to the effects of school closure in the highland region of Cotopaxi. The authors argue that closures of local community schools are undermining the community social structures, leading to increased migration to urban areas, but there is no evidence that the children of those who have moved are automatically transferring to the flagship schools (Mena & Terán, 2015). Most importantly, they argue that long established support networks and educational initiatives have been dismantled, resulting in the very real danger of a decrease, rather than a rise in school enrolment of the most vulnerable children (Mena & Terán, 2015).

3.4.2 Meritocracy and standardized testing

The centralization of authority and resources is principally justified on the ideological basis of instilling a meritocratic education system, resulting in a comprehensive roll-out of standardized pupil and teacher assessments. It is also important to note that since the 2010 Education Law, teaching salaries have increased, so that many teachers across the private and public sector who were previously on a basic salary of below \$300 a month, have now had their pay within the public sector increased to over \$540 a month. This policy can be judged as coherent within the government's ideological position of raising the standard of public education, thereby promoting the reduction of the role of private education. Teaching categories based on length of service have been changed to a points-based system relating to levels of academic qualification, evaluation test scores and employment-related national training schemes (Ministerio de Educación, 2014). Of significance too, is the decision by the Ministry of Education, to not only reduce the number of schools but also the levels of teaching and administrative staff from 157, 300 to an optimum of 133,000 by the end of 2014 (El Comercio Ecuador, 2014b, Interview with Minister of Education). At the time of writing, the country's economy has experienced a knock-on effect from the downturn in oil revenues which Ecuador as an oil exporting economy is particularly susceptible to, therefore projections made in 2014 for the building of new flagship schools and levels of teaching staff have not as yet been fully realized.

However, the standards testing of all teachers within the public education system has led to a massive reshuffle of staff, resulting in a large number of teachers losing their permanent status, being retained instead on temporary contracts. Teachers who succeed in passing the assessments retain their existing working status while those attaining the topmost scores are moved into a higher professional category, with an accompanying increase in salary. On the other hand, teachers who do not achieve the minimum score on the standard test, are usually granted a one- or two-year contract and are offered two further opportunities to pass the tests in order to continue teaching in the public sector. Although no official statistics have been published, as far as I have been able to

ascertain from my research, there are suggestions that teachers within IBE and in rural sectors have been disproportionately affected. I conducted an interview with the civil servant who at the time of writing was in charge of Human Resources in the provincial Education Department for Napo in 2013 and was informed that only three out of eighty teachers within the IBE system had managed to retain permanent status; the remainder were still working but had been placed on temporary contracts (Interview, Education Department Official in charge of Human Resources, April 2013, Tena).

The official discourse states that the requisite upgrade to teachers' terms of employment must be related to improved teaching standards based on measurable indicators. In the words of the president Rafael Correa:

“Lo más fácil sería decir: todos los maestros con contratos inmediatamente adquieren el nombramiento; pero sería destrozar nuestros principios, el principio de una estricta meritocracia” (Correa, cited in Petrella, 2014).

“The easiest thing to say is: all teachers with contracts will retain permanent status; however, this would be a disaster in terms of our principles, the principle of a strict meritocracy” (Correa, cited in Petrella, 2014, own translation).

This response clearly reflects the broader political discourse, which legitimizes meritocracy as a means of eliminating mediocracy, denounced as sustained by clientelist and corrupt political and institutional practices. The Government therefore claims to be acting fairly in terms of instilling a highly rigid meritocratic system, reflecting a strong ideological tendency of what Giroux defines as a ‘positivist culture’ (Giroux, 2003) valuing only that which can be defined by measurable standards. Associating ‘merit’ in the strictest sense to the attributes and effort of individuals, fails to recognize diverse particularities or to take into account enduring structural inequalities.

The Government’s preferred methods of promoting meritocracy by focusing on statistical data to demonstrate improvements have been criticized as a highly technocratic system, masking, rather than moving away, from a neoliberal model

of education (Muyolema, 2015; Terán, 2015). Armando Muyolema, considers that the fundamental issue of curricula justice has been displaced in favour of standardized, ethnocentric tests in Spanish, placing bilingual individuals who differ from an assumed 'cultural standard' at significant disadvantages (Muyolema, 2015). Terán, is also highly critical of a system she describes as "unilaterally transferring the responsibility of results...onto individuals in the face of established standards...generating in this way the fiction of individual responsibility...which underlies the concept of meritocracy, removing the State's role in this issue, whilst at the same time masking the exclusionist, selective and elitist character of the education model" (Terán, 2015, p10, my own translation).

3.4.3 Political and social tensions

This inflexible stance demonstrated by the Ministry of Education/Government towards CONAIE and the indigenous leaders described above, has been similarly adopted in its dealings with Union leaders. In a question posed by the journalist of the national newspaper 'El Comercio' to the Ministry of Education concerning its relationship with the national teaching union UNE 'Union Nacional de Educadores' (Nation Union of Educators), the Minister replied: "The UNE does not exist. What is it? Is anybody aware of their recent elections to change the directors? No! (El Comercio Ecuador, 2014b, my own translation).

From 2010 there have been mounting protests against government policies on higher education laws, labour rights, free speech and oil and mining extraction, leading in some cases to violent clashes. On the 10th of December 2013 Ecuarunari, CONAIE and UNE held a joint protest march in support of their claim that the new education law was unconstitutional. The previous day, a news conference was held in attendance of; Carlos Perez the president of Ecuarunari, Rosana Palacios the president of the UNE and Geraldo Simbaña (a representative of the Intercultural Indigenous University Amawta Wasi closed down in October 2013). Carlos Perez opened the news conference stating:

“Es con gran lamentación que somos testigos del progresivo y sistemático exterminio de la Educación Intercultural Bilingüe en Ecuador (Carlos Perez, Rueda de Prensa, 9th December, 2013)

“It is with great regret that we are witnessing the progressive and systematic annihilation of Bilingual Intercultural Education in Ecuador” (own translation from recording).

All three leaders agreed and emphatically stated that the current implementation of education policies, regulations and actions by the Government were increasingly and aggressively marginalizing the political participation of civil society organizations. The march conducted on the following day passed relatively peacefully and concluded with a formal presentation of a petition for the repeal of the Education Law to the Constitutional Court of Law.

Other manifestations of dissent, street protests and meetings have not been so peaceful. Government discourse presented through public television and radio stations, regularly claims public protests which are not officially authorized are acts of ‘terrorism’ against the State from a small section of society aiming to protect their own privileges. In 2009, Shuar teacher Bosco Wizum was shot and killed during one of these protests although it is still not clear who was to blame (El Comercio Ecuador, 2009). More recently in 2014, over fifty students of two emblematic secondary schools in Quito who were participating in a national strike which had been called by a number of traditional unions and CONAIE, were detained for several days, with some of the students *later claiming they had been subjected to torture by the police* (El Comercio Ecuador, 2014c).

On the 6th and 7th of June 2015, the fourth Intercultural Bilingual Education National Congress took place in one of the long-established bilingual schools in Peguche on the outskirts of Otavalo, in the Ecuadorian highlands. This meeting was called by indigenous and campesino organizations in conjunction with the national teachers’ union UNE, all of whom had been delegitimized by the Government. However, the meeting was unable to take place due to the arrival of the police on the 5th June who bolted the school gates, denying entry to the

building. The meeting nevertheless went ahead as scheduled in an open field next to the school. The episode testified to the degree of intolerance displayed by the Government towards civil society organizations exercising their right to express members' concerns on Government policy by legitimate means. Perhaps, not surprisingly, the manifesto expounded on members' views towards current Government policy and actions, stating:

We declare the need to:

1. Reconsider the plurinational state in the current political context.
2. Recover the right to an Intercultural Bilingual Education via the establishment of a genuine plurinational state.
3. Oppose the construction of further 'Millennium School Units'.
4. Demand government investment in infrastructure, technology and pedagogy for community schools.
5. Demand the implementation of Intercultural Bilingual Education as stated in the Constitution.
6. Act in solidarity with all the 'compañeros y compañeras' (comrades) of the 'pueblos and nacionalidades' who suffer persecution by the State and national Government. (Redacción Plan V, 2015, my own translation)

For the purposes of this thesis, I am considering only the political events, which are of specific relevance to matters of intercultural education. However, the upward trend in the number of street protests and the rising levels of detention, criminalization and violence towards protesters have been raised with the UN Commission on Human Rights, are significant in terms of providing a fuller appreciation of the context²⁵.

I turn now to examine changes to the policy document on the pedagogic model for implementing intercultural bilingual education named '*Modelo de Educación*

²⁵ RIDH (International Network of Human Rights) with CONAIE, et al published an alternative report for submission to the UN human rights commission for the period 117 from 20th of June to 15th of July 2016, on emblematic cases of violation against human rights in relation to civil protest and imprisonment, see www.ohchr.org/Treaties/CCPR/SharedDocuments/EQU/INT_CCPR_CSS_EQU_24073_S.pdf

Intercultural Bilingüe' (MOSEIB). I compare specific elements that have altered between the original document that was drawn up in 1993 and the revised version published in 2014. In my analysis, I reveal subtle, though profound, changes over the conceptualization of knowledge and diversity, concluding that this reflects different notions of plurality that are implicit in the building of a national political project.

3.5 Conceptualization of 'cultural knowledge': a comparative analysis between 1993 and 2014

In 1993, a year after the decentralization of the DINEIB, the guiding document for creating the pedagogic model for bilingual intercultural education (MOSEIB) was officially approved. This document outlines the guiding principles defining intercultural bilingual education practice and establishes the general pedagogic model that is to be followed, including the respective roles and obligations of different social actors. In 2014 a revised version of the MOSEIB was officially approved in line with the new Law for Intercultural Education (LOEI), which was passed in 2010. Below I contrast the two texts in terms of the conceptualization of 'cultural knowledge' and how this reflects different political projects over the objective of IBE. I propose this analysis evidences a considerable shift in the participation and influence of different social actors in determining what IBE can be understood to be. I conclude that the conceptualization of IBE in the initial document forms part of a politics of contestation, aimed at challenging and disrupting a dominant political state project. In contrast I demonstrate how the later document, presuming to act on behalf of a universal 'intercultural citizen' aims to sustain what appears to be an already existing inclusive political project. The differences in the conceptualization of 'cultural knowledge' as revealed in these two documents, I suggest reflects the current turbulent political scenario that is shaping indigenous-state relations.

In 1993 the MOSEIB with the approval of the Ministry of Education and Culture, was essentially elaborated by indigenous leaders of the DINEIB in collaboration with national and international education and linguistic specialists. Tensions and

disputes between different actors and their particular visions over IBE are now widely acknowledged and were further confirmed during the interviews I carried out with some of the protagonists who continue to be associated with IBE. However, irrespective of the tensions, in 1993 the responsibility for governance of IBE lay undisputedly with CONAIE in collaboration with diverse social actors including consultant specialists and ministry officials. The 1993 MOSEIB therefore became the principal guiding document for implementing intercultural bilingual education until its revision in 2010 and final approval in 2014.

3.5.1 Participation and MOSEIB aims

The Ministry of Education contracted the renown academic on intercultural education Ruth Moya, and influential in developing IBE in Ecuador, as a specialist consultant to coordinate the process for updating and re-formulating the document. Reaching a consensus over changes to the model was fraught by politically intense opposition from an established sector of officials of the DINEIB (Field-notes, from conversation with consultant and education officials, November 2013). It is noteworthy that although the consultation process came to an end in 2012, the document was not legally approved until 2014, reflecting the stated tensions between political actors. Given this state of affairs, it was surprising to discover that the format of the document was mostly unchanged. At first glance, it appeared that much of content also remained the same, with only minor changes and revision, mostly in relation to particular wording. However, as I demonstrate in my comparative analysis of the texts below, these changes were, in fact, far from superficial.

Table 3 - MOSEIB text in 1993 and 2014 defining ‘Aims’

Fines/Aims	1993	2014
1	Apoyar el fortalecimiento de la interculturalidad de la sociedad ecuatoriana.	Apoyar la construcción del Estado plurinacional sustentable con una sociedad intercultural, basado en la sabiduría,

		conocimientos y practicas ancestrales de los pueblos y nacionalidades, en la diversidad biológica del Ecuador, en los aportes de las diferentes culturas del mundo;
1	<i>Back the strengthening of interculturality of the Ecuadorian society</i>	<i>Back the construction of the sustainable plurinational State with an intercultural society, based on the ancestral wisdom, knowledge and practices of the pueblos and nacionalidades on the biological diversity of Ecuador, and the contributions of the different cultures of the world;</i>
2	Fortalecer la identidad cultural y la organización de los pueblos indígenas.	Fortalecer la identidad cultural, las lenguas y la organización de los pueblos y nacionalidades.
	<i>Strengthen the cultural identity and the organization of indigenous pueblos</i>	<i>Strengthen the cultural identity, languages and the organization of pueblos and nationalities</i>
3	Contribuir a la búsqueda de mejores condiciones de la calidad de vida de los pueblos indígenas	Contribuir a la búsqueda de mejores condiciones de vida de las nacionalidades y de otros pueblos del país.
	<i>Contribute to the search of improved conditions of the quality of life of indigenous pueblos</i>	<i>Contribute to the search of improved conditions of the quality of life of the nationalities and of other pueblos of the country</i>

(Source documents, collated from MOSEIB 1993 & 2014, my own translation)

The main difference appears to be in relation to changes in terminology, whereby in 1993, 'indigenous pueblos' is used as the term to refer to specific cultural diversity, in 2014 the terms used are 'nacionalidades' and 'pueblos'. This is not entirely surprising since the wording corresponds to changes in terminology in the 2008 constitution reflecting the longstanding political demand by CONAIE to move forward the establishing of a plurinational state. Aims 2 and 3 can therefore be considered as equivalent between the two versions as they simply relate to an update in terminology.

However, the same cannot be said for aim 1. In the version of 1993, the aim of IBE is described as being to: 'support the strengthening of 'interculturality' in Ecuadorian society'. As previously discussed, interculturality forms part of CONAIE's proposal for a plurinational state as an enduring political demand. Interculturality in this way implies an on-going need to recognize the social and structural historical processes of marginalization and discrimination of diverse indigenous ethnicities, as a basis for initiating a process of de-colonizing the whole of society (Walsh, 2009). This strategic objective of IBE to strengthen the interculturality of Ecuadorian society can therefore be understood underpinning a process of political contestation that was intended to facilitate social transformation.

In the 2014 version, whilst 'nationalities' and a 'plurinational' state is incorporated into the wording, they are seen as *contributing* to the 'construction of a sustainable plurinational state'. What is more, *contribution* is defined as part of the ancestral knowledge of these 'nationalities' and 'pueblos' in a society assumed as already intercultural. The on-going structural inequality arising from the differentiated status of ethnic diversity within current society is not being addressed and therefore interculturality refers to a superficial and descriptive term. I consider the aim of IBE is therefore conceptualized as providing 'diverse content' to a supposed intercultural society. 'Interculturality' in this way is in danger of becoming a descriptive term, conceptualized as a means of incorporating diversity as a harmonious process. This follows the critique raised by the indigenous movement of ignoring the existing political demand for the need to recognize and therefore address the continued historical hierarchical

social structures that determine power relations. The contrast is one between the conceptualization of 'interculturality' as *incorporating diversity* into society as it is, versus that of interculturality problematizing how diversity is perceived in current society. The latter responds to a form of political contestation. I consider the conceptualization of interculturality as positioned in 2014 assumes a neutral subjectivity for the incorporation of diversity. The text makes direct reference to diversity as 'content', emphasising the contribution of these 'nationalities and pueblos' associated with 'the wisdom, knowledge and practices' regarding Ecuador's *biological* diversity. Furthermore, knowledge associated with Ecuador's cultural diversity is understood in equal terms to the contribution made by *other* cultures of the world. I consider this ignores the contextual and political nature of knowledge production reflecting a highly utilitarian notion over knowledge and cultural diversity, masking existing tensions that demand a careful critical and on-going analysis.

The front cover of the current document states: "This document...is the result of a work of participation with the actual actors of the Bilingual Intercultural Education System of the 14 indigenous nationalidades and 18 pueblos of Ecuador" (MOSEIB, 2014, my own translation). However, in contradiction to this claim, as described above, Ecuaruani, CONAIE and UNE were protesting on the streets about their forceful exclusion from political participation, at this same time.

3.5.2 Administrative Strategies: *what type of knowledge is of value*

Under administrative strategies, the roles and relationships between different social actors are ascribed. The changes in types of social actors who are included and their respective roles, can be seen to reflect changes in current power relations that legitimize particular social structures and therefore the kinds of knowledge that are seen to be of value. I analyse that, 'knowledge' is perceived as being of value when it is related to a concrete and prior established political project, explicitly referred to in this section of the document.

Table 4 - MOSEIB text in 1993 and 2014 defining ‘Administrative Strategies’

Administrative Strategies	1993	2014
1	<p>Reorientar las políticas de educación intercultural bilingüe</p> <p>Implementar progresivamente el currículo de educación bilingüe intercultural en las comunidades indígenas</p>	<p>Propiciar la participación de los actores sociales en el consenso de un Plan de Estado Sustentable con visión de largo plazo, para la implementación progresiva del currículo de educación intercultural bilingüe en los Centros Educativos Comunitarios Interculturales Bilingües (CECIBs)</p>
	<p>Re-orientate bilingual intercultural education policies</p> <p>Progressively implement the BI curriculum in the indigenous communities</p>	<p>Facilitate the participation of social actors in the consensus of a Sustainable State Plan with a long-term vision, for the progressive implementation of the curriculum of intercultural education in the Bilingual Intercultural Education Community Centres (CECIBs)</p>
2	<p>Coordinar la participación de la DINEIB con las organizaciones indígenas en todas las instancias del proceso educativo (planificación, organización, ejecución y evaluación) en</p>	<p>Garantizar la participación de los pueblos y nacionalidades en función de su representatividad y experiencias en la planificación, organización, ejecución y evaluación del</p>

	función de su representatividad y experiencia en la educación intercultural bilingüe	proceso educativo intercultural bilingüe
	Coordinate the participation of the DINEIB with the indigenous organizations in all educational areas (planning, organizing, executing and evaluating) in relation to their representativeness and experience in BIE.	Guarantee the participation of pueblos and nacionalidades in relation to their representation and experiences in planning, organizing, executing and evaluation of the process of BIE

(Source documents, collated from MOSEIB, 1993 & 2014, my own translation)

At first glance, the second administrative strategy, the changes appear superficial. However, bearing in mind the analysis presented above, the notable difference is the level of abstraction of who is to participate and how. In the version of 1993, it is clearly identified that it is the DINEIB who is in the institutional body in charge of coordinating participation with representative indigenous organizations. In the 2014 version, ‘pueblos and nacionalidades’ are to be guaranteed participation, in relation to their level of representation. The specific institutional body is not referred to. In ‘guarantee participation’ the implication is that it is the State that must ensure the ‘right’ to participation. Therefore, given the current changes in policies, it must be understood that it is the Government as manifested in the State, through the Ministry of Education, that decides and is responsible for guaranteeing participation on the basis of cultural diversity. Again, the question resides over who defines what legitimacy of representation is. The new education law proposes a ‘plurinational council’ made up of one representative from each ‘pueblo and nacionalidad’ (Ley Orgánica de Educación Intercultural, 2011, Art, 251), again reflecting a concept of cultural diversity as bounded and fixed. Also, as previously mentioned, it is the Minister of Education alone who has the power of veto, so it is the Minister who has the final say, thus concentrating power in the hands of this position. In this way, it would appear to be the Government who ultimately decides who is the ‘legitimate’

representative of Ecuador's cultural diversity, as if ethnic identity were simply a description of a given and not part of a dynamic, complex process constantly in contestation, i.e. intrinsic to a politics of contestation.

The wording of the document acquires a problematic level of abstraction in the later version in contrast to the greater degree of specificity in the original version. In 1993 the administration strategy was described as 're-orientating IBE education policies'. To understand what is meant by 're-orientating', the historical context is important here. Prior to the 1980s, 'indigenous education', adopted the use of vernacular languages as tools for efficient assimilation of the indigenous people into national society, as described in previous chapters. With the conformation of the DINEIB, IBE was projected as a means of challenging the function of an education system that was traditionally regarded as a mechanism for reproducing racially-discriminating social structures, to a new system where language and culture would not be tools for assimilation but instead would be positioned as integral to acquiring and producing diverse knowledge. It is therefore in this sense that IBE re-orientates bilingual education, specifically in relation to language use and forms of knowledge production. By contrast in 2014, IBE is to be orientated towards the consensus building of a 'Sustainable State Plan' through the participation of *all* social actors. Again, the term 'social actors' whilst apparently inclusive, is also diffused; the differentiation in the relative levels of political participation between different social actors is masked, by assuming an apparent level playing field between *all* social actors. It is worth noting that from 2009, a 'Sustainable State Plan' was introduced relating to a fixed political project, in the form of the "Plan Nacional del Buen Vivir²⁶" drawn up as five-year development plans. These plans were intended to set out the long-term vision for Ecuador's sustainable State development, coordinated and written up by the National Secretariat for Planning and Development (SENPLADES). Whilst there may be opportunities for different social actors to participate in having a say in these plans, SENPLADES is uncompromisingly a centralized authority with specific responsibilities for drawing up these plans and is in charge of decision-

²⁶ See Gonzalez & Macias, 2015 for a discussion on the ideological framing of Buen Vivir by the Ecuadorian Government at the time, see also Radcliffe, 2015 already mentioned. For a critical perspective from Ecuadorian academics during this period, see various articles published in 'El Correismo al Desnudo' already cited in this chapter.

making. I suggest therefore that the administrative strategies appear to be directed towards a standardization of education that is in line with the State development plan, reflecting a top-down approach, coherent with the present Government's ideological position.

A close analysis of the 'Plan National de Buen Vivir' reveals a specific conceptualization of 'cultural knowledge' in relation to its 'value', associated with the advancement of a particular vision of development. The quote below appears in both versions: in the 2009-2013 and 2013-2017 development plans as a footnote associated to, 'Objective 10 - Impulsar el cambio de matriz productiva' (promote change in the economic production model):

"29 - La mayor ventaja comparativa con la que cuenta el país es su biodiversidad y, sin duda, la mayor ventaja competitiva que podría tener es saber aprovecharla, a través de su conservación y de la construcción de industrias propias relativas a la bio y nanotecnología. En este sentido, la estrategia está orientada a construir en el mediano y largo plazo una sociedad del bioconocimiento y de servicios ecoturísticos comunitarios. Biodiversidad es sinónimo de vida y, por lo tanto, de información (Senplades, 2013, Obj. 10, p 78)

"The greatest comparative advantage that the country has is its biodiversity and without a doubt the greatest competitive advantage that could be had is to know how to take advantage of it, via its conservation and the construction of its own industries related to bio and nanotechnology. In this sense, the strategy is orientated towards the construction in the medium and long-term of a society of bio knowledge and community ecotourism services. Biodiversity is synonymous with life and therefore with information" (Senplades, 2013, Obj. 10, p 78, own translation).

As this quote evidences, the central vision of development is to move the model of production away from primary resource extraction to a high-tech bio-knowledge industry. Of significance here, is that the central objective of formal education for the government becomes directly linked with the political project aimed at transforming society into a 'bio-knowledge society'. Disturbingly, under

official discourse, 'life' is understood as being equivalent to biodiversity and synonymous with information for purposes of development. When cross-referenced with the discourse presented in the 2014 version of the MOSEIB, the government's notion of 'diversity' whether in terms of 'nature' or 'culture' is understood as an 'object', of use for advancing a particular construction of a national political project. I consider this portrays a highly utilitarian notion of diversity, framed within an ideological and linear conceptualization of development. I argue therefore that diverse ethnic nationalities are being conceived as 'sources of information', where dialogue provides useful 'raw material' for scientific and social advancement. The notion of 'diversity' as a source of information, reproduces existing structures of hierarchical relationships between forms of knowledge production and possibilities of diverse ways of being and living.

The Government's promotion of the development plan and its corresponding intentions towards the IBE is further made explicit in the 2014 version of MOSEIB 2014 under the section stipulating pedagogic practices:

“Centres of Intercultural Community Education’ (CECIBs), [the name given to Bilingual Intercultural community schools] should be constituted into spaces for the development of collective knowledge on genetic resources, biological diversity and agro-biodiversity as well as the community’s knowledge, techno-scientific training and promotion of diverse forms of productive and cultural development;” (MOSEIB, 2014, p.33)

Clearly the role of IBE becomes disassociated from a political process that, as part of the emergence of indigenous politics, aimed to position plurality as a means of disrupting a homogenizing national project reflecting the emergence of indigenous politics. In this way 'cultural knowledge' under official government discourse is neutralized, becoming a source of information to be incorporated for economic advancement. 'Diversity' is arguably understood as only having value in terms of transforming Ecuador's society into a 'bio-knowledge society'.

3.6 Summary

In this chapter I have contrasted the current political scenario from 2009 onwards with that of the relative political openings of the late 1980s and early 90s, coincident with the emergence of the indigenous political actor at the national level. I have analysed and described the various implications for education that arose from the governance of cultural diversity within this changing scenario.

In 2014 representatives of Ecuador's cultural diversity are perceived as corresponding to separate nationalities; this has become a descriptive term that essentializes cultural identity and masks the political and historical process within which social identities are constructed. Currently, as discussed above, the government does not consider indigenous leaders of CONAIE and associated organizations as legitimate political representatives. Arguably, the articulation of an indigenous 'voice' has been denied its political nature, left without a representative organizational form; while it is not a homogenous body without its own internal tensions, nevertheless it should not be delegitimized from above. Under current official discourse, the participation of all social actors is already 'accounted for' in the form of 'the intercultural citizen', presumed to be representative of the cultural diversity of Ecuador's 'pueblos' and 'nacionalidades'. Through my analysis, I argue difference is valued only in relation to its potential *tangible* use, within a given dominant vision of development and society. In this way, equality is considered as equivalent to inclusivity, and inequality in power relations is not recognized, masked by a discourse of equal opportunity through promotes a standardized education for achieving a meritocratic system.

If the 1990s represented a break with a 'ventriloquist representation' (Albó, 1991) of the indigenous subject across the region, during the last decade the accusation by the Ecuadorian government towards the leadership of indigenous organizations is that they have reproduced this same 'ventriloquism'. Whilst considering that the emergence of indigenous organizations in the national political sphere has indeed created an indigenous political elite, León (2002) reflects this must also be understood as a dynamic process of representation in

public decision-making. This long-term academic and socio-political analyst also suggests, the creation of an indigenous elite can be a case of representation by political insertion without necessarily changing institutional structures; however, notes this does not exclude possibilities for different constructions of representation (León, 2002, p.31). In other words, the creation of an indigenous political elite does not in itself close off possibilities for constructing political pluralism. Significantly, Leon points out that transformations are not only in one direction, i.e. towards the state but that inclusion into public decision-making also transforms internal social structures including redefining leadership and the emergence of elites. Leon considers that the broadening and reconceptualization of what “other” signifies in ethnic terms, has also meant the possible questioning of “what it is now to be ‘indigenous’ by both those that self-identify as such, as well as those that don’t” (Leon, 2002, p 3). León concludes that the possibilities for different constructions of representation are dependent on “how permissible or not political national systems are to accepting new actors and processes of social differentiation” (León, 2002 p32). Trapnell (2003), specifically reflecting on intercultural education programs in Peru, also notes the importance of taking into consideration the dynamic nature and changing social contexts of indigenous movements and organizations. Whilst the 1993 model reflects a particular historical moment in time relating to the demand for recognition of difference within the process of state schooling, and since then current social and political conditions have unquestionably changed, what is arguably required now, is a process of critical reflection and open debate. However, as I have explored here, central Government during the past decade appears to claim legitimate representation over its diverse citizens, excluding participation by civil society groups and other organizations that oppose Government policy and measures. The implication therefore is of a narrowing rather than broadening of the possibilities and spaces for a politics of contestation of a fixed and dominant political project. The highly centralized, top-down approach to schooling and consequently over what can be defined as IBE, I propose reflects the limited possibilities for imagining diverse political projects as a form of plurality in Ecuador’s national political sphere.

Regarding education as a whole, there is serious concern over the “strong articulation of higher education with the goals of economic development [proposed by the Government] leave schooling as simply a first step on the ladder without it being understood also as an end in itself” (Terán, 2015 p 3). Linked to this general concern is the official conceptualization over the notion of plurality that is currently being advanced as part of an intercultural education system. From my analysis I propose that the Government’s position towards recognition of cultural difference and knowledge production, masks the contextual, relational and therefore politically- contentious nature of the recognition of difference, and ultimately what can count as worthwhile knowledge. In this way, I suggest ‘dialogue’ as a pedagogic process between different ways of knowing is devoid of its highly contextual articulation and emptied of significance. Government policy is driving a process of essentialization of cultural difference from the top-downwards.

As Martinez Novo (2014) concludes, the recent political scenario in Ecuador points to a regressive position in relation to governance over diversity. Though there are signs of change in the political scenario after the election of Lenin Moreno, (24th May 2017) as the new president of Ecuador, under the same political party of ‘*Alianza Pais*’, what the implications may be and what will result from this change of presidency in terms of shifting power relations, it is too early to say. Whether the changes in the political scene will have implications for the structural and ideological education project that has been underway, is as yet unknown, we shall have to wait and see.

However, significantly, in this chapter, I raise a specific concern over the notion of diverse cultural knowledge as it is expressed in official discourse as leading to a process of objectification, valued a source of information but only in terms of its use within a dominant vision of development. Without a space for open critique and active participation from multiple sectors, or an opportunity for serious reflection at a political and theoretical level regarding a dominant ‘progressive’ vision of development, I suggest that the association between knowledge and difference will continue to be objectified and decontextualized, concealed as it is within a discourse of apparent inclusion.

In the following chapter I shall consider the political objective over formal education from the local perspective, which contrasts dramatically with that of Government official discourse. I continue to explore the inherent tension between the need to be recognized and so the ability to be heard, whilst at the same time demonstrating difference. I aim to contextualize the changing national scenario, as seen from the local perspective, in the continuing process of constructing an alternative political project over education, as a means of articulating difference.

Chapter 4: Intercultural classroom practice: constructing boundaries and negotiating possibilities

In the previous chapter I analysed the process of how IBE has come to be defined within the shifting power relationships between distinct political actors, constructing and contesting a national political project. I explored the inherent tension of the indigenous political demand for the institutionalization of formal schooling, in order to achieve recognition and the ability to be heard as a political actor, whilst at the same time needing to demonstrate difference. I contrasted the emergence of IBE under the relative autonomy and governance of indigenous organizations of the late 1980s with that of the past decade, proposing that the possibilities for a politics of contestation had narrowed. I further analysed the changes in education policy that indicated a strong tendency towards centralized decision-making and processes of standardization and how this led simultaneously to a rise in political tensions. I concluded that changes to education policy are framed by a top-down, essentialized notion defining cultural diversity.

In the previous chapter, through discourse analysis of policy texts, I raise concerns about the highly utilitarian conceptualization over knowledge production, whereby diversity is valued specifically in terms of its application to advance a linear and hegemonic vision of development. I argue that current education policy can be seen to reflect an underlying political ideology of cultural homogenization, which raises serious doubts as whether the construction of a pluralist national political project is possible.

In this chapter I focus on how IBE policy is translated in the particular context of Pumamaki and discuss the effects of the implementation of national education policy on the ground. Whilst my ethnographic fieldwork took place between 2013-2015, representing therefore only a window in time, my aim is to contextualize what I observed and analysed as part of an historical and dynamic political process following that which was explored in chapter two. In relation to the building of a political project, I aim to highlight a local perspective in defining and

imagining schooling through the continuous reconstruction between the local and national changing contexts.

To begin with, I explore elements of discursive texts and oral communication that construct and frame the local political objective over state schooling. Following Rappaport's analysis of the production of local cultural discourse through the work of 'organic intellectuals', I propose that the ideal function of schooling expressed through local discourse reflects the construction of a 'native political ideology' (Rappaport, 2005, p 15). I develop the argument that the dynamic and contextualized construction of boundaries by members of Pumamaki creates the possibility for negotiating power relations between 'inside' and 'outside'. In this way the 'school' within the territory of Pumamaki is also envisaged within this political dynamic, becoming a space to build an 'intercultural utopia' (Rappaport, 2005). I suggest, the production of local cultural discourse inherently forms part of the on-going historical struggle to sustain relative autonomy, reflecting the political objective of schooling as an ideal, which ultimately aims to maintain a balance between that conceived as 'inside' and 'outside'.

From an analysis of local discourse, my conclusion accords with the definition of intercultural education practice from a decolonial theoretical discourse (as described in chapter one) and therefore, there exists a clear political intention to generate a critical intercultural education practice. I propose, at a discursive level, the classroom is conceptualized as a 'contact zone' (Pratt, 1991) between hegemonic and subaltern knowledge. This is commonly expressed as 'lo nuestro' (that which is ours) belonging to 'the inside' defining collective identity, and that which is conceptualized as 'lo de afuera' (that which is outside), defined as belonging to 'the outside'. In this way, I propose that the teacher's role is positioned in terms of a perceived ideal, that is, as an interlocutor between the 'inside' and the 'outside'. The role of local teachers is therefore envisioned to be that of a mediator between dominant hegemonic discourse practices and that, which has been subalternized.

The chapter then moves on to analyse the effects of education policy specifically in relation to the education system in Pumamaki as it evolved during my research. My findings suggest that the implementation of highly standardized national education policies threatens to further entrench a two-tier education system, disproportionately affecting rural and indigenous locations such as Pumamaki.

Finally, I enter into the domain of the classroom to explore the gap between discourses and practice, analysing how language policy is translated in the classroom context, in contrast with the complex language strategies employed in oral communication. I conclude that although the production of local discourse is important in generating possibilities for creating a local political objective over the function of schooling, so asserting a claim to internal agency, my findings do not suggest a critical education process taking place. I find little evidence of classroom practice challenging the reproduction of hierarchical social practices; rather it appears to reproduce the legitimacy of higher status discursive practices. I propose that in the present system of education, teachers are unable to assume an empowered position as mediators between dominant and subaltern discourse practices.

4.1 The local educational context

At the time of my research, within the territorial space of Pumamaki, approximately four hundred students were receiving formal schooling, through five primary schools and one secondary school with a total of thirty-two teachers. Of these thirty-two teachers (seven women, twenty-five men) only three were originally non-Kichwa speakers, twenty-eight being direct family members of Pumamaki. The possibility of having five primary schools and one secondary school led almost entirely by local teachers, must be understood as gains achieved through the last thirty years of indigenous politics at the national level, enabling the professionalization of indigenous rural teachers. In the case of Pumamaki, a further significant factor resulting in the above description has been the political capacity at the local level to create collaborative networks and mobilize resources, as I shall explore further in this chapter.

During the period of my research, the majority of teachers who were from Pumamaki had more than fifteen years' teaching experience. This implies most of these individuals had become professional teachers directly as a consequence of the establishment of the IBE system at a national level. Four of these more-experienced teachers recounted that it was their own personal decision to enter into the teaching profession, but in contrast, a number of others said they had become teachers as a result of having been asked to do so by the local community. As an example, in a separate conversation with Marcos, one of the experienced teachers, it was explained to me that he himself had no particular intention of becoming a teacher but his decision to train for the profession in his early twenties was a result of having been approached by the community leadership. I asked Marcos if he had thought to reject the petition, since the decision to become a teacher had not been at his own instigation. He replied, "this would not have been the right thing to do" (Marcos, Pumamaki, 2015). Having been asked by the community, he had accepted their judgement, and duly trained to become a teacher.

The majority of teachers of Pumamaki undertook their training locally at the bilingual intercultural pedagogic institute of Canelos in the province of Pastaza. On successful completion of a three-year technical teaching course, they were awarded formal certification to teach at standard education level. From 2010, prospective teachers have been required by law to obtain a university degree before being allowed to enter the profession. In the case of Pumamaki, twenty-one teachers had gained a university degree via an in-situ program I shall describe further on.

Two members of Pumamaki had been teaching for over thirty years and were close to retirement at the time I was conducting my ethnographic research. This meant that these teachers had been trained by the Dominican missionary order when only Spanish was permitted as the language of educational instruction. As discussed in chapters 1 and 2, indigenous education before the establishment of IBE would have been ideologically directed towards a bicultural education as a process of assimilation. Therefore, it can be assumed that these particular

teachers would have experienced teaching under two apparently opposing ideological models of education.

Three of the secondary school teachers, two of whom were not originally members of Pumamaki, held further specialized secondary school certification. A small number of younger teachers were school graduates and did not have any further education training. These teachers were contracted on account of the general shortage of teachers who were willing to work in rural locations²⁷, such as Pumamaki. As an exception, however, a young Economics graduate from the metropolitan city of Guayaquil with a background in supporting the political process in Pumamaki was contracted as a temporary English teacher.

Of significance is that most of Pumamaki's teachers were locals, having grown up within the territory and therefore had experience of leadership roles, for example as community presidents and/or elected members of the central political organization. Several individuals had also participated as representatives at the regional and national level.

One long-term teaching post had at the time of my research been occupied by an elderly lady who recognized herself as a mestiza, descended from one of the original migrant families to settle in Puyo. She had been teaching in Pumamaki for over 18 years and spoke Kichwa fluently. Following her retirement during the period of my research, she was replaced by another female teacher from Puyo, also identifying as a mestiza, who understood, but did not speak Kichwa.

Pumamaki as a territorial political organization can therefore be considered as having established relatively optimal conditions in terms of developing its own teaching body with the staff having reasonably high levels of experience and formal professionalization in comparison to other rural indigenous locations of this Amazon region.

²⁷ In a training workshop, in early 2014 held in Puyo, at which all rural teachers of the intercultural bilingual education system were requested to attend, I encountered various examples of school graduates working as teachers across this Amazon region. It seems that the pragmatic need to fill existing teaching posts overrides that established in the law of 2010, at least for rural locations.

However, at the time of my ethnographic research, from early 2014 to late 2015, the prevalent feeling shared by the community leadership, teachers and students alike was one of frustration and uncertainty. Without exception, all the teachers I observed and conversed with during my fieldwork, expressed serious doubts over their own abilities to deliver a ‘proper’ intercultural education. It could be reasonably surmised that the implementation of the unpopular standardized education policies was one important contributing factor for the low moral and tense environment I observed during that particular period. However, classroom practice is established as part of a long-term process and could not be explained exclusively in relation to the latest policy changes. I develop the argument that there continues to exist an underlying tension over the function of schooling in relation to accessing recognition as full citizens. I propose this function of schooling implies the need to demonstrate specific citizenship criteria. Although the State claims to recognize ‘difference’ this occurs through demonstrating tangible elements of cultural specificity resulting in an essentialization of cultural difference. In this way, citizenship criteria continue to be established from the top-down, limiting the possibilities of translating local discourse envisioning IBE as a space to promote epistemological plurality, into practice.

4.1.1 The local education proposal

In 2010, (preceding my research), I was invited by members of Pumamaki’s local political leadership to take part in a two-day special assembly that had been called to discuss a plan for developing and implementing a local curriculum, stated as ‘un currículo propio’ (our own curriculum). The key aspiration, repeatedly expressed at the assembly, could be aptly summarized as, “necesitamos una educación propia, donde se ensene lo nuestro y lo de afuera” (we need our own education system whereby our knowledge and outside knowledge is taught) (Pumamaki, April 2010). From this articulation of views, it can be reasonably inferred that the community was explicitly positioning the ideal of the local school as a space to acquire ‘authorized/official’ knowledge while also legitimizing ‘local/inside’ knowledge. In theory, authorizing distinct forms of knowledge inscribed within specific social and political practices challenges the

traditional objective of schooling as a mechanism of reproducing dominant social structures (Bourdieu & Passeron, 1990). The term 'lo propio'²⁸ (our own) can be understood as representing that which is endogenous. Expressed at a local level, 'lo propio' appears to be generally interchangeable with 'lo nuestro' (that which is ours). Local political objectives for education, at a discursive level, therefore coincide with the consensual vision of intercultural education that I earlier referred to, in chapter 1, as a dialogue between difference, in equality. The implication is that the school *should* embody a space of plurality in which equal status between enunciations of knowledge emerging from 'inside' practices and 'outside' practices are recognized.

As described in the previous chapter, 2010 was the year when the new educational law was passed, and a year after the governance of the DINEIB was centralized under the Ministry of Education. For Pumamaki, 2010 was also a year after the finalizing of a five-year experimental in-situ teacher training program, locally driven and developed as a joint initiative between five entities: Pumamaki's political organization, the Spanish University of Lerida, the Ecuadorian University of Cuenca and the DINEIB with international NGO funding. The aim of this teacher-training project was for community members to obtain a graduate teaching certificate to provide pertinent cultural pedagogic training and further professionalization to support the development of the local teaching body. Through this initiative, twenty-one local teachers successfully completed the course, gaining a university-accredited degree. Among the specific objectives of the teacher-training program were, to:

- Recover and revalue ancestral knowledge about philosophy, indigenous cosmovision, cultural identity, customs, traditions, language and education.
- Develop an education model for the community and indigenous peoples of the province of Pastaza, interrelating own and external knowledge

²⁸ I interpret the use of 'lo nuestro' as parallel to the use of the term 'lo propio', which Rappoport defines as a complex notion referring to "how culture is experienced on the ground" (2005, p 141). I consider Rappoport's description and analysis of 'lo propio' in relation to the Colombian CRIC project of education, chimes well with my own understanding of the term in Pumamaki.

(Source, document: Vela, 2014, Informe proyecto Yachay 2001-2009, my own translation)

It should be understood that the implementation of this locally driven education project was influenced and facilitated as a result of the political gains achieved by the indigenous movement in the 1990s. In the context of 'neoliberal multiculturalism' (Hale, 2002), the direction of state policies opened up possibilities at the local level for building direct links with particular organizations (Hale, 2002, p 489). In this particular case, Pumamaki's leadership created networks and established partnerships with specific organizations of their own choosing. In this sense, the experimental in-situ teacher-training project must be understood not as an isolated initiative, but as part of the construction of a local political project and the culmination of a longer process promoting experimental education initiatives with external support.

In the mid-1990s an experimental, privately funded initiative established a parallel alternative to early years schooling; named Tayak Wasi (the House of Ancestors) its objective was to combine Montessori-inspired pedagogy with local knowledge and learning processes (Interview with its founding member, January 2015). According to Sandra, one of its founding members, the initiative was aimed at challenging the nationally dominant, highly reproductive traditional pedagogy that was being implemented through formal schooling (Sandra, Pumamaki, January 2015). Sandra explained how Tayak Wasi, as an autonomous project eventually became financially unsustainable and was incorporated into the state school system. Nevertheless, her account, as confirmed in conversation with various local teachers who received specific training through this initiative, was that Tayak was able to set a local precedent of an alternative pedagogic practice influencing current primary school teaching (Sandra, Pumamaki, January 2015).

Whilst it could be of interest to explore these initiatives in detail, it is not within the remit of my research to do so, moreover I consider that this type of investigation would necessarily require an on-going process which should be directed by the local organization itself, and not by an external researcher. Of interest to this research, is that these initiatives reflected a significant political capacity at the

local level for realizing an educational objective that was part of the struggle for relative autonomy and an important aspect of the local political discourse. The concept of 'lo nuestro', I argue, is intrinsic to the long-term process of maintaining relative autonomy.

4.2 Recreating 'inside and outside' through discourse

Pumamaki, as a territorial geographical space as well as in relation to the numbers of individual members it makes up, (approximately, 1000)²⁹ is a relatively small group of community that belies the extent of its political role and influence in advancing indigenous politics at a national level and beyond. It is the importance of Pumamaki as a key political actor that goes some way to explaining the particularity of its school system. Pumamaki gained national and international recognition from the early 1990s, mainly due to conflicts over oil extraction projects in its territorial space. As part of this process the local political leadership of Pumamaki has been able to establish a wide network of support and collaboration, constituting Pumamaki as a site of important production of intellectual work, positioning what Rappoport defines as a 'native political ideology' (Rappoport, 2005, p 10). The local school project I have described above is part of this process and production.

As seen in the previous chapter, 'difference' framed as a concept of culture through policy inevitably results in an imposition of an essentialist notion of cultural boundaries as a means for political recognition. In this way, the claim to specific rights translated into policy, becomes based on the continuous

²⁹ This is the approximate population living within the Pumamaki territory as stated in a report by FLACSO and CDES (Chavez et al.) in 2005, (research into the effects of oil exploitation). The political leadership however estimates a higher number, closer to 2000, though this could include people of Pumamaki who live outside of the territory whilst maintaining contact and identifying as of Pumamaki. I was unable during the time of my research to obtain official figures.

demonstration of difference. A clear contradiction is set up, whereby difference is conceptualized as a social construct and simultaneously based on the notion of an 'original'. For Rappaport (2005), the existence of this tension is not incoherent but is what enables cultural difference to be utilized as a process of constant and deliberate bringing-into-existence of a cultural project (Rappaport, 2005, p 38). In this way, it is important to consider who, and from what position, a particular discourse is being articulated in the construction of cultural boundaries in the simultaneous claims for difference and recognition. Significantly, what Rappaport is pointing to, is, that essentializing discourse when framed from above also becomes articulated from below, but for different purposes.

In the case of the Colombian indigenous organization CRIC (Consejo Regional Indigena del Cauca), Rappaport (2005) demonstrates how "though 'templates for essentializing' of culture are historically bound to the discourse practice of dominant culture, conversely these templates also become instrumental tools of subordinate groups in society" (Rappaport, 2005, p 38). This, I suggest, follows the notion of strategic essentialization and self-essentialization (Ramos, 1998, 2001; Walsh, 2002; Whitten, NE, Jr, 2008), as a political but also individual social subaltern tool. Rappaport discusses indigenous discourse on cultural difference as delimited in relation to specific historical moments, and so a political tool constitutive of the struggle for cultural revitalization and political sovereignty (Rappaport, 2005, p 39). Rappaport reveals a complex and heterogeneous interaction through which dominant essentializing discourse is consciously rearticulated, creating a continued space for sustaining relative autonomy, and describes this as intrinsic to the process of constructing 'intercultural utopias' (Rappaport, 2005, p39).

For Rappaport, the construction of 'intercultural utopias' is an intrinsically heterogeneous and collaborative production of 'intellectual work' (Rappaport, 2005, p 10). This builds on Gramsci's definition of intellectual workers not only as that conducted by 'traditional intellectuals' in powerful sectors of society such as academia, but also by 'organic intellectuals' (Rappaport, 2005) whether themselves from subordinate groups of society or in relationship with these groups (Rappaport, 2005, p 10). For Rappaport, this collaborative production of

intellectual work is constitutive to, and a crucial element of the indigenous organization's construction of 'a native political ideology' (Rappaport, 2005, p 15). The notion of intercultural utopias as stated by Rappaport: "not only maintains existing cultures but also creates new ones within the struggle of hegemony" (Rappaport, 2005, p 5). The construction of intercultural utopias³⁰ therefore is to be understood as a political, heterogeneous and collaborative process of intellectual work, in order to imagine a space of equality in the interaction between difference. The construction of intercultural utopias is a mechanism for challenging the reproduction of existing hierarchical relationships and structures. Significantly, Rappaport identifies the 'cultural worker' as a type of organic intellectual not simply by assuming a subaltern subjective position but in the appropriation of a transgressive subjective position. According to Rappaport, the cultural worker recognizes herself as an 'inappropriate other' (Minh-Ha, 1991); a constant, deliberate and critical transgressor of an essentialized identity. The inappropriate other is an individual that is conscious of transgressing, using both dominant and subaltern discourses (Rappaport, 2005, p 40-43).

I interpret the notion of an 'inappropriate other', theoretically as an empowered subaltern subjectivity. Later in this chapter I develop the argument that it is this notion, which frames the conceptualization of the role of the teacher in the classroom as part of the local community, integral to advancing the local political project. It is worth, therefore reflecting in some detail, on Rappaport ethnographic description of the 'inappropriate other' in relation to the Nasa cultural worker:

"For Nasa researchers, autoethnography involves a search for the "inside" of indigenous culture, the construction of a Nasa essence. It is anathema to academic anthropologists, "native" or otherwise. ... [For] Nasa cultural activists, ...there is – or perhaps better put, there should be – an inside, an untouched centre of Nasa culture...Distinguishing respectively, locations "on this side" and "on that side" of a border. The dichotomy is highly contextual, so that a place is

³⁰ I interpret Rappaport's intercultural utopias as corresponding to Whitten's 1976 notion of ethnogenesis, which is similarly a complex interaction of "cultural continuity and cultural change"; a means to sustaining 'meaningful ways of existence' as a consequence of the threat of cultural ethnocide (Whitten, 1976 and 1978). However, I consider that Rappaport places emphasis on the process of a complex collaboration and production of intellectual work.

“on this side” or “that side” only in relation to the temporal and topographic context of the speaker, creating a momentary and highly relational inside. However, a geographical and cultural barrier is effectively constituted... the inside is buried deep within Tierradentro itself (Rappaport, 2005 p. 35)”.

Rappaport here highlights the process of ‘autoethnography’ as a specific search for the ‘inside’ from the perspective of a Nasa cultural worker. Rappaport makes a clear distinction between the work of the anthropologist as an academic practitioner whether the individual carrying out this work is Nasa or not, and the cultural activist, working from the perspective of an integral particular political project. According to Rappaport, as a cultural worker, a Nasa cultural activist is involved in constructing a Nasa essence imagined as the inside. The production of cultural discourse as part of indigenous political discourse produces what Rappaport therefore defines as ‘a political native ideology’. In this way, the work of a cultural activist is inevitably bound with the notion of an essence enabled by the dynamic and highly contextual construction of boundaries (Rappaport, 2005, p 39).

It should be noted that ‘inside’ and ‘outside’ do not exist as materially or subjectively fixed, however, the dynamic construction of boundaries and the movement across boundaries is necessary for the cultural worker to establish a transgressive subjectivity and so take part in the intellectual work of constructing a political native ideology. I contend, therefore, the construction of boundaries and the reference to an original essence are co-constitutive. The dynamic representation of inside and outside enables the possibilities of assuming a transgressive subjective position and in this way, enables the construction of a cultural project as a politically-conscious activity.

According to Rappaport (2005), cultural workers are understood as ‘travellers’ that act to create a space of interlocution i.e. a ‘contact zone’ (Pratt, 1991) between hegemonic and subaltern discourses. For Rappaport: “Travellers are those who successfully bridge the frontier in the construction of a hybrid discourse that articulates metropolitan forms of expression with indigenous cultural forms (Pratt 1991 in Rappaport 2005, p 40).” Cultural workers can

therefore be understood as activists in the struggle to retain 'interpretive power' (Pratt, 1991) in relationship with ideological projects evolving through the lived experiences of marginalization.

4.2.1 *The successful traveller*

The notion of 'successful travellers' as individuals, who are able to stand on the frontier and bridge between 'inside' and 'outside' worlds, is something that I encountered often in conversation with members of Pumamaki. Nadia, the women elder whom I have mentioned in previous chapters, was someone who perhaps best expressed this notion of 'successful travellers', in mention of her adult sons and daughters. Most of Nadia's children have held significant positions in the community and beyond. All had lived and studied outside of the territory at some point while some had travelled and lived beyond the national border.

Before the local secondary school had been established in Pumamaki, Nadia had gone to great lengths to send her sons to school in the provincial capital, although this had involved significant expense and worry, as her children's well-being could be threatened by racial and other types of abuse by teachers and urban dwellers. Nadia explained with a heavy heart that it was necessary to take these risks in order for them to obtain an education, not only for their own sake but because it would benefit the whole community (Nadia, January 2014). Below I reproduce part of the conversation with Nadia, which demonstrates the importance of being able to travel whilst maintaining and reconstructing 'inside' boundaries:

Antonia – “¿Por qué no quedarse aquí en la comunidad y no ir al colegio? ¿No ir a la Universidad?”

Nadia – “Porque, es necesario también, porque como van a enfrentarse con estas cosas como ahora, están enfrentando, es necesario saber lo de allá también pues. Pero que no dejen lo de acá. Pero en cambio hay otras

personas que se integran solo lo de allá, lo de acá quieren olvidarse, en cambio mis hijos no están en eso, pues. Primero lo de aquí”.

Antonia – “¿Y cómo se mantiene lo de acá, cree?”

Nadia – “Se mantiene, viviendo como somos, cuando vienen de allá, como somos, como vivimos nosotros, porque los que ya se adaptan totalmente lo de allá, vienen aquí ya no quieren hacer nada, ni siquiera quieren hablar Kichwa, a los niños les enseñan solo Castellano y no saben Kichwa.” (Conversation with Nadia, January 2014, see annex 2 for translation)

Nadia here is implicitly assuming the existence of boundaries, by explicitly referring to an inside; ‘lo de aca’ (that of here) and an outside, ‘lo de alla’ (that of over there). In other words, Nadia’s description directly links to the above description by Rappaport of Nasa cultural workers describing a geographical centre. Though a social construct, the geographical displacement of moving into the politically-recognized territory of Pumamaki, is indeed felt as a physical boundary, experienced by moving from the urban sector, leaving the road and commerce behind and travelling up river. However, as Nadia indicates, there is more to this crossing than a mere physical displacement. Nadia reflects that the danger lies in that the physical crossing of the boundary between ‘inside’ and ‘outside’ implies the risk of a permanent departure of identity. For Nadia, the risk of losing a ‘true’ identity often occurs when people go and live outside the territorial boundary and adopt an external identity. In the case of her sons, she states, they travel ‘without forgetting’ that is ‘knowing that what is important is remembering the inside’.

The idea of knowing what is important, and that this refers to a physical ‘inside’, implies a deliberate and active process of reinterpretation. In this sense, Nadia’s sons, now currently members of Pumamaki’s political leadership, form part of what Rappaport identifies as the ‘multiplicity of organic intellectuals in indigenous organizations’. This multiplicity, as Rappaport highlights, not only involves those individuals that identify as directly belonging to an ‘authentic’ inside, but also

those of external identity, such as collaborators engaged with indigenous organizations and in some cases traditional intellectuals such as academics. In the case of Pumamaki, as I briefly described, a wide and dynamic network of collaborators has been developed, at the local, national and international levels.

4.2.2 Production of a cultural project

In 2003, the political organization of Pumamaki, in collaboration with national and international anthropologists and other experts, elaborated a formal written document outlining Pumamaki's 'Plan de Vida'³¹ (Life Plan). This document can be considered a strategic tool to negotiate relative control and therefore, autonomy, over this legally- recognized ancestral territory. This document contrasts with central government development plans that circumscribe different forms of land use, including oil exploitation for this region.

Prior to the production of the formal 'Plan de Vida' a member of Pumamaki's political leadership formally articulated the concept 'Sumak Kawsay' (good living) in a short article³² published in 2002. More recently, in 2014, a published anthology³³, reflecting the contentious debate over the appropriation of the term 'Sumak Kawsay' into mainstream politics, included an edited version of Pumamaki's 'Plan de Vida'. This article is represented as an articulation of the term Sumak Kawsay from the perspective of indigenous practice. Pumamaki is represented as an area where there is a thriving political discourse, a space engaged in a continuous struggle to sustain relative territorial autonomy. This is evidenced in the extract reproduced below:

³¹ Pumamaki (2003) *Pumamaki Sumak Kawsayta Nawpakman Katina Killka*. El libro de la vida de Pumamaki para defender nuestro futuro. Territorio Autonomia de la Nacion Originaria del Pueblo Kichwa de Pumamaki, Ecuador.

³² Viteri, C. 2002. *Vision Indigena del desarrollo en la Amazonia*. Polis, Revista de la Univesdidad Bolivariana, 1(3), 1-6. Viteri C. 2003 *Sumak Kausai. Una respuesta viable al desarrollo*. Quito: Universidad Politecnica Salesiana, (tesis de licenciatura). The article is considered an important source by NGOs, environmental activists and academics, for interpreting and promoting the conceptualization of Sumak Kawsay as representing an alternative vision of development from an indigenous cosmovision. For an in-depth discussion, see Altmann, P., 2013. Good life as a social movement proposal for natural resource use: The indigenous movement in Ecuador. *Consilience: The Journal of Sustainable Development*, 10(1), pp.59-71.

³³ Pumamaki (2014) en Hidalgo-Capitan A-L et al. (eds). 2014. *Antologia del Pensamiento Indigenista Ecuatoriano sobre Sumak Kawsay*, Huelva & Cuenca: FIUCUHU, pp. 77-102

“Muchas veces, en estos últimos siglos, han intentado someternos y, con ello, obligarnos a renunciar a nuestra sachá, al poder de gobernar nuestra vida. Cada vez que lo han hecho, han obtenido de nosotros una respuesta de dignidad, repudio y resistencia. Y hoy, cuando el gobierno central pretende imponernos nuevos proyectos de explotación petrolera [...], no es la excepción.” (Pumamaki, 2014 p 79)

“Many times in the last centuries, they have tried to subordinate us, and with this force us to give up our ‘sacha’ (forest), the power of governing our own lives. Every time they have done this, they have received from us a reply of dignity, repudiation and resistance. And today when the central government intends to impose new oil exploitation projects [...], this is not the exception’.

Framed within the dominant discourse on political rights for cultural recognition and self-governance, this extract explicitly identifies oppositional agency. Oppositional agency is referred to in terms of the ability to act as an ‘inside agent’, simultaneously highlighting the lack of recognition of this by outside actors. For example, in the phrase ‘han intendado someternos’ (they have tried to subordinate us) an imposition by ‘them on us’ is established. This imposition is not accepted and actively refuted stating; ‘han obtenido de nosotros una respuesta de dignidad, repudio y resistencia’ (they have obtained from us a response of dignity, repudiation and resistance). I consider this discursive framing reflects a conscious intention to challenge existing power relations by distinguishing between ‘inside versus outside’ agency. I suggest that the failure of outside actors to recognize the full existence of agency of the people of Pumamaki, i.e. ‘inside agency’ (which extends to all indigenous communities regionally), forms a key part of Pumamaki’s expression of a native political ideology, produced discursively, both in written text and orally. The importance of ‘inside agency’ is articulated as being fundamental to the aspirations and educational objectives of Pumamaki:

“Conforme a nuestra experiencia e historia, la educación y la formación suponen también organización, en un doble sentido. Por un lado, previa a la ejecución de

cualquier programa de educación (o salud, o comunicación), este debe ser organizado dentro de un sistema coherente en el cual hayamos definido la finalidad buscada y cuales son los pasos que vamos a plantear para conseguir estos objetivos. Y por otro lado, la formación, la educación y la capacitación deben girar en torno a la defensa y la consolidación de nuestro territorio. Por esa razón, organización política y programas de educación van juntos.” (Pumamaki, 2014, p 100)

“As our experience and history have shown us, both education and formation imply organization, in a double sense. On the one hand, prior to the execution of any education (health or communication) program, this must be organized within a coherent system in which we have defined our objectives and the steps that need to be taken to achieve them. On the other hand, formation, education and training must be in relation to the defence and consolidation of our territory. For this reason, political organization and educational programs go together.”

The discourse which this community positions itself with, clearly identifies the importance of education as an instrument of power. The statement is a declaration of taking part, as a legitimate and principal political actor in the education process within the territorial space. In other words, it is a statement of community entitlement to take the lead role over formal education by establishing what should be the relative balance of power between ‘inside and outside’ authorities. A further extract highlights how this claim to internal agency extends equally to the production of knowledge:

“La visión colonial actual nos trata de convertir en “comunidades tradicionales”. Distintos organismos y documentos internacionales se refieren a nuestros conocimientos como algo separado de nuestros proyectos políticos o económicos” (Pumamaki, Sumak Kawsay, 2014, p 79).

“The current colonial vision has tried to convert us into “traditional communities”. Various international organisms and documents refer to our knowledge as something separate to our political and economic projects.”

This extract explicitly refers to the re-inscription of knowledge through powerful institutions in the context of unequal relations of power. The statement challenges the reproduction of an epistemological hierarchy by decontextualizing knowledge production as part of the continuous actualization of a social and political project. The statement recognizes the categorization of Pumamaki as 'traditional', in all senses of the word, as imposed by dominant society. The implication is that colonial hierarchy is reproduced by positioning the knowledge of 'traditional' communities as culturally specific, in contrast to the non-cultural specificity of knowledge of dominant social institutions. What is being stated in the extract above, it that dominant institutions consider their own knowledge as universal, whereas the community's knowledge is understood as culturally bounded, and therefore implicitly inferior. The explicit recognition in this text, that the discourse of powerful institutions positions the knowledge of 'traditional' communities' as something static - and most importantly – as something that is disassociated from the communities' own political and social practices, I suggest reveals a strong correlation with the critique from decolonial theoretical discourse on the marginalization of subaltern knowledge production.

As discussed in chapter 1, from a decolonial theoretical discourse, the enunciation of knowledge from a dominant subject position claims authority by ignoring its own socio-political specificity, denying difference and masking the existence of epistemological pluralities (Walsh, 2009). A decolonial discourse claims that dominant society positions a western epistemology as universal, masking the intrinsic relationship between power and knowledge, projecting cultural specificity only towards the 'other' (De Sousa Santos, 2008; Mignolo, 2001; Quijano, 2000; Walsh, 2002). As an example of the formal production of Pumamaki's intellectual workers, the 'Plan de Vida' document, explicitly makes references to a continued epistemological coloniality as a direct threat to self-determination. Considering that formal schooling embodies the legitimacy of the state by reproducing dominant discursive practices as 'authorized knowledge', it can be understood, that the aim of creating a community curriculum functions at the discursive level to challenge the hegemonic reproductive function of education within the particular territorial space of Pumamaki. I suggest that the work of organic intellectuals is vital to the construction of a local political

educational objective by producing a political discourse that shares the definition of boundaries as predicated by 'lo nuestro', constructing not only a geographical territory but also a local cultural project.

Though part of a national education system governed by national policy, Pumamaki's school system reflects the continuing demand for recognition of internal agency, which has mobilized and benefitted from developing collaborative partnerships with diverse external actors. The particular case of Pumamaki, is therefore an example whereby a local socio-political organization has developed a political discourse as part of a native political ideology, of which education is an intrinsic element. In line with Rappaport's notion of creating intercultural utopias, a native political ideology expressed in the texts above functions in two ways: On the one hand, directed towards the 'outside' demanding recognition of 'inside' representation, but also, and significantly, to enable the construction of a local cultural project. The school is therefore not a separate aspect of Pumamak's historical struggle but is conceptualized at a discursive level as embodying a conscious desire to re-articulate boundaries to ensure possibilities for achieving relative autonomy and dynamic construction of an alternative political project. Pumamaki's stated objectives of implementing 'una educacion propia' (our own education) are therefore integral to the construction of a local political project, conceptualizing the school ideally as a space of interlocution between 'inside and outside' knowledge as of equal worth.

Therefore, it is important to further investigate the reasons for the dramatic shift in outlook that was expressed in Pumamki from when I originally visited in 2010 to later in 2014 when I began my ethnographic research. There was a clear contrast from an earlier consensus that the community was 'embarking on a new era' by exercising control over their own education, to a later sense of frustration over the inability to deliver this vision. The changes in the national scenario with regards to the implementation of a standardized education policy, and more broadly, a deteriorating political relationship between traditional indigenous organizations and central government, can in part explain the highly tense atmosphere I encountered during my research, as I explore below.

4.3 Implications of changing education policy on the ground

One of the most direct effects of changes in educational policy was the implementation of standard teacher evaluation tests. Beginning in the urban sectors in 2010, by 2013 and during the period of my research, the programme had been rolled out to the rural areas so that all teachers working in the public sector had sat the standard teaching evaluation tests at least once³⁴. In the particular case of Pumamaki, none of the teachers had achieved a high enough score during the period of my research to pass these various standards tests, including in the Kichwa language. I shall refer to the effects of the standard Kichwa test in more detail further on.

The tension, frustration and uncertainty felt by these teachers, became increasingly palpable in the general working environment, and overall, morale was low among the teaching body. Whilst a small number of the teachers of Pumamaki welcomed the new policies on the grounds that these policies were

³⁴ These standard test, where formalized as a legal requirement via the Ministerial Agreement No. 0249-13 de 31, July 2013 (Ministerio de Educación, 2013). Stating: “la Autoridad Educativa Nacional expidió la *“Normativa para obtener la calidad de elegible y del concurso de méritos y oposición para llenar vacantes de docentes en el Magisterio Nacional”* Art 5 specifies: Para obtener la elegibilidad, el aspirante a ocupar una vacante de docente deberá superar la prueba psicométrica y la prueba estandarizada de conocimientos específicos.

The psychometric test evaluates the individual’s suitability as a pass or a fail “apropiado o no apropiado”. For the standardized test of individuals specific knowledge, the pass mark is 70% or above. Art.8 goes on to state that as part of the specific knowledge test for those teachers eligible for intercultural bilingual institutions, is a sufficiency language test for the respective pueblo or nationality teaching in. The pass mark is also 70% or above. I reproduce the exact wording: “**Art. 8.- Elegibilidad para aspirantes que desean participar en concursos de méritos y oposición para llenar vacantes en instituciones educativas interculturales bilingües.-** Los aspirantes que deseen ocupar una vacante en establecimientos que ofertan educación intercultural bilingüe, deberán demostrar suficiencia en el idioma del pueblo o nacionalidad correspondiente, para lo cual deberán aprobar una prueba estandarizada, con un puntaje igual o mayor al setenta por ciento (70%). Dicha calificación será considerada únicamente en la participación de concursos de méritos y oposición en las instituciones educativas interculturales bilingües y este resultado no se tomará en cuenta para la fase de oposición. A más de aprobar la prueba estandarizada que demuestre la suficiencia en el idioma del pueblo o nacionalidad, los aspirantes deben aprobar la prueba de conocimientos específicos en por lo menos una especialidad.

necessary to raise teaching standards, the vast majority were critical. Those who failed the tests, expressed their concerns and objections amidst feelings of embarrassment and *anger*, arguing that they did not relate to, or take account of, their own knowledge and experience. On the other hand, teachers who were supportive of the changes had gained a relatively higher level of educational certification. The concerns of these teachers related mostly to the limited opportunities for advancement, which they felt lead to stagnation, from working in a rural sector. They believed that a points-based system would provide greater possibilities for progression and higher salaries. However, independently of the range of expressed views, at the time my ethnographic research was completed in late 2015, only a small number of teachers had passed some of the tests, while none of the thirty-two teachers had succeeded in passing all of the relevant assessments. The impact on their terms and conditions at that particular time resulted in the more experienced teachers managing to retain permanent contracts, but the terms and conditions of employment were subject to possible revision; the remaining teachers (approximately half) were employed under short-term contracts and were more uncertain of their long-term prospects.

The majority of the teachers at Pumamaki considered themselves to be at a real disadvantage under the new points-based system in comparison to their urban counterparts, principally on account of having less access to teacher-training workshops. In the medium- to long-term, achieving certification and gaining points through official training workshops will be a necessary requirement for progressing through the various teaching levels with corresponding increases in salary. For these teachers, their attendance at workshops incurred additional travel, food and accommodation costs which were not covered by central government. In theory, the Ministry of Education would provide two flights a year to enable them to travel into Puyo on official business, but as the teachers explained, in reality these flights either did not materialize or were insufficient to cover the number of teachers and trips that were really needed.

Indeed, a general complaint expressed concerned the overall level of disruption from regularly having to travel to Puyo in order to comply with new bureaucratic requirements. Under the new regulations, daily registration of attendance,

children's grades and class teaching plans, were required to be regularly updated through the official webpage. Although Pumamaki does have access to the internet via satellite, the service was not reliable and could not be used to upload documents onto the official website, meaning that all paperwork had to be completed by individual teachers in the urban centre of Puyo, usually in an internet cafe. During the ten visits and more I made to Pumamaki, there was never an occasion when at least some of the teaching body did not have to travel to Puyo at short notice. On more than two occasions, teachers returned early because the particular event they were requested to attend had been postponed, or the official webpage had crashed, and timetables had been altered. The overall effect was a serious loss of contact hours in the classroom and mounting personal expenses for teachers, who not only had to cover their own costs but also had to pay for supply staff - normally a graduate of a relevant subject - to cover their teaching lessons. As a result, these teachers expressed that though the education reforms had increased teachers' salaries, in real terms their income was considerably less than it had been before the reforms.

If there is no improvement in the terms of employment of rural teachers, the result will be a significant disparity between rural and urban teacher conditions. The chief result of the current standardized tests and bureaucratic procedures as evidenced in the case of Pumamaki, will likely not result in improvements to overall teaching standards, but will instead create a two-tier education system that is strongly linked to geographical location. The case of Pumamaki reveals how changes in education policies in most cases are disproportionately affecting these types of rural locations that are already at a disadvantage in relation to urban areas. This situation is compounded when taking into consideration the impact of Government policy to transfer funding to large 'millennium' flagship schools.

4.3.1 School infrastructure

A major effect on education in Pumamaki, was the systematic reduction in the number of school institutions, concentrating resources instead in the

amalgamation of existing schools into new, larger units. During the period of my research, one of the primary schools had been forced to close and at least two more of the outlining primary schools were under threat of closure. According to the president of Pumamaki and also the regional education director in Puyo, officials from the Ministry of Education were insisting that the current legislation made it necessary for several of the primary and the secondary schools to merge together before funding could be released for structural improvements. This condition in itself created major tension between the community leadership and government officials, against what they saw as an uncompromising imposition of standard infrastructure; moreover, within the community there were additional difficulties over allocating a suitable piece of land for the new school. According to the local leadership, the ministry regulations imposed a requirement of a larger piece of land for the new infrastructure than currently in use by any of the centrally-located schools. It is important to note, that all land within the territory whilst legally under collective global ownership, does have specific family group use under complex rules. Conversing with various community elders of the central community, they expressed concern about the lack of available land for a centrally-located school unit, since the land was already in family use. Moreover, many families not living in the central area had concerns for their children's well-being over the increased travelling distance and environmental risks, particularly during periods of flooding.

Finally, the community leadership was, and continues to be, firmly against the 'fussing' of the schools, especially in relation to a standard infrastructure and form of governance proposed by the Ministry, since it is contrary to their own established political project. However, this has resulted in the ministry of education withholding badly-needed funds for basic structural improvements to the existing schools. During my research, the majority of the schools did not have a functioning toilet and many of the classrooms were in need of basic renovations. The secondary school was particularly affected, with no toilet facilities at all. This meant that around one hundred adolescents and young adults were obliged to use the surrounding forested area, potentially creating a serious health hazard. Two classrooms at the secondary school were constructed simply of a straw roof under which the students sat, and the white board was

propped up against a couple of chairs. None of the schools had electricity in the classrooms, which meant that during the heavy and frequent rains the writing on the white board was illegible, even from the middle of the classroom. When the rains came, lessons were interrupted, as it was not possible to hear anything above the noise of the rain pelting down on the laminated metal roof.

The effects at the local level from changes in education policy therefore raises serious concerns of a further entrenchment of a two-tiered education system, something the Government had asserted the new education policies were designed to overcome. The gains already achieved from the development of a local, professionalized teaching body were under threat on account of standardized evaluation processes that now classified these teachers as inadequate. Whilst it would be foolish to propose that the Ministry of Education should have no means of evaluating the adequacy of teaching standards, it is highly questionable to do this from a distance through a standard format without considering the highly diverse contexts in which education takes place. Teachers were not being evaluated on the basis of their classroom practice and experience as befitted the particular context and needs of the students. Professional self-esteem was being undermined and this in turn was having a direct and increasingly significant impact on teacher performance. The deterioration of basic school infrastructure and what can only be described as an abandonment of responsibility for maintaining it, raises serious concerns and could be considered a violation of children's rights in Pumamaki to have equal access to a secure school environment. Therefore, whilst public funds had significantly increased for public education nationally, from my field research in this rural location, the investment was not available as the community were not prepared to submit to conditions that were unacceptable to them, for quite credible and compelling reasons within the local context. Over the year-and-a-half that I carried out my ethnographic research in Pumamaki, I observed how the implementation of a top-down, highly-standardized education policy was evidently having a negative effect on the teaching and learning process at a local level.

However, I consider it is also important to contextualize the impact of current policy changes in relation to established national teaching practice. I therefore

suggest that while the direct effects of education policy are clearly evident, I contend that the level of frustration expressed in Pumamaki in turn reflects a deeper and long-term tension of defining and demonstrating difference.

4.4 Demonstrating intercultural education: The gap between discourse and practice

As discussed previously, I reflected that 2010 might have marked a crucial moment in time, as the breaking point in the implementation of an intercultural and bilingual education, based on the imperative of 'effectively' demonstrating cultural specificity. I shall analyse how the year 2010 from a local perspective marks both an internal expectation in terms of delivering 'una educacion propia' (our own education) as well as growing pressure over having to demonstrate cultural specificity and educational 'quality', in line with a national drive towards educational standardization.

As I have discussed above, implicit within local discourse is the visualization that teachers from the community should act as key agents for re-creating school as a space to legitimize local knowledge whilst also accessing and interpreting 'official' knowledge. I develop the argument that this ideal, following a decolonial theoretical framing, conceptualizes teachers as empowered individuals from a subaltern subjective position. Within the context of local discourse, teachers are perceived as guides who can show students how to become 'successful travellers' between 'lo nuestro' and 'lo de afuera'. As a consequence, a major tension emerged within the community from the leadership's perception that the teaching body had failed to elaborate 'un curriculum propio' (an own curriculum) that would deliver both 'lo nuestro' (what is ours) and 'lo de afuera' (what is from outside). In other words, it was an exasperation caused by the apparent inability of teachers to fill the gap between discourse and practice by assuming an empowered subaltern subjective position. For their part, teachers expressed relative disempowerment and deep frustration as to how and what exactly they were expected to deliver.

From a conversation I had with one of the most experienced and committed of primary school teachers (Mercedes) regarding *nuestra educación* (our education) she expressed the frustration she felt after one assembly meeting:

“Quieren que hagamos nuestra educación, pero si me dicen que hacer con gusto yo haría, solo que no sé qué tengo que hacer. ¿Tengo que llevarles a la chakra? ¿Cómo, y si les pica una serpiente? ¿Necesito canoitas, necesito canastas, necesito barro, pero acaso vienen y nos ayudan con eso? No. Nos exigen y quieren que hagamos ...todo nosotros.” (Mercedes, January 2014).

“They want us to carry out our own education, but if they tell me what to do, gladly I’ll do it, only I don’t know what to do. Have I got to take them to the chakra? How? And what if they get bitten by a snake? I need small canoes, baskets, clay, but do they come and help with this. No. They simply make demands and expect us to do it all ourselves.”

The pronoun, ‘they’, here is being used in an overall sense, meaning ‘the community’ and perhaps more specifically, the political leadership, but it could also be extended to mean ‘those representing the educational authorities and experts in general’. In various assemblies that I was invited to, and also in conversation with some members of the leadership, as well as various elders, a commonly-voiced concern was that the teachers did not implement ‘lo nuestro’ (ours) in the classroom and only taught, ‘lo de afuera’ (that of outside). The accusation was usually in relation to teachers having mixed allegiance because they received a fixed salary from outside, i.e. from the Ministry of Education. However, three women elders I interviewed expressed a contrary view that teachers needed to gain more experience from outside and they voiced some concern that they lacked proper training in comparison to urban teachers. Whatever the case may be, from the teachers’ perspective, as Mercedes aptly expresses above, the onus was unfairly being placed on them, to fulfil ‘una educación propia’ (our own education) by demonstrating ‘lo nuestro’ (what is ours) with insufficient, if at all any support. Of significance, which I shall explore further in this chapter and develop fully in the following, is Mercedes’ reference to not knowing exactly what she should be delivering in terms of ‘lo nuestro’.

A specific complaint that was raised by teachers and leadership alike in terms of the difficulties of delivering 'una educación propia' (our own education) was the consequence of the loss of a draft document outlining a local curriculum that had been drawn up at the end of an in-situ teacher-training process. From various interviews with teachers and members of the political leadership, I was told this document had been misplaced by a previous community leader and there were no copies either in hard copy or digital format to be found. I found the upheaval this had clearly caused somewhat puzzling and raised the question with various teachers as to why a new version had not yet been drawn up, considering that most of the individuals, both teachers and leadership participating in the original process continued to be present. In other words, why had they simply not re-drawn a new document, and/or why was a formal document seemingly so essential for implementing 'an own education'? My polite but perhaps not-so-subtle questioning received no direct answers. The absence of this document continued to be referred to by teachers and leadership alike as a key impediment to implementing a local curriculum. Some teachers declared they would need the support of the leadership to form a new working group and, furthermore, both teachers and leadership stated that responding to external pressures did not leave them with any time for engaging in this sort of work.

From my own observations, these statements were clearly true, teachers were, at the time of my research, under enormous pressure to comply with external education policy regulations, as discussed above, while members of the leadership were having to contend with serious political and legal conflicts with central government. However, I interpret the importance placed on the lack of a formal document for developing a local curriculum reflected a deeper underlying tension. As I have been developing throughout, there was obvious anxiety within the community regarding a twofold need of ensuring the school continued to function at a local level so that they could meet the established citizenship criteria while simultaneously demonstrating difference in relation to the claim for recognition of particular cultural rights. The school locally must function to achieve both these aims to sustaining a balance between 'outside' and 'inside' power relationships for relative territorial autonomy. This, I suggest, explains the

concerns of both the teachers and community leadership as to how citizenship criteria and difference should be demonstrated.

On the surface, specific cultural characteristics including language specificity, concepts such as 'indigenous cosmovision' and associated practices are officially accepted (as) citizenship criteria to be developed within IBE, apparently closing the gap between discourse and practice. However, cultural difference in this way appears static and is therefore a mechanism of the essentialization of difference. Locally, implicit within the community's discourse of the ideal function of the school, is the re-construction of 'inside/outside' boundaries materialized in terms of 'lo nuestro' (that which is ours) against 'lo de afuera' in the classroom. Official discourse and local discourse therefore assumes the materialization of difference into school content.

The tendency of both these discourses is to essentialize culture; nevertheless it is important to recognize that they are being articulated from different subjective positions within unequal power relations, similarly to that described by Rappaport in the case of the Nasa. Implicit within local discourse, is the need for the school to function as a space to re-construct 'inside/outside' boundaries as part of a wider political and cultural project which needs to be materialized into a specific curriculum and demonstrated as part of teaching content in terms of 'lo nuestro' (that which is ours). The tension between these two discursive practices, that from the top-down and that articulated locally concerning cultural distinction, reflects opposing political objectives over formal education, aggravated when needing to be transformed into demonstrable classroom practice.

4.4.1 What is 'lo nuestro'?

As part of my commitment to ensure the research was relevant at a local level, I conducted several workshops with the teachers and the community leadership. Overall, this was perhaps the hardest part of my research and led me to reflect on the disparity between my own interests and those of the teachers and other members of Pumamaki. I expected the results of my research would lead to a

critical reflection of a local education process that could be shared and used by local actors, as they saw fit. My intention was that these workshops with local teachers and community leaders of Pumamaki, would create a participatory space for collective discussion that would assist in the implementation of a relevant intercultural bilingual education by revealing inherent tensions and difficulties. Also, and significantly for myself, I hoped to open up my own analysis and interpretations so that they could be queried before I had fully completed this process as an individual researcher.

As I came to realise, my research could only be accepted as being of any use depending on whether anything I had to say chimed with the pragmatic needs, problems and solutions these local actors were facing at a particular moment in time. This did not, for the most part, involve a concern for underlying tensions and long-term issues, or at least, this was not the situation at the time of my research. Whilst it was the case that the local leadership were interested enough to request specific reports from my research, of which I developed and delivered three, further interest in participating in what the teachers had swiftly declared as 'yet another workshop', was minimal. The workshops had been agreed at the outset in the general assembly as part of my conditions for conducting research. This had two implications, the first was my obligation of organizing the workshops and secondly the participation of those involved, i.e. teachers and leadership. However even the actual logistics of convening and organizing the workshops created tensions. It became apparent to me that whilst teachers were by and large happy to discuss most issues with me directly, they were reluctant to take this further to an open discussion. Also, I later came to reflect that the questions, format and objectives of the workshops, were clearly positioned from my own subjectivity, straddled between being an 'academic researcher' and an a 'activist'. My aspiration of beginning a process of collective reflection over a longer-term educational process, based on the presentation of my research findings, was very clearly not felt as a priority, or it was perhaps viewed by local actors as something that was beyond their own responsibilities and possibilities for engagement, at that moment in time.

What became clear at the beginning of the workshop was that the teachers expected, and I deduced, wished for was the typical format of workshops. I have observed and participated in many 'typical' workshops before and understood this meant participation of attendees is superficial, and it is the person leading the workshop who has the authoritative knowledge to pass on. It became clear that the teachers wanted me to provide examples of teaching methods and didactic materials to 'solve' what they perceived are their current teaching problems. This was clearly not something I could deliver, since this was not what my research involved. Nevertheless, I was able to conduct two workshops with the participation of more than half the teaching body as well as one workshop with members of the community's leadership. In the event, the workshops did lead to an open discussion, revealing internal tensions between the leadership and teaching body, and if only in a minor way, it provided some insight into the different perspectives between these two sets of actors. Moreover, the workshops provided me with a deeper understanding of the conceptualization of 'lo nuestro' versus 'lo de afuera' from the perspective of local teachers and the difficulties of translating this into classroom practice.

The specific objectives of the workshops, from my own viewpoint, were twofold: Firstly, to enable critical reflection to take place on the current political educational context affecting Pumamaki. My aim in this respect was to provide specific information and share my analysis over changes in education policy in terms of national and local current and likely consequences. Secondly, I aimed to explore the underlying tensions over the difficulties as they were perceived and expressed, for implementing 'una educacion propio' (our own education). My intention was to reflect on to what extent the oppositional terms in relation to 'lo nuestro' and 'lo de afuera' could be translated into classroom practice. Below I summarize and analyse the group work of the second workshop I conducted with the teachers, reflecting on the definitions of 'lo nuestro' and 'lo de afuera' and the implications this had for classroom practice. Nineteen teachers participated, working in five groups of five-to-six individuals. I started by discussing my analysis of the local educational objective and described some of the tensions I had observed and had heard expressed locally over teaching 'lo nuestro'. I therefore posed the following questions:

- 1) What is the purpose of teaching 'lo nuestro'? What is 'lo nuestro' in formal schooling?
- 2) What is the purpose of teaching 'lo de afuera'? What is 'lo de afuera' in formal schooling?

Table 5 - Summary of the answers on 'lo nuestro' were the following:

What is the purpose of 'lo nuestro'	What is 'lo nuestro' in formal schooling
To strengthen and not lose our cultural identity To maintain our language To potentialize our wisdom and knowledge To put into practice our way of living To live in harmony with nature To have harmonious values	Our 'Plan de Vida' (Life Plan) Kichwa, our language Sacha Runa Yachay (Knowledge of the forest person) Our stories, legends, crafts, etc. The autonomy to make all our decisions by consensus The territory

(Teachers workshop, Pumamaki, October 2015)

Concerning the purpose of 'lo nuestro', the teachers' views here correspond directly with the need to sustain cultural specificity. These characteristics were described in relation to distinctive identity, language and practices, but also in relation to legitimizing distinct forms of knowledge, wisdom and values. The latter would appear to correspond with the notion of a different way of knowing, and so, a different epistemology. This different way of knowing appeared to be qualified in terms of greater relational harmony with the world. I suggest this closely reflects the production of a cultural project as part of the construction of a 'native political ideology' reconstructing cultural specific boundaries.

Translating 'lo nuestro' into formal school practice, was seen as: 'using our language' as well as specific cultural practices, identified in this case with 'our stories, legends and crafts'. These aspects of cultural specificity would appear to be relatively tangible, in other words, relatively easily defined and demonstrable. Language specificity to all intents and purposes is a demonstrable cultural

characteristic, however, as I explore further, this is not as clear-cut as it may at first appear. On the other hand, 'lo nuestro' is also stated in correspondence as 'our way of living' and 'Sacha Runa Yachay' (Knowledge of the Forest Person) etc. that are not tangible characteristics that are easily defined and demonstrable. Teachers also specifically refer to 'lo nuestro' as territory and the exercise of political autonomy within a process of consensual decision-making, again not easily materialized into classroom content. These later elements are expressed in the document of 'Plan de Vida' - the formalized document outlining a local political development plan, mentioned above. It can be understood, that these forms of identifying 'lo nuestro' appear to correspond with a decolonial theoretical framing, away from an essentialization of cultural specificity and perhaps towards a critical intercultural education process.

I believe that the pressure felt by teachers as described above, relates to having to demonstrate both prescribed cultural specificity (i.e. standardized nationalities language use, and that named as 'nationalities cosmovision') and an epistemological equality between 'western' and 'ancestral' ways of knowing in the classroom. This becomes more apparent when contrasted with the conceptualization of 'lo de afuera' (that of outside). Below is a summary of the answers the groups provided to the same questions about 'lo de afuera' (that of outside):

Table 6 - Summary on what and for 'lo de afuera' in the classroom

What is the purpose of 'lo de afuera'	What is 'lo de afuera' in formal schooling
To be able to relate with the rest of the people	Spanish language, Spanish as the language of intercultural relations
To know another culture	English language
Acquire the ability to use English and Spanish	The new knowledge
Acquire outside knowledge	Scientific knowledge
Acquire scientific knowledge	Subject knowledge
	Technology and communication

Enable systematization Enable the documentation of our people's knowledge/wisdom Job security	
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(Teachers workshop, Pumamaki, October 2015)

Again 'lo de afuera' is identified as culturally-specific, making a direct correlation between language and culture. Spanish is named as the language of intercultural relations, following terms established in the Ecuadorian Constitution of 2008 and the education law of 2011³⁵. The link is made between language and culture in terms of the function of 'lo de afuera', as the ability to relate with other cultures. Here 'lo de afuera' not only refers to Spanish as the socially-dominant national language but also as something on the outside. I suggest this is because the acquisition of English is regarded and experienced as a further marker of social status.

I contend that something comparable can be said, in relation to how knowledge is categorized. 'Outside' knowledge is stated as being related to the concept of modernity, i.e. 'new', 'scientific', 'technological', etc. Also 'outside' knowledge in school is explicitly referred to as subject knowledge. However as discussed above, the function of this essentializing discourse needs to be explored in context. I suggest, how teachers express 'lo nuestro' in relation to 'lo de afuera' responds to the need to create the school also as a space to construct an inside, in correspondence with a particular cultural project. The purpose of teaching 'lo de afuera' is therefore related to legitimizing 'lo nuestro', whereby the school is envisioned as the embodiment of a boundary, whereby the school represents the physical space of encounter of 'inside and outside' knowledge, in terms acceptable for continued social cohesion.

³⁵ The Constitution of 2008 recognizes three official languages, Spanish, Kichwa and Shuar. Spanish is considered the official language nationally except when the dominant language of a particular location is that of a particular ethnic nationality. In this case Spanish becomes the language of intercultural relations. In locations where Spanish is dominant, Kichwa and Shuar are considered languages of intercultural relations. This has meant that all official documents written and published in Spanish also have to be translated into the other two official languages, Kichwa Shuar. Other ethnic languages were not declared official languages as demanded by CONAIE.

The relationship between 'inside and outside' knowledge is also expressed in pragmatic terms. For example, the acquisition of 'outside' knowledge and practices is expressed in relation to possibilities of systematizing and recording 'other peoples' knowledge/wisdom' (i.e. indigenous/local knowledge). In this way, the tools of outside are being ideally projected to grant equal status for recognizing inside. Not to be ignored is the expression of the need to demonstrate the acquisition of 'outside knowledge', in relation to the lived experience of being able to obtain 'outside' salaried jobs and professional certification through successful schooling. Of course, in reality this inside/outside dichotomy is questionable as not all salaried jobs take place geographically 'outside' the territory but also between and within the territory. In summary, I consider an essentializing cultural discourse ideally serves to position the school as the 'representative' of a state institution of authority, that demonstrably procures 'outside' knowledge, whilst simultaneously aimed to reach a balance with the need to sustain the construction and legitimization of an 'inside'.

A key question therefore is how is discourse translated into practice? In other words, how does, cultural specificity and the reconstruction of cultural boundaries become actualized in the classroom? And how does this reflect the real possibilities of finding a balance between 'lo nuestro' and 'lo de afuera' as a strategic political tool, in the situation where there continues to be a disparity in relations of power?

Here I shall reflect on one of the principal elements that has defined intercultural education in Ecuador, namely, language specificity. Another significant element of IBE relates to the notion of different epistemologies in terms of knowledge systems that I explore in the following chapter.

4.5 Language policy and language strategies in the classroom

As a long-established indigenous territory, Pumamaki can be viewed as an example of a relatively homogenous, social and cultural educational context, in contrast to what may be the case in an urban setting. As previously mentioned, the majority of students and teachers here strongly identify with the territorial

location of Pumamaki, stating their cultural identity as a person of Pumamaki. It is only when having to identify with a specific ethnic nationality that individuals of Pumamaki describe themselves as Amazonian Kichwas. This is a common experience described in ethnographic work, which demonstrates that reference to a particular identity can be seen as relative to different cultural/social context (Albó, 2004; King, 2001).

As discussed in the previous chapter, ethnic nationality within the national political scenario, demonstrates a strong tendency towards essentialization, linguistically and geographically bound to an 'original'. Pumamaki, in terms of national policy, is therefore politically understood as representing an indigenous territory of the Amazonian Kichwa nationality. In this way, language-planning policy as it is implemented through formal education specifies that Kichwa should be used as principal language of instruction in the classroom with Spanish as a second language:

“La lengua, es el medio de producción de la sabiduría, conocimientos, ciencia y tecnología. La educación intercultural bilingüe como fundamento lingüístico prevé el desarrollo de las lenguas de las nacionalidades como lengua oficial de educación, y el castellano como lengua de relación intercultural.

Las lenguas de las nacionalidades deben potencializarse, mediante el estudio fonológico, morfológico, sintáctico, semántico y pragmático buscando la normalización, y estandarización (Modelo del Sistema de Educación Intercultural Bilingüe, 2014, p 40)”

“Language is the medium of production of wisdom, knowledge, science and technology. Intercultural bilingual education on a linguistic basis understands the development of nationalities’ languages as the official language of education and Spanish as the language for intercultural relations.

The languages of nationalities must be promoted via phonological, morphological, syntactic, semantic and pragmatic study for their normalization and standardization”. (my own translation)

Education policy also establishes the following distribution for each respective language according to particular stage of formal education:

Educación infantil comunitaria	Inserción a los procesos semióticos	Fortalecimiento cognitivo afectivo, y psicomotriz	Desarrollo de las destrezas y técnicas de estudio	Procesos de aprendizaje investigativo	Bachillerato
100% Lengua de la nacionalidad	75% Lengua de la nacionalidad	50% Lengua de la nacionalidad	45% Lengua de la nacionalidad	40% Lengua de la nacionalidad	40% Lengua de la nacionalidad
	20% Lengua de relación intercultural	40% Lengua de relación intercultural	45% Lengua de relación intercultural	40% Lengua de relación intercultural	40% Lengua de relación intercultural
	5% Lengua extranjera	10% Lengua extranjera	10% Lengua extranjera	20% Lengua extranjera	20% Lengua extranjera

(Source: Modelo del Sistema de Educación Intercultural Bilingüe, 2013) Acuerdo Ministerial 0440-13, 2013)

The first column of the table above corresponds to pre-school and therefore is considered as non-formal schooling. For this stage the regulation stipulates the language used should correspond entirely to the language of the respective nationality. The second column corresponds to the early years of primary schooling conceptualized as the key period for ‘alphabetization’ when the language of instruction should comply with 75% use of the respective nationality, Spanish 20% and a foreign language 5%. From there, the time allocation for both Spanish and the indigenous language is roughly equivalent. This serves to project an ideal bilingual linguistic scenario of two separate languages, with the addition of a foreign language as a third language. The current MOSEIB of 2014 reproduces this same table with some minor changes in wording and a slight change in allocation within the second column, increasing use of the language of the respective ethnic nationality from 75% to 80% (MOSEIB, 2014, p 46). I would suggest that this increase in the percentage from 2013-2014 indicates the importance that placed on language use as a key measure of IBE. However, perhaps more importantly, it raises the question as to what exactly a ‘percentage’ represents in this context?

As outlined in the previous chapter, research on language use in the classroom has shown that contrary to established IBE policy, Spanish continued to be used as the dominant language of instruction, with only one hour a week of Kichwa language lessons (Martinez Novo, 2014; King, 2001; Contreras, 2010). What becomes evident therefore, is that although one of the key objectives of IBE in regard to linguistic cultural rights is that children should be educated in their respective 'mother tongue/native language', this is not being translated into classroom practice. The reasons given by researchers and IBE advocates though complex and multiple, as mentioned in the previous chapter, come down to insufficient funding and resources for appropriate development of educational material and teacher training (Garcia & Velasco, 2012; Cortina, Martinez Novo 2014; Montaluisa, 2008). It is important to note that while current education policy appears to (be attempting to) redress the problem of general lack of funding and appropriate levels of teacher training, it does so from a highly top-down approach. As already discussed, one element of this dominant ideology is the process of evaluating teachers' linguistic abilities in their 'mother tongue' through uniform testing methods. From my analysis, I argue the implications on the ground of linguistic policy, reinforces the conceptual limitation of a dualist notion of culture, historically underpinning notion of IBE education.

4.5.1 Kichwa or Spanish as the dominant language of instruction?

From my own observations of secondary school lessons in Pumamaki, and in line with other research findings, Spanish is evidently the dominant language of instruction in the classroom, with Kichwa consigned to a weekly language lesson. However, the linguistic diversity and language strategies employed in the classroom were not straightforward and could not be understood within the accepted dualist notion between Spanish and an ethnic language, as is implicit in education policy. The linguistic reality on the ground contrasts with the predominant conceptualization in language planning policy of language as discrete and separate entities (Bucholtz, 2003; López, 2008). The implementation of language policy on the basis of a specific language mapped onto a particular ethnic cultural identity in the context of formal education therefore becomes highly problematic, as evidenced by the situation in Pumamaki.

Proponents of the standardization of Kichwa, describe the process of establishing a written unified standard, as an on-going process of applying expert knowledge so that ultimately a balance can be reached that is representative of all the diverse vernacular forms under a unified written standard with its own unified written standard³⁶. A clear distinction made by proponents of standardization is that whereas a unified Kichwa is appropriate for written bilingual intercultural pedagogic practice, it should not supersede oral vernacular diversity in the classroom. Considering the linguistic varieties of a language, Kichwa is theoretically recognized as orally diverse, but unified under one writing system. However, on the ground this distinction does not usually occur (Howard 2007; Zavala, 2014; Wroblewski, 2014; Garcia & Velasco, 2012, King, 2001).

From my own observations of language use in the classrooms of Pumamaki, the language strategies employed by teachers and students were complex, and for the most part did not correspond to one or other language use (Spanish and Kichwa) as separate entities. I suggest bilingualism³⁷ was by far the dominant language strategy of oral communication adopted by individuals in the classroom, in correspondence with the dominant linguistic context outside the classroom of this specific location. In terms of literacy³⁸, understood in its narrow form, as a

³⁶ See Howard, 2007 and King, 2001, for an in-depth discussion on this highly contentious process of 'Kichwa unificado' in the Ecuadorian context.

³⁷ The term 'bilingualism' in the literature has been critiqued on the basis of representing hermetically- closed language systems, instead of being conceptualized as dynamic and in continual flow between individuals and varying social contexts (Heller, 2007). Makoni & Mashiri (2007) emphasize bilingualism as the conceptualization of "the use of vernaculars that leak into one another to understand the social realities of their users" (cited in Martin-Jones, et al (eds), 2012 p. 10). Here, I most closely relate to bilingualism in relation to the notion of 'trans-languaging' (Garcia 2009b). As stated by Garcia: "Trans-languaging is the act performed by Bilinguals of accessing different linguistic features of various modes of 'autonomous languages in order to maximize communication potential. It is an approach to bilingualism that is centred, not on languages, as has been often the case, but on the practices of Bilinguals that are readily observable in order to make sense of their multilingual worlds (as cited in García, O. and Wei, L., 2014, p 64).

³⁸ Literacy viewed as a straightforward technical development and acquisition process has been challenged within 'New Literacy Studies' where it is seen instead as part of plural social practices, see Gee, J.P., 1986. Orality and literacy: From the savage mind to ways with words. *Tesol Quarterly*, 20(4), pp.719-746, and Street, B., 1997. The implications of the 'New Literacy Studies' for literacy education. *English in education*, 31(3), pp.45-59. See also Salomon & Niño-Murcia (2011) *The Lettered Mountain*, for a discussion on literacy practices in the context of rural highland Andean context.

normalized process of reading and writing acquired through schooling, Spanish was indeed the dominant language of use in the classroom. However, bilingualism was by far the dominant language strategy of oral communication in the classroom.

In the classroom, teachers and students communicated by employing bilingual language strategies for effective communication (Cummings, 2005; Garcia & Wei, 2014), making use of the local vernacular Kichwa and Spanish through lexical borrowings and code switching, varying between individuals and particular contexts. Lexical borrowing, as far as I was able to identify, was prevalent in the form of a ‘nativized orthography’ (Howard, et al, awaiting publication) adopted as a pragmatic strategy. A ‘nativized’ orthography incorporates Spanish vocabulary specific to particular practices usually of high social status “by pragmatically adopting and transforming these words in convergence with the vernacular spoken language” (Howard, et al, awaiting publication). To give an example, I reproduce a short conversation of a lesson I observed and recorded between secondary school students concerning an exercise they were working on in a Kichwa language lesson:

“Es que... encambio, encambio, chibiga rimay tukungimi, mas corectotami, musionariy tukungi, que advinanza. Mayjanka mana, na mana completamente intindiy paktakpika, siempre, siempre shuk sentidokuna”

“It’s that...on the other hand, on the other hand, there [referring to the dictionary] you will be able to speak more correctly, to present the riddle. If they can’t completely understand which [word], completely, [they will be able to guess] always, always through the single sense” (11th grade students, Pumamaki, November 2014).

The words underlined are examples of lexical borrowing, adapting the Spanish word in convergence with the vernacular. The example above also demonstrates extensive code switching, whereby each language system is maintained whilst

switching occurs between the Kichwa and Spanish. As can be seen in this example, lexical borrowing and code-switching occurred organically throughout the sentence and overall was extremely frequent.

In secondary school, Kichwa was formally taught as a regular separate weekly lesson; for the older grades at primary school, Kichwa was not a separate weekly subject as such, but was nevertheless taught as a grammar lesson at specific moments in time during the school period. For the younger grades, acquisition of literary (as alphabetical decoding) was mixed. From my lesson observations of young children learning the letters of the alphabet, teachers were attempting to instruct them on the differences between the two languages by making the distinction that Kichwa as only having three vowels as opposed to the five in Spanish³⁹. Beyond this alphabet lesson, when using words and learning spelling, the children usually mixed both Kichwa and Spanish words organically, in the same way as the older students. For example, when the teacher asked for words beginning with S, young children would shout out 'sisa, silla, sapu, supa' (flower, chair, frog, soup). Most of the teachers I spoke to, said they thought they should separate between languages but were unsure exactly how to do this in practice.

Some of the teachers began lessons by providing instructions in Spanish, simultaneously translating into the spoken vernacular Kichwa. However, as the lessons progressed the local vernacular quite quickly became the predominant language of use for oral communication, demonstrating lexical borrowing and code switching as described above. When I asked Arturo, (one of the longest-serving teachers, trained under the Dominican Missionary order) why he was using this method of simultaneous translation, he replied that families expected children to be able to acquire Spanish at school. He explained that some pupils had a limited knowledge of Spanish, so it was necessary for comprehension. (Arturo, Pumamaki, November 2014).

This was a common view of most of the teachers I spoke to during my research. Garcia and Velasco (2012), conducting research on effects of language policy in

³⁹ See Howard 2007 for a discussion about the debate in Ecuador concerning the three or five vowel system.

the classroom, in rural settings in the context of Mexico, describe similar findings (see Garcia & Velasco, 2012). In the case of Pumamaki, it was difficult to assess to what extent this common perception of teachers accurately reflected the children's experience. For example, during my research, I often interacted with the children as a participant observer helping individual pupils and we interacted mostly in Spanish. On a few occasions, I also led a couple of secondary school classes at the teacher's request, due to their absence. In all of these occasions, the children did not appear to have difficulties in understanding what I said in Spanish even if they did often reply in Kichwa.

At secondary school, teachers introduced all subject lessons in Spanish apart from the one-hour-a-week Kichwa lesson or 'Nationalities Cosmovision' lesson which was also treated as a separate subject. In spite of the fact that lessons were being given in Spanish, the pupils once again would respond to the teacher and communicate with one another in the local vernacular, which as described above corresponds to bilingualism. The teachers themselves local speakers, would also revert to the local vernacular for giving explanations, when communicating with students individually or when speaking about issues beyond the subject lesson.

When conversing with the teachers about language use in the classroom, the majority felt they were not implementing sufficient use of Kichwa and some referred to the respective designation in the MOSEIB of ethnic nationality language use, as mentioned above. In this respect, I observed a lesson with five- to six-year-old children who had just begun a basic maths lessons on simple addition. The children used Spanish words for numbers, as I noticed was also common practice in everyday speech. However, after approximately ten minutes, the teacher spent the following hour as a drill session with the children on the Kichwa numbering system. When I enquired further into this after the lesson, the teacher explained that children at nursery are usually taught the numbers in Spanish therefore this process needed to be reversed once they began primary school. She said that the regulations required 80% Kichwa language use in the classroom at this stage and since she was not sure how officials would measure

this, she believed it was therefore necessary to teach the children standard Kichwa vocabulary and numbering system.

In summary, bilingualism strategies were widely employed for effective oral communication in all contexts inside and outside the classroom. However, from my classroom observations, formal literacy in all cases was dominated by the use of Spanish. When using text-books and writing on the white boards, teachers mostly wrote or read out in Spanish, as did the students. The only exception to this, was in the specific case of lessons in standard written Kichwa. I would argue, therefore that literacy was being understood in the narrow sense of a formal process of reading and writing with the principal purpose of helping pupils to attain a linguistic standard, whether in Spanish or Kichwa. The dominant use of Spanish for teaching literacy could be partly explained by the lack of resources in Kichwa, however from my own observations and conversations with teachers and students, as I shall evidence below, standardized Kichwa appeared to create an added barrier in the attainment of formal literacy.

4.5.2 Language use and acquisition of formal literacy

Since the legislative changes came into effect, the Ministry of Education has been distributing textbooks to all public schools in the four main school subjects of maths, literacy, social sciences and natural sciences. The Ministry is in charge of sending out to tender updated versions of the official textbooks and is therefore responsible for the content and didactic representation of this content. In terms of curricula cultural differentiation, within the existing political categorization, the Kichwa nationality is subdivided into highland Pueblos and Amazonian Kichwas, so that 'cultural pertinence' is represented through images and descriptions in these textbooks, however so far, all these textbooks have been in Spanish.

At the time of writing, although some resources were available in Kichwa, new standard textbooks were not yet available in Kichwa or Shuar or any of the other ethnic languages. Specific curriculums for each ethnic nationality in their respective languages have only recently been published, becoming available as

of the 23rd of February 2017⁴⁰. The MOSEIB on the other hand, had already been translated into Kichwa and the other ethnic nationality languages and were accordingly distributed to teachers. All of the teachers of Pumamaki had been provided with the Kichwa version of the updated MOSEIB. However, during my fieldwork, when teachers noticed I had the Spanish copy of the MOSEIB, they asked if they could borrow it or if I could pass them a hard copy; some had already downloaded the Spanish version from the ministry website. On enquiring about this, they expressed their frustration over the difficulty of not being able to read 'Kichwa unificado' (standardized Kichwa). They stated the wording was complicated and the phonology did not correspond to their own vernacular. Various teachers explained they were accustomed to reading in Spanish and though they could translate what they read orally into Kichwa, they felt embarrassed by their failure to understand the standardized written Kichwa. The updated resources in Kichwa being used by teachers in Pumamaki were the Kichwa dictionary and texts on Kichwa grammar, downloaded from the Ministry of Education's website⁴¹.

4.5.3 Attitudes towards vernacular versus standardized Kichwa

The young adults attending secondary school similarly expressed their exasperation in relation to 'Kichwa unificado'. Interestingly, while teachers did not openly object to standardized Kichwa, assuming they were themselves to blame for their failure to understand it, students did not feel the same burden and vociferously rejected the standardized written Kichwa. In the three Kichwa lessons at secondary school level that I observed, all were grammar lessons where the intention was to help students attain the written standard. These lessons were in fact the most contentious I witnessed with students complaining bitterly about words that did not correspond to their own use. They also regarded the standard alphabet as too restricted in correspondence to the phonology of their own oral Kichwa. They also strongly rejected neologisms, having for the

⁴⁰ See Ministry of education webpage; <https://educacion.gob.ec/curriculos-nacionales-interculturales-bilingues/>

⁴¹In 2016 the Instituto de Idiomas, Ciencias y Saberes Ancestrales was established as a separate institution but under the governance of the Ministry of Education. The materials in the respective ethnic languages currently can be found through the official website of this institution:

<http://www.saberesancestrales.gob.ec>

most part adopted a pragmatic approach of nativizing Spanish vocabulary as previously described. In one of the few creative tasks I observed as part of this subject, the teacher asked the students to think up a riddle and commit it to writing in Kichwa. Working with one particular group who had composed their own riddle, I noticed they were looking through the Spanish/Kichwa dictionary for several words in Spanish to find the corresponding word in standardized Kichwa. In oral communication, these words were those usually nativized, employed as lexical borrowings from Spanish. The students were therefore searching through the Spanish-Kichwa dictionary to find the 'appropriate' words in standard Kichwa, so as to 'correct' their own version. The implication was that lexical borrowings were not accepted as correct and the words in the dictionary were assumed as the authoritative version.

When I discussed this with the students, they said it was frustrating to have to use Kichwa words they did not recognize, and that in any case it did not make sense to use these words for the exercise, assuming that the intention was to pass it on to the younger children. In this sense, as one student said: "How are they [the younger children] going to understand this, they won't be able to guess the answer" (11 grade student, Pumamaki, November 2015). Clearly, given the chance, the students were preferring to use their creative output as part of a real and useful communication exercise and literacy practice.

The lead subject teacher afterwards explained that although she experienced the same sense of dissatisfaction as the students in having to follow the written standard, nevertheless, her role was to teach 'Kichwa unificado' which she did not feel sufficiently proficient in. She added that since teachers were being tested on the official standard, it was therefore this standard that had to be taught in the classroom. This is a further example of the negative influence standard testing has for generating reproductive rather than creative teaching practice.

Earlier studies on language revitalization, conducted by Kendall King (2001) working with Saraguros, describe the context was one of an existing generational gap in Kichwa language use, with predominantly older individuals speaking Kichwa and younger people more often communicating in Spanish. In Pumamaki

this generational gap did not seem prevalent and the opposite may even have been true. I observed how the young people often spent their free time on social media, especially on 'Chat'. On speaking to some of these teenagers, they told me that they usually wrote in Kichwa when chatting with other young people of Pumamaki in Puyo or other places but emphasized that it was: 'el nuestro, asi como nos sale, no el unificado' (our own, how it comes out, not the unified Kichwa) (Pumamaki, October 2014). They stated that when using Facebook, it didn't matter if they made 'mistakes' as they still felt they could express themselves in the way they wanted to. The informality of social media allowed them to produce without necessarily following the standard written form. Recent studies on the use of indigenous languages through social media (Cru, 2014) demonstrate it how may be having an impact on language revitalization. Communication in spaces perceived as 'non-official' allow for greater linguistic fluidity and not least demonstrate the dynamic and social nature of language use. Interestingly, one of these young men still at school, frankly asserted that his generation spoke Kichwa more fluidly than the current leadership who went to school outside of Pumamaki, and that among his generation they have their own words (jargon) that the older generation don't understand (Pumamaki, October 2014). The use and context of language use outside formal schooling is a significant area for further study but which extends beyond the scope and specialization of the remit of this particular research.

Considering local discourse in terms of the significance of 'lo nuestro', the national and international political situation of the past thirty years has likely influenced a possible decrease in the rate of the move away from using the local vernacular towards the dominance of Spanish orally. It appears that past political openings generating social changes have enabled these young people to feel entitled and emboldened to communicate in ways they claim to be in their own language. By contrast, all the teachers felt they did not have an adequate grasp of Kichwa, as measured against the standard. They also considered it as inappropriate and most importantly, as a sign of professional inadequacy on their part to be 'mixing both languages'.

4.6 'Correct' use of language

The gap between discourse and practice in terms of language policy and implementation is widely recognized in the literature as not being a linear process but a complex interaction at multiple levels between diverse social actors (Hornberger & King, 1996; Howard, 2007; López, 2008; Zavala, 2014). An exploration of the complexity and practicalities of using local vernacular as part of a bilingual strategy, in contrast to an approximation to a standard in the context of Pumamaki, would warrant a separate and likely collaborative study; here I simply reflect on how this on-going and complex issue within classroom practice seems to be further exacerbated by the implementation of current education policy.

In relation to the interaction in classroom practice between diverse social actors, Zavala highlights how the reproduction of hierarchical social structures between “a community of experts of Quechua and the rest of Quechua speakers, ... reflects a multiple and complex colonial ideology that accentuates; linguistic and cultural purism, the superiority of written forms over oral discourse and the stigmatization of code-switching between languages” (Zavala, 2014, p 130, my own translation). In the case of Peru, Zavala (2014) describes how in establishing a bilingual intercultural education, the process of language standardization creates ‘a community of practice’ defined as ‘language experts’ as part of the political process taking place at the national level (Zavala, 2014, p 132). Zavala defines “the community of practice as made up of diverse groups of individuals who interact as part of the constituting of language planning policies and process, that whilst not homogenous and often may have conflicting positions, nevertheless identify with an existing project in common” (Zavala, 2014, p 132). Through ethnographic research of a specific location in Peru, Zavala develops the argument that ‘a community of practice’ is not static but relates to a subjective identity, which reproduces hierarchical power relationships (Zavala, 2014, p 141). In this way, ‘a community of practice’ constitutes a point of reference over the claim to authoritative knowledge of the language by means of displaying technical knowledge of the written standard.

As Zavala reveals, teachers of the IBE system inevitably become identified in terms of their level of authoritative knowledge in reference to the community of practice they are part of (Zavala, 2014, p 157). Corresponding to Zavala's study, teachers with closer links and more experience of the formal IBE system tend to be those teachers who accentuate 'correct' language use and therefore identify mixing as inappropriate. The teachers of Pumamaki who believed their own language use and knowledge was inadequate were not the exception. What precisely this authoritative knowledge is, and who conforms the 'community of practice', though relative and fluid, nevertheless, as the case of Pumamaki demonstrates, has real consequences on the ground. The teachers of Pumamaki, most of whom have been involved in IBE for many years and have received extensive training, do not necessarily feel empowered as indigenous teachers, instead my research suggests quite the opposite: they express a growing sense of inadequacy revealing relative levels of disempowerment. It needs to be appreciated that attitudes to language will reflect a long-term process of language planning policy; however, I argue that the current education policy, which rigorously endorses standardization, is further entrenching the conceptualization of 'correctness' as an educational paradigm. Those who do not correspond or cannot measure up to the standard are inevitably disqualified.

4.7 Summary

Perhaps unsurprisingly I conclude that communication in the classroom, whether at primary or secondary school level stemmed from the local vernacular. In contrast to an urban setting where Spanish tends to be the dominant language of communication, here a bilingual linguistic strategy existed in which Kichwa clearly prevailed. I suggest that rather than esteeming the use of standard nationalities languages in the classroom as an indicator of cultural pertinence, the language used should relate to the broader community context which the school is part of. The relatively homogenous social and cultural context represented by Pumamaki implies that teachers and students share a local linguistic repertoire, expressing diverse levels of bilingualism as an effective communication strategy (Garcia &

Wei, 2014). Teachers and students invariably revert to bilingual language strategies in the classroom when they are not constricted by a requirement to apply a specific linguistic standard.

The fact remains that although didactic materials was mostly in Spanish, the teaching materials in Kichwa were either not seen as adequate or were outrightly rejected. The teachers of Pumamaki have received relatively extensive training specifically in bilingual intercultural education. I conclude therefore that teaching practice is not predetermined principally by a lack of resources either in Kichwa or in levels of training, as the current literature suggests. While not denying that these elements have an effect on teaching practice, from my analysis of language strategies and language use in the classroom, it is the dominance of a normative ideology that limits the effective use of bilingual language strategies in the classroom. The separation and 'correct' use of languages is underpinned by the conceptualization of a bounded and therefore essentialized notion of culture and language. Language as a dynamic and as part of diverse social practices is ignored and what is more important, the differentiated status of particular social practices continues to be reproduced.

Current educational policy provides greater amounts of funding and improved levels of teacher training but does so under the central premise of conceptualizing formal schooling as a space to acquire citizenship criteria. A key criterion for demonstrating citizenship appears to be the acquisition of 'literacy', measured against a 'correct' standard to be learnt at school. Ironically, indigenous students have an additional burden in having to demonstrate proficiency in 'correct' Spanish and Kichwa.

The particular context of Pumamaki reveals that the imposition of strict language policy measures cannot be effectual and are likely having the reverse effect to the specific intention of instituting Kichwa as principal language of instruction. The impact of complex power relationships at different levels cannot be ignored, for simultaneously imposing constraints on the language and opportunities for its development. Following Zavala, I conclude, the manner in which teachers and students in Pumamaki interpret and interact in the classroom reveals both the

tensions and potential for translating language policy and [political discourse over schooling] into practice (Zavala, 2014, p 134).

Despite being a relatively small population and geographically-marginalized indigenous Ecuadorian Amazonian territory, the members of Pumamaki have been able to generate possibilities in the production of a local cultural project, as part of an on-going political strategy. A key element of the local cultural project is the vision of local schooling in terms of 'una educacion propia' (our own education), in which the School is positioned as space for the construction of an intercultural utopia. This I would argue, corresponds with a theoretical decolonial discourse, inferring the development of a critical intercultural education classroom practice. I further contend that at the local level, the school is conceptualized as a boundary within the territory embodying a contact zone between 'inside' (lo nuestro) and outside (lo de afuera), which in common with other frontier crossings, requires successful navigation. Through my analysis, I propose the role of the local teacher is perceived as that of an effective guide for students, so that are able to become 'successful travellers' in cultural border crossings, simultaneously constructing and sustaining that which belongs to an inside and that which belongs to an outside. As Nadia describes what is important is to "no olvidar lo de aca" (not to forget, what is ours). From a decolonial discourse a key element of this ideal would mean that teachers are assumed to be empowered individuals encompassing a subaltern subjectivity. In other words, teachers are ideally conceptualized as effective interlocutors between 'inside and outside' knowledge that needs to be demonstrated through classroom practice.

In relation to formal schooling, Pumamaki has been able to develop a long-term, local professional teaching body, as part of a community-driven political process. Of significance is that the majority of these teachers are themselves involved and committed to the ongoing political struggle for relative political autonomy as members of Pumamaki.

From the relevant documents I had access to, and in general conversation with the participants of the teacher training initiatives developed locally, the overall pedagogic objective was to incorporate and promote local cultural knowledge and

practices into the classroom as part of a constructivist education. Even so, my research reveals that teachers are not fully able to assume an empowered subaltern subjective position; from my analysis I suggest they translate political discourse into a less demanding stance than would be assumed by a decolonial theoretical framing. I propose that teachers interpret political discourse from a relatively disempowered position, conceptualizing the school as a literal 'contact zone' where the 'inside' and 'outside' are present in parallel but not in contrast. I shall develop this further in the next chapter.

So far, I have argued that the local school is certainly a space of contention and negotiation and is one that is part of the broader and historical demand for recognition of internal agency. I have described how the fostering of social cohesion and demand for recognition is directly linked to the possibilities of defining boundaries, in order to legitimize and establish relative power relationships between 'inside' and 'outside' and therefore to finding mechanisms for achieving relative autonomy. However, I conclude, the possibilities of translating discourse into practice, is limited by the overriding function of schooling, that is, the continued need to demonstrate specific citizenship criteria.

In conclusion, teachers felt they were being 'scapegoated' for not being able to implement 'una educacion propia' (our own education) as the communities stated educational political objective from the inside. They also felt judged from the outside as inadequate teachers, in terms of standardized testing implemented through national education policies. Teachers were faced with the impossibility of fulfilling two opposing political objectives over the function of schooling. The first was an increased pressure to deliver a top-down standardized education in order that children could gain the skills to allow them to function within dominant society, thereby minimizing the risks of being subjected to discrimination and marginalization. The second related to the community imperative of legitimizing local knowledge and practices as being of equal worth to authorized subject knowledge by translocating these into the formal and institutional space of the classroom. This inherent tension is not new as Martinez Novo states: "Official intercultural education discourse and Indigenous leaders claim Indigenous knowledge, but parents and children seem to demand 'modern' or Western

content, and teachers struggle to provide this knowledge to their students while asserting publicly that they are preserving the group's culture" (Martinez Novo, 2014, p 99). However, what raises concern is the heightened tension created by top-down education policy, framed by and further promoting an essentialized notion of cultural diversity and knowledge.

In this chapter I have analysed the limits and possibilities of translating political discourse into classroom practice, drawing on observations of language use as a key element in IBE. If the need to demonstrate language specificity as a cultural marker for recognition of ethnic citizenship limits the possibilities for effective diverse language use in the classroom, the obvious question is raised as to what effect this has on translating knowledge diversity into classroom practice? In the following chapter I develop my analysis in relation to a much less tangible aspect of knowledge - considering how 'lo nuestro' (what is ours) and 'lo de afuera' (what is of outside) is translated in terms of content in the classroom.

Chapter 5 'Translating' Classroom Practices

In the previous chapter I presented elements of local political discourse in written text and oral communication as part of the construction of a 'native ideology' (Rappaport, 2005). The production of a cultural discourse at the local level I link to a complex and heterogeneous interaction between organic intellectuals and others, as a political tool in the demand for recognition of cultural difference. In this way the building of a local cultural project, has been a crucial factor in relation to the Pumamaki's current education system. I demonstrate the political achievement of establishing a relatively large number of schools within the territory and most importantly creating a long-term professionalized local teaching body. I propose local discourse over schooling also projects a clear political intention of the school as a space to challenge the epistemological hierarchy (official knowledge vs local knowledge), implying the generating of a critical intercultural education practice in correspondence with a decolonial theoretical discourse. However, my analysis so far of classroom practice suggests a continued reproduction of hierarchical social practices specifically in relation to the acquisition of literacy. I conclude the imposition of the use of a 'correct' language, reflects the hierarchical status of a standardized written system whether Spanish or Kichwa over oral communication as diverse and dynamic language strategies. From classroom observations of teaching practice, I suggest little evidence of a critical education process translated into classroom practice.

Here, my concern is to explore to what extent an intercultural education practice is translated as an epistemological concern in the classroom. I analyse to what extent the construction of a political discourse to build a local educational project for local knowledge to enter the classroom, challenging the universalization of a western epistemology, can be evidenced through observation of classroom practice. Specifically, I ask, to what extent does classroom practice reveal the existence of plural epistemologies. I explore how 'lo nuestro' enters the classroom and question whether 'lo nuestro' is being employed simply as a rhetorical tool, or if what takes place in the classroom may reveal unexpected ways of difference being present.

From my analysis of classroom practices, I question the theoretical framing of intercultural education positioning difference (i.e. 'lo nuestro/lo propio' (that which is ours')) as the revealing of subalternized epistemologies, challenging the hierarchical status of a dominant geopolitical western epistemology. I propose an analytical shift away from revealing difference in classroom practice in terms of an epistemological concern, i.e. revealing plural knowledges, in order to consider the enactment of an 'ontological difference' (Blaser, 2009; De la Cadena, 2010). I suggest the existence of a 'radical alterity' (Holbraad & Pedersen, 2017) present in the classroom, passes unnoticed. Far from a rhetorical tool, I develop the argument that 'lo nuestro' is brought into the classroom, however the way this occurs, suggests that the school is not experienced as a space for epistemological dialogue across difference, and therefore locally, schooling is not perceived principally as an epistemological matter of concern. I propose instead, from its emergence the School, continues to be experienced as an ontological matter of concern.

5.1 Epistemological Plurality – 'Sacha Runa Yachay'

Intercultural education from a decolonial discourse is ideologically conceptualized as breaking a western hegemony to create a space of epistemological plurality, where a real dialogue across difference is possible. From a decolonial perspective as previously mentioned, epistemology, as a way of knowing, is categorized not specifically in terms of culture, but in relation to a hegemonic cultural process, denying the validity of epistemological plurality. The core concern from a theoretical decolonial framing is therefore the revealing of epistemological plurality as a decolonizing education practice. A decolonizing education practice implies the positioning of a critical subaltern subjectivity. By contrasting education practice as I observe in the classrooms of Pumamaki, with the discursive framing of an ideal intercultural education practice, I question the assumption that the enunciation of knowledge from a subaltern subjective position is intrinsically counterhegemonic and one of relative empowerment. I propose that whilst difference maybe present, classroom practice does not reveal the existence of epistemological plurality, challenging a dominant subject position as an authoritative claim to knowledge.

In the context of Pumamaki as I have been describing, outside dominance is indeed challenged in political discourse by exercising inside agency and demanding recognition as a legitimate political actor. In the workshop I conducted with some of the teachers of Pumamaki described in the previous chapter, the term used to relate to the concept of 'lo nuestro' as knowledge, was 'Sacha Runa Yachay'. *Sacha Runa Yachay*, is named as part of Pumamaki's work by organic intellectuals as part of a native political ideology for constructing an intercultural utopia. I interpret therefore that *Sacha Runa Yachay*, could theoretically be understood as the expression of a subalternized epistemology, that is, a way of knowing enunciated from a subaltern subjective position. If so, the local interpretation over interculturalism as 'una educación propia' seems to imply that 'Sacha Runa Yachay' should be learnt as of equal worth to official subject knowledge, challenging the dominant status of official knowledge, in the classroom. This raises the question as to what is, or to be more precise how to identify in what way *sacha runa yachay* is brought into the classroom? Furthermore, if *Sacha runa yachay* is revealed in classroom practice does this challenge the dominant status of official subject knowledge?

The official Kichwa/Spanish dictionary published by the Ministry of Education in 2009, translates 'sacha' as 'bosque, monte, maleza' (forest, wilderness, unkept patch of land) (my own translation) and as an adjective as 'salvaje, silvestre, mediocre' (wild, undomesticated, mediocre'. In the same dictionary 'runa' is translated to 'ser humano, persona' (human being, person) and 'yachay' as 'sabiduría, inteligencia, juicio, razonamiento' (wisdom, intelligence, judgement, rationality). *Yachay*, comes from the verb 'yachana' which is translated as 'saber' (to know). The most literal translation of *sacha runa yachay* would therefore be 'the way of knowing of a forest person', suggested in the previous chapter. However, this does not take us much further in knowing what *sacha runa yachay* may be and how it can be translated into classroom practice.

Norman Whitten conducting extensive ethnographic work during the 1970s with Canelos Quichuas entitles his book 'Sacha Runa' making detailed and extensive reference to *sacha runa* and *yachay* (Whitten, 1976). Whitten states: "The ability

to understand life's processes, to become integrated with them as an intellectual, questing, creative human is the primary meaning of Sacha Runa – jungle person, knowledgeable person” (Whitten, 1976, p 35). Whitten extends this in a footnote to describe knowledgeable person in relation to knowledge of the forest both in terms of a physical understanding as well and the knowledge granted by “spirits of the forest...through dreams and visions” (Whitten, 1976, p 59).

Whitten also describes ‘Sacha Runa’ as an oppositional duality to ‘Alli Runa’, where ‘Alli Runa’ (good person) reflecting the evangelizing missionary project of converting the ‘savages’ to ‘good Christian people’ (Whitten, 1976, p 219). Whitten explains “Alli runa and Sacha runa as one and the same...” (p 219) whereby Alli runa is an identity adopted when dealing with missionaries, the state, in commercial exchanges. Considering the previous analysis of cultural boundary construction, I interpret Whitten description of ‘alli runa’ and ‘sacha runa’ as a dualist identity as a strategy to construct and face an ‘inside’. It can be understood that *sacha runa* is what one is inside or facing inside, whilst alli runa is what one is and is recognized as being facing outside, constructed as belonging to that which is foreign. I shall explore this in detail relating to a particular example of a lesson conducted in Pumamak’s secondary school further on in this chapter.

In a later published article, Whitten goes further, theoretically framing: “Sacha Runa as a significant example of a ‘sign-image’ of Canelos Quichua’s paradigm of ecological imagery...a multivocalic, associationally complex, ambiguous, open-ended, highly condensed...sign-image which may be abstracted as symbol (Fernandez 1974: 120) to refer to the Canelos Quichua themselves, to other jungle people...and, to a postulated spirit master, to the spirit of the forest, to the spirit of Datura, to a master of animals, in either singular or plural form⁴²” (Whitten, 1978, p 839).

During my ethnographic research, ‘*sacha runa yachay*’ was spoken about principally in relation to spending time in the forest and a specifically important

⁴² Sacha Runa as a plural forest master spirit relates to naming of ‘Amazanga-Nunghui-Sungui, see the referenced article for a detailed description.

element of going on *purina* with the younger generation. As described to me during my research and reflecting Whitten's anthropological description, *purinas*⁴³ are recognized as ancestral links in the deeper forest areas, in this way living in closer contact with the forest and ancestral entities. In chapter 2, I described the historical battle and violent imposition by missionaries to control the local practices in this area of going on *purina*, aimed at preventing the abandonment of missionary settlement. *Purinas* were regularly mentioned in everyday discourse during my own ethnographic research and going on *purina* as entire family units was planned by the family I stayed with for part of my research. As I encountered, going on a *purina*, continues to be a common practice by most members of Pumamaki, now usually occurring during the school holidays or at weekends.

In this way I interpret, *sacha runa yachay* as a learning process corresponding to a collective practice in relationship with the forest and existing ancestors. My aim, however, is not to specify anthropologically what terms such as 'sacha runa' or 'yachay' are, but rather to pick up on that these terms continue to be enunciated and more importantly, named in specific reference to a central objective of formal schooling. Therefore, of significance for my research, was that *sacha runa yachay* was named by teachers as that which made reference to 'lo nuestro' in classroom practice. However, given the complexity over what *sacha runa yachay* can refer to, it becomes difficult to understand how this concept can enter into the formal space of the classroom. It appears, that what *sacha runa yachay* is in the context of the forest in order to enter the formal space the school represents, would require both translocating and 'translating', to become part of school content and practice. Below I explore the notion of identifying *sacha runa yachay* as a possible subaltern epistemology, translated to classroom content and/or practice.

5.1.1 Translation as a subaltern tool

In the case of Colombia's bilingual intercultural education driven by the indigenous political organization CRIC, Rappaport identifies the significance of

⁴³ Whitten describes *purina*, as a trek system, connecting the *ayllu* units (for a detailed description see Whitten, 1976, p 19 and 125. See also Harrison, 1994, *Signos, Cantos y Memoria en los Andes. Traduciendo la lengua y la cultura quechua*).

'translation' as a subaltern tool, crucial in the process of constructing intercultural utopias. Could something similar be occurring in the case of Pumamaki, since similarly to that described by Rappaport in relation to CRIC, Pumamaki has also been able to construct a native ideology by developing a local political process. Rappaport describes the process of 'translation as a subaltern tool' as follows:

"...translation provides an indispensable strategy used by Nasa activists to appropriate concepts from dominant society and to reconfigure them into self-conscious indigenous categories. (Rey Chow, 1995),...translation into Nasa Yuwe of ideas originating in the national and international arenas supplements the original Spanish terminology, "improving" it for making sense of the way Nasa culturalist intellectuals have harnessed translation to their political imaginings... That is they did not *translate* the constitution in a strict sense, but *reimagined* its fundamental precepts from a Nasa subject position... they were not seeking commensurability, but a means for arriving at their own political principles that could eventually enter into dialogue with those of the state. This is not translation as we know it, but a subaltern methodology for taking on the new political challenges facing the movement...(Rappaport, 2005, p 235-236)

Rappaport suggests the Colombian constitution is being translated by Nasa organic intellectuals not as a process of equivalence, but instead of non-equivalence enabling a process of reimagining. From this description what is significant, is that Nasa organic intellectuals are not translating in the same way as missionary literacy practices aimed to translate the bible, imposing a dominant world view and political project. If translation can be achieved not by equivalence assuming commensality, but as a careful and intentional process of reimagining, is this what is aimed at in the case of 'sacha runa yachay'? Below is an extract of the discursive text where Sacha is 'translated' in a reverse language exercise to that described by Rappaport, i.e. a Spanish category into a 'native category' but instead 'a native category' into Spanish. However, I suggest the direction does not change the intention of 'entering into dialogue' by reimagining the possibilities within different political principals as the extract below demonstrates:

"La selva, para los pueblos indígenas que habitamos en la Amazonia, es vida, es

Kawsak Sacha, la Selva Viviente. Cada espacio (pantanales, montañas, moretales y lagunas) tiene sus amos y dueños. En cada uno de estos hay Llaktas (pueblos) con poblaciones llamadas Runas, también son las casas y refugios de animales, como de los jabalís, jaguar, anacondas, pavas, tapires y pumas.

Cada montaña y grandes árboles se intercomunican mediante redes de conductos (en forma de cables telefónicos), por donde los Supay, (seres superiores de la selva) se movilizan en todos los lugares del Amazanka, Sacharuna, Yashinku, Juktusupay en la selva.

Amazanka, es hombre amo y señor dueño de la selva, portador de la sabiduría, de la salud, de la belleza, de la energía vital. Es el personaje más significativo y respetado por todos los seres de las selvas y montañas. Juntos los Supay, son quienes guardan celosamente la selva amazónica.” (Asamblea del Pueblo Originario Kichwa de Pumamaki, 2012)⁴⁴

“The forest, for the indigenous peoples that inhabit the Amazon, is life, it is Kawsay Sacha, the Living Forest. Every space (marshes, mountains, moretales and lagoons) have their owners and masters. In every one of these there are Llaktas (communities) with populations called Runas, they are also the houses and refuges of the animals, such as the wild pig, jaguars, anacondas, doves, tapires and pumas.

Every mountain and large tree are intercommunicated via a network of conduits (like telephone cables), by which the Supays (superior beings of the forest) mobilize within all the places of the Amazanka, Sacharuna, Yashinku, Juktusupay of the forest.

Amazanka is the man owner and master of the forest, bearer of wisdom, on health, beauty and vital energy. He is the most significant figure and respected by all beings of the forest and mountains. Together with the Supay they are the

⁴⁴ Source, document: Asamblea del Pueblo Originario Kichwa de Pumamaki, Kawsay Sacha – Selva Viviente, diciembre, 2012 (<http://tayjasaruta.wordpress.com>)

zealous guardians of the forest.

This written text in Spanish is explicitly pointing to a process of incomplete translation to represent a native ideology. The need for a double and incomplete translation which reveals incommensurability between ways of knowing is made explicit in the phrases added in inverted commas; “(like telephone cables)” and also the inclusion of terms not translated into Spanish. Therefore, though indeed *Sacha* and terms such as; *Amazanga*, *Supay*, *Runa* or *Llacta* are described, it is made clear that these terms cannot be fully comprehended in translation. Following Rappaport, I suggest the local political organization is consciously attempting to translate *into* Spanish indigenous categories from a *Pumamaki* subject position.

Since this text aims to highlight incommensurability it could also be understood as a process of straight forward essentialization. However, this text is also part of a political demand for the protection of forests aimed at being recognized by international institutions. Therefore, the objective of producing this discursive text can be understood, following Rappaport’s analysis of a claim to enter into dialogue with the state by positioning concepts as plural, in this case, from a *Pumamaki* subjectivity. This would imply a radically different form of recognition, beyond that of recognizing the right to cultural particularity as such, demanding further recognition over the validity of a different conceptual category for forest in itself. This form of recognition, I consider relates to Taylor’s observation that interculturalism demands a recognition of equal cultural worth (discussed in chapter 1). The claim for protecting ‘*Sacha*’ is not as a material category, in other words, it’s worth is not being articulated as a resource, whether in biological terms or in economic terms. *Sacha* is being articulated as not equivalent to a material resource, it is being enunciated as a living entity in itself; ‘*Kawsay Sacha – Selva Viviente*’. The demand for recognition of value is as Other. *Sacha*, is being positioned and understood as a living being within a different discourse practice to that which can know the forest as an ecological and material category. A plural epistemology is being evidenced through this discursive text and the demand is that for recognition of plural categories in the space of dominant social practices.

The process of translation through the text above retains the naming of Sacha as a means of challenging the hegemonic category of what a forest is. I interpret that this can be understood as a decolonizing process whereby an enunciation of knowledge from a subaltern subjective position, is revealed and challenges a singular epistemology from a dominant (western) subjective position. It is in this way I suggest the explicit reference made to *sacha runa yachay* by teachers and leadership in relation to 'lo nuestro' reflects the construction of a native ideology as a form of 'translation', i.e. as an intentional process of translation, a subaltern tool for reimagining to retain the possibilities of interpreting differently (Rappaport, 2005).

The use of particular terms and the intention of translating does not occur in a vacuum, in Whitten's ethnographic work of the 1970s, the socio-political context is one of the direct threat of territorial encroachment through colonist claims to land, as a consequence of the agrarian reform. I propose a process of continuity can be evidenced between Whitten's own analysis, and the production of formal texts, produced by Pumamaki's organic intellectuals over 30 years later. During the 1970's, Whitten concludes that: "the root paradigm is continuously evoked...as a Sacha Runa construct, ideologically opposed to any nationalist design for incorporation of the Canelos Quichua into Ecuadorian lower class" (Whitten, 1978, p 852). In 2015 from my own analysis the naming of *sacha runa yachay* appears to continue to fulfil the same function of oppositional but culturally versatile categorization responding to the threat of shifting the precarious balance of 'inside/outside' power-relations. The naming of *sacha runa yachay* could therefore be functioning as a versatile and oppositional cultural categorization in the context of formal schooling.

Therefore, theoretically, a critical intercultural education process could be identified by taking the same form as that of these texts, i.e. as an intentional process of translation of significant concepts in the classroom. This would imply moving beyond identifying cultural specificity as a direct equivalence of the language used in the classroom, to instead consider how language is used to reimagine and explore concepts as potentially plural and more importantly linked

to the construction of a political project. Clearly this is a tall order and having said this, a gap between discourse and practice is inevitable. What I consider therefore of significance, taking into account the historical and political context of Pumamaki, is to explore, to what extent *sacha runa yachay* representing the possibility of revealing plural epistemologies, can be translated and revealed as part of classroom practice.

5.2 Classroom practice of 'lo nuestro' and 'lo de afuera'

Below I analyse a classroom observation of a biology lesson. The lesson observation is of a 7th grade primary class, equivalent to the last year of primary school. The children were aged between 10 and 13 approximately 18 children in total. In the same classroom the teacher, taught both the 6th and 7th grade. The grades were split into two groups, clustered at either end of the classroom. This classroom corresponds to one of the three outlying smaller primary schools, approximately one hours walk from Pumamaki's political centre. In this particular case, both the children and teacher live and ethnically identified themselves as belonging to the community.

In interpreting this lesson observation, I develop the argument that though the teacher did rely and therefore legitimizing the children's own knowledge, he did not evidence the revealing of epistemological plurality. Instead it appears that subject knowledge, in this case biological classification, is equivalent to local knowledge, i.e. of the same form. Therefore, I conclude classroom practice reinforced rather than challenged official knowledge.

The teacher Armando, was in his mid 20s, one of the younger teachers of Pumamaki's teaching body, with just over 5 years' experience as a primary school teacher. Armando did not have to travel far to go to work, since he lived, just across the yard from the school, in the outlying community this particular school is located in.

Armando introduced the theme of the lesson as about biodiversity, writing the heading on the board as 'Biodiversidad en America Latina', (Biodiversity in Latin

America), copied from the official text book, for natural sciences. He then stated, that they were first going to classify, to which various children responded in chorus, in the following manner:

Children: Mamíferos, anfibios, reptiles (*Mammals, amphibians, reptiles*)

Armando acknowledged the children's response and added: Mamíferos, todos los que maman teta (*Mammals all those that suckle teat*) and; Reptiles, todos los lagartos, serpientes (*Reptiles, all the lizards and snakes*)

Armando, then noted on the board the five higher order animal biological classifications: "Mammals, Birds, Fish, Reptiles, and Amphibians". When conversing with the children and providing explanations, Armando spoke mostly in vernacular Kichwa, however as demonstrated below Armando named examples of animals in correspondence to the five classifications of animals in Spanish. The children responded by either, acknowledging that they were found locally or by translating into the Kichwa and/or using a local name:

Teacher Speech:	Colibríes	<i>Humming bird</i> (Spanish)
Students Response:	Kindi	Humming bird (Kichwa)
Teacher Speech:	Halcones	Hawks (Spanish)
Students Response:	Inda tian	Correct they exist/are [here] (Kichwa)
Teacher Speech:	Águilas	Eagles (Spanish)
Students Response:	Machinanga	(Local name for a type of bird of prey)

It can be clearly identified that the teacher was intentionally using and therefore validating the children's knowledge of local animals as an example of different animal classes. Armando then moves on with the exercise to explicitly reinforce the notion that they are living in a highly biodiverse and valuable environment, again validating the children's existing knowledge of their local environment. The teacher asked the children to individually write ten examples for each classification as an individual exercise in their workbooks. The table below is a

reproduction of what the teacher wrote on the board in response to the collective examples given by the children:

<i>Mamíferos</i> (Mamamals)	<i>Aves</i> (Birds)	<i>Peces</i> (Fish)	<i>Anfibios</i> (Amphibians)	<i>Reptiles</i> (Reptiles)
<i>Sajino</i> (wild pig)	<i>Perdis</i> (Phesant)	<i>Bocachico</i>	<i>Sara sapu</i>	<i>Pitalala</i>
<i>Tigre</i> (Jaguar)	<i>Tucan</i>	<i>Chuti</i>	<i>Cuwa</i>	<i>Warapolu</i>
<i>Venado</i> (Dear)	<i>Papagayo</i> (Parrot)	<i>Carachama</i>	<i>Juwin</i>	<i>Waskapitalala</i>
<i>Tapir</i>	<i>Pawshi/Paujil</i>	<i>Pashin</i>	<i>Tulumpa</i>	<i>Illuli</i>
<i>Armadillo</i> (Armadilo)	<i>Gaupi</i>	<i>Tanla</i>	<i>Guian sapu</i>	Shinshin
<i>Ardilla</i> (Squirrel)		<i>Bagre</i>	<i>Indiacura</i>	<i>Mutula</i>

The table above demonstrates that both children and teacher clearly knew what ‘types’ of animals correspond to the five biological classifications, by giving specific local examples. It also demonstrates the children are highly knowledgeable and have a close relationship with their local environment. In this way, this lesson is an example whereby the classroom representing a formal official space validates the children’s knowledge as important. Significantly, the children’s sense of pride and identity in terms of belonging to Pumamaki living in a rich biodiverse environment and knowledgeable about this richness is also validated. I was able to evidence this type of practice repeated through primary and secondary regularly. Almost all of the teachers reinforced a sense of cultural identity and validated the children’s local knowledge. However, this is not sufficient in itself to demonstrate epistemological plurality, as for example the formal text presented previously stating *Sacha* as other than a particular ecosystem or biological resource makes explicit.

The interaction as part of the lesson I describe above takes place between a teacher and children of Pumamaki, whose discourse and social practices are in

common. My interpretation is that the children and teacher are naming in relation to their every-day experience and that in this lesson, a 'sara-sapu' is placed in correspondence to the abstract classification belonging to the discourse practice that is biology. In other words, such a thing as an 'amphibian', 'mammal' or 'fish' doesn't actually exist as an entity that can be pointed at unless within the discourse practice of biology. However, if Sacha is known not only as a forest, i.e. in correspondence to an ecological category, but also as an entity in itself (a Subject), as made explicit in previous text produced by Pumamaki's organic intellectuals, then why would, 'sara-sapu', 'pitalala' or 'tigre' necessarily only correspond to a type of 'frog, reptile or mammal'? Why is not 'sara-sapu' also explored as a domestic being of Amazanga, for example? In terms of an epistemological concern, i.e. revealing plural ways of knowing, my findings suggest that epistemological plurality is not evidenced, since naming in the lesson I describe above appears to only correspond to a biological classification. Different ways of knowing 'sara sapu', 'pitalala' or 'tigre' are not revealed.

I suggest what the activity in this lesson represents, is a pointing to a common referent to both children and teacher, e.g. 'sara-sapu' divorced from its link with a particular discourse practice. What I propose occurs is the local naming that these individuals know within their everyday practice into a discourse practice of higher social status, i.e. biology, masking any other form of naming that could correspond to a different system of knowledge, i.e. epistemology. Considering this example, I conclude that the classroom appears not to be the place where 'sara-sapu', 'pitalala' or 'tigre' could be explored within a different discursive practice as anything other than examples of amphibians, reptiles or mammals. In conclusion, *Sara sapu* is acknowledged as a frog, accepted because it represents official subject knowledge, revealing no epistemological plurality, no clash between ways of knowing.

5.2.1 'Local knowledge' as equivalent to 'scientific knowledge'

The term 'indigenous knowledge' as Cruikshank (2007) describes in relation to sustainable development projects, seems to have achieved legitimate

recognition, most specifically in working practices by NGOs in collaboration with governmental institutions. However, Cruickshank demonstrates that in this type of work practice 'indigenous/local knowledge' continues to be understood within the framing of 'scientific norms of universalism' (Cruikshank, 2007, p 356). For Cruickshank '*local knowledge*' refers to: "tacit knowledge embodied in life experiences and reproduced in everyday behaviour and speech" (Cruikshank, 2007, p 371). From this perspective, as Cruickshank positions, local knowledge cannot be disassociated from its forms of reproduction. Therefore, Cruikshank argues that the continued colonial hierarchy is reproduced even in 'seemingly progressive contexts' by conceptualizing 'local knowledge' as disembodied and so translated to become 'bits of data' in correspondence with knowledge as scientific (Cruikshank, 2007, p 371).

As I interpret, Cruickshank's reflection closely corresponds with the utilitarian notion of knowledge framed within official discourse and specific education policy directed at IBE, I analysed and showed in chapter three. I consider the table of animal classification reproduced above, reflects how this dominant homogenizing conceptualization of knowledge becomes translated in practice. In the classroom, the children's knowledge is not actually being granted value as a different way of knowing but as particular information. In this sense, what appears to be the case is that the children and teacher have extensive 'biological knowledge' of their environment. The question is, whether the children and teacher are aware of what counts for the five higher order biological classification of animals and so what it means to name a *sara sapu* as an amphibian? An educational concern could be raised as to whether these children are in fact learning biology? I saw very little evidence of this in the classroom, only once did the teacher refer to mammals as "those that suck teat". It is highly likely that these children experience animals suckling their young in their daily lives and have no reason to consider this, as a form of classification that could potentially be different to what a 'tigre' (jaguar) is understood to be in terms of a non-biological category.

Cruikshank states the central unresolved issue of supposed collaboration between different forms of knowledge production, is in fact the masking of difference:

“At issue, here are diverging notions of agency and interpretation. One key difference between Athapaskan oral traditions and scientific discourse is that elders’ narratives merge natural and social history, whereas scientists assessing environmental change describe one of their objectives as disentangling natural from cultural factors” (Cruikshank, 2007, p 361).

I suggest in the classroom *sara-sapu*, *pitalala* and *tigre* are abstracted to be addressed as ‘natural’ factors. Therefore, in what is stated to be a science lesson, *sara-sapu*, *pitalala* or *tigre* enter the classroom to be explained as natural factors. As Cruickshank reflection highlights, the implication is that “diverging notions of agency”, don’t appear to be legitimized, in the formal space of the school classroom.

The lesson above was not an isolated case. In three different occasions with three different teachers I observed the theme of differentiating between, ‘biotic’ (living) and ‘abiotic’ (non-living matter) also as a table based on the children naming in relation to their local knowledge and placing in the ‘correct’ category. In these cases, the children again provided a rich list of abiotic and biotic matter, for example naming the different types of woods used to build the actual classroom they were sitting in or producing an extensive list of locally named plants and animals.

The examples I describe demonstrate that whilst local identity is intentionally legitimized and valued by teachers, the status of official knowledge is not being challenged, but instead apparently reinforced. I would argue that very little critical learning does in fact take place in the classroom, since categories are not explored simply reproduced. I suggest, the children enter the classroom with certain specific knowledge and simply learn what form authorized knowledge takes. I conclude therefore that the legitimization of ‘lo nuestro’ as a process of critical intercultural education is not evidenced. Local knowledge does not appear to become a strategic tool to reveal plural epistemologies and so challenge the hegemony of official subject knowledge.

5.2.2 Equivocation

This raises the question as to why, if in this particular context at the formal political level, work is produced that does positions 'lo nuestro' in contrast to a western hegemonic epistemology, why can this not seem to take place, equally in the classroom? Specifically, given that an epistemological struggle is reflected in the intellectual work positioning a native ideology, why does this same process of translation not occur in the classroom? Does this imply that difference is only being represented as a strategic tool for recognition, responding to the need to publically demonstrate cultural specificity to claim cultural rights? Does a lack of correspondence between discourse and practice, reflect the construction of a native ideology simply as a rhetorical political exercise? I would argue against this type of interpretation as over simplistic.

I propose that in practice the school functions principally as a space of performance. I suggest therefore, fundamentally the function of schooling has not shifted from its original form as that of representing authorized knowledge that 'indigenous' children as 'other' must learn to reproduce, in order acquire citizenship and therefore recognition as subjects. Citizenship criteria may have changed, and expanded, so that currently not only literacy in Spanish is needing to be demonstrated, but so too criteria categorized as 'universal logical skills' through standard evaluations, as well as demonstrating cultural specificity, as previously discussed. In this context, the classroom can then be seen to become per excellence a space to learn to perform, to demonstrate the expected criteria that should be acquired through schooling. From my own observations, for the most part, classroom practice did not focus on exploring forms of knowledge, but on learning to reproduce knowledge presented as authorized subject knowledge. Therefore, from my analysis I conclude, that classroom practice on the ground is not experienced principally in terms of an epistemological concern, i.e. a struggle between different forms of knowledge, aimed at being put into dialogue.

From my analysis, 'inside' knowledge, takes the form of naming into a discourse practice of higher social status. In the lesson example I provided above, my findings suggest, biological classification trumps any other form of naming as

corresponding to a different epistemology. In this particular context, there is little evidence that the school is able to be constructed by teachers as cultural workers, into a space to reveal plural epistemologies. I suggest, teachers experience the principal objective of schooling as, preparing these children to confront the 'outside', by learning to reproduce official knowledge avoiding stigmatization and marginalization. I conclude the school primarily functions as the space to acquire the ability to *demonstrate* citizenship by being able to perform expected criteria, including demonstrating 'culturally specific criteria' representing ethnic difference. In this way, the school continues to be a space for accessing citizenship conceptualized as equivalent to acquiring a universal personhood. I argue that citizenship currently, whilst appearing as inclusive of cultural particularity, does so by having to demonstrate particular criteria in relation to cultural difference, in correspondence to becoming *an* intercultural citizen, driven and framed within government education policy.

I suggest, that teachers do not enunciate assuming an empowered critical subaltern subjectivity in order to reveal epistemological plurality and therefore challenge a universalizing 'western' epistemology. It appears that teachers are unable to assume an empowered position in order to contest official knowledge by revealing difference, in the institutional space of formal schooling, even in the relative politically empowered context that Pumamaki represents. I therefore question that the local objective of schooling should be interpreted as an epistemological concern, from a decolonial theoretical discourse, assuming a juxta positioning between 'local knowledge' in contrast to 'western knowledge' with the object of reveal epistemology as plural. I conclude formal schooling in this context functions principally in relation to avoiding marginalization by ensuring public recognition.

If the school at a local level does not function principally in relation to an epistemological concern, what is at stake in the dispute over local schooling? Considering my analysis of the historical contextualization of the emergence of schooling in Pumamaki described in chapter 2, I propose the school is inserted into the political negotiation of balancing the relative power relationship between 'inside' and 'outside' authority. I suggest that the struggle is over retaining control

of schooling in this territorial space as a formal institution to establish coherence with the construction of an inside cultural project and not only that representing and belonging an outside authority. However, as I have demonstrated the struggle for recognition of internal agency does not translate to that of revealing epistemological plurality in the classroom. The struggle over formal schooling is not enacted as an epistemological struggle in the classroom, but has been conducted as a long-term political struggle for recognition for negotiating relative power to determine the shape and political objective of the School as a formal institution. In the space of the school classroom, local knowledge and official subject knowledge are not 'equal in difference' but presented as apparently equivalent forms. I propose the gap between discourse and practice is not simply one '*of lost in translation*', but that the intellectual work of production of local discourse, functions in a different scenario to that of formal education. What I conclude takes place by the teachers, is the opposite to that of revealing plural epistemologies. Instead through a process of equivocation, I suggest potential different frames of reference are avoided, so that what is named *appears* to be the same thing.

Understanding classroom practice in relation to its function as a performance to learning how to demonstrate criteria for citizenship, enables current teaching practice to be understood as coherent, with the overall long-term political objective. Coherence, however does not reflect the possibility of teachers assuming a critical subaltern subjective position able to transform classroom practice into a space of dialogue between difference in equality, as that positioned from a decolonial theoretical discourse. It would appear that *sacha runa yachay* does not after all take form in the classroom. However, a closer analysis of teacher's enunciations may provide a different interpretation over what is present in the classroom.

I suggest, a shift in theoretical analysis of the process of equivocation taking place through classroom practice, may unexpectedly enable divergent notions of agency to be present. This analysis requires moving away from considering classroom practice in relation to an epistemological concern, i.e. revealing different ways of knowing. I shall develop the argument that divergent agency in

not being revealed, conversely enables a 'radical difference' (Blaser, 2009, 2014) to become present and enacted in this formal institutional space, precisely by not acting as an oppositional category to 'western/outside' knowledge in the classroom.

5.3 Encountering difference beyond a cultural perspective

From my analysis of classroom practice, what I interpret is occurring in the classroom, is that local teachers are conducting an 'uncontrolled equivocation' (De Castro, 2004), avoiding confrontation between forms of knowledge of unequal status and therefore the need to differentiate between them. As describes in anthropological literature equivocation is when a disjuncture occurs so that those in dialogue believe they are communicating about the same concept, 'when in fact what each is referring to is not the same thing' (Viveiros De Castro, 2004, p 9). However, De Castro extends equivocation to consider not only a reference to a conceptual misunderstanding but an ontological difference:

"I conceive of a "misunderstanding" in the specific sense of equivocality found in Amerindian perspectivist cosmology. An equivocation is not just a "failure to understand" (Oxford English Dictionary, 1989), but a failure to understand that understandings are necessarily not the same, and that they are not related to imaginary ways of "seeing the world" but to the real worlds that are being seen...even when misunderstandings are transformed into understandings – like when the anthropologist transforms his initial bewilderment at the natives' way into "their culture," or when the natives understand that what the Whites called, say "gifts" were in reality "commodities" – even here understandings persist in being not the same. The Other of the Others is always other" (Viveiros de Castro, 2004, p 11).

Viveiros de Castro's proposition is that an equivocation is not a misunderstanding between different epistemological perspectives of what things are from different points of view, but by taking Amerindian perspectivism seriously, the perspective, i.e. the point of view is "the world in general" (Viveiros De Castro, 2004, p 11). In

taking seriously an Ameridian perspectivism, the implication over what is enunciated is that humans and non-humans share the same culture though each from their own corporal perspective:

“... animals and spirits see themselves as humans: they perceive themselves as (or become) anthropomorphic beings when they are in their own houses or villages and they experience their own habits and characteristics in the form of culture - they see their food as human food (jaguars see blood as manioc beer, vultures see the maggots in rotting meat as grilled fish, etc.),...”(Viveiros de Castro 1998, p 470)

The notion of perspectivism in this way, is also described as the ability to transform between different corporeal forms. Uzendoski, describes this transformation as ‘metamorphosis’ (see Uzendoski, 2004)⁴⁵ in his research with Napo runas, expressed through oral narratives. As Viveiros De Castro describes one of the most significant aspects about perspectivism, is the capacity to return to the original perspective, the original corporeal form. Therefore, in the encounter with another powerful entity, the capacity to retain the ability to change perspective is essential (Viveiros de Castro, 2004). Perspective and being are the same, the human person and jaguar experience and understand the world in the same way, what differs is the perspective.

A common explanation I have been given in conversations with my Amazonians Kichwa friends including my time in Pumamaki, is that the encounters with Others, should be avoided, described as meetings with ‘supays⁴⁶’ powerful entities that have no fixed corporeal form. Again, it is widely recognized that only some individuals such as the yachaks (powerful shaman) retain and can develop

⁴⁵ For a detailed explanation of the notion of metamorphosis as the ability to change corporal form see Uzendoski, M.A., 2004. Manioc beer and meat: value, reproduction and cosmic substance among the Napo Runa of the Ecuadorian Amazon. *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute*, 10(4), pp.883-902.

⁴⁶ Supays are a wide spread concept across the Andean region. In the encounter with the Spanish colonization as a process of conversion and evangelization, describes how ‘Supays’ were translated in coherence with a Christian theology into the singular as equivalent to ‘the Devil’, clearly an example of equivocation in the opposite direction to that I have been describing practiced by these teachers (Taylor, 1980).

the ability to change physical form, in this changed physical form knowledge as other is acquired not available in human form⁴⁷.

Following Viveiros de Castro's proposition to consider perspectivism seriously, and not convert it into a cultural representation of the world, I conduct a shift in analysis in interpreting classroom practice, away from that of an epistemological concern. De Castro states: "...perspectivism supposes a constant epistemology and variable ontologies, the same representations and other objects, a single meaning and multiple referents" (Viveiros de Castro, 2004, p 6). Considering difference not only in terms of different cultural perspectives about something in common, implies the possibility that what is 'in common' is actually different things. I therefore conduct a shift in my analysis, in order to take seriously the discordant enunciations made by teachers in correspondence with subject knowledge as potentially, over different things.

On one occasion, well into my ethnographic research and so having observed quite a number of lessons and having established a rapport with a several teachers, one of these teachers came up to me and asked politely:

"Dices que vienes a ver sobre educación intercultural bilingüe aquí, pero que ves, como lo ves? Estamos haciendo?"

"You say you've come to study intercultural education here, but what do you see, how do you see it?" "Are we doing it?"

I was taken aback by the question, I was clearly being asked, what was my judgement over their teaching. I felt I was caught up in the palpable tension in defining what should be the 'correct' demonstration of intercultural pedagogic practice. However, if taking seriously Viveiros De Castro's notion of 'Amerindian perspectivism' (Viveiros de Castro, 2004) perhaps in a literal sense, the question posed to me may have gone further.

⁴⁷ for specific examples see Uzendoski, 2004 and Whitten, 1976, chapter 5.

From my analyses of the example of the biodiversity lesson above, I show how the teacher creates an apparent equivalence between 'inside' and 'outside' knowledge, as if about the same thing, i.e. an equivocation. However, I propose the discordance evidenced in classroom practice, may also reflect my ethnographic encounter with an 'alterity' (Holbraad & Pedersen 2017) enabling the taking seriously of a radical difference. I conduct a change in analytical focus, away from revealing an epistemological struggle, to consider divergent agency made present as 'ontological variability' (Latour, 1994) in the classroom. In this way, I link classroom practice with the political objective of positioning schooling as a demand for creating an intercultural utopia in this territorial space. If what can be seen as classroom practice is principally a performance corresponding to the function of schooling for public recognition of cultural particularity, I suggest what is equally significant, is what I cannot see, in what appears as the teacher's discordant enunciations. The act of performance as the principal activity of classroom practice, in avoiding epistemological confrontation, can by taking seriously the presence of an ontological difference (Blaser, 2009, 2014; De la Cadena, 2010, 2015), also be seen as enabling the enactment of a radical difference to pass unnoticed and therefore unchallenged.

I suggest, teachers do indeed enunciate from a subaltern position, but one which in their role as formal teachers is not assumed from a critical subjectivity, as an empowered position in order to challenge discourse practice of higher social status. I propose the passing unnoticed of divergent agency as an equivalence, enables ontological difference to be enacted unchallenged in the classroom in correspondence to 'ways of worlding' (Blaser, 2014, p 55) differently, avoiding further marginalization in the formal space the school represents.

Understanding of agency as divergent, implies a break with framing difference in terms only in relation to the notion of culture, in order to consider agency beyond the human. The position of reevaluating agency, questions the modernist ontological assumption of agency as a uniquely human characteristic in relation to a single fixed material world. Considering divergent agency, requires assuming

an ‘ontological openness’⁴⁸ not only in terms of how things may be seen differently, but to what things maybe, i.e. seeing different things (Holbraad & Pedersen 2017; De la Cadena, 2015; Blaser, 2009)

5.3.1 Divergent agency

Blaser (2009, 2016) acknowledges two significant trends in the reevaluation of agency as divergent. The first labelled as ‘multispecies ethnography and new materialism’ (Blaser, 2016, p 547) is that considering the world as a “lively assemblages of humans and more-than-humans”. This questions the ontological assumption of a subject/object divide, initially appearing in concern with the fields of science and technology studies, (STS). From this theoretical perspective, the socio-material world is considered in constant and dynamic emergence as assemblages of humans and non-humans or more than-humans. Latour (1994) from a philosophical theoretical enquiry on science and technology studies, critiques the Cartesian perspective of ‘the modern’s’ ontological assumption of ‘Nature and Culture’ as external separate transcendental truths (Latour, 1994). The critique is that a universal modern perspective through scientific enquiry is assumed, aiming to explain the world, by separating out our experience of the world in correspondence with an external Nature and Culture, what Latour describes as ‘the work of purification’ (Latour, 1994, p 51). As stated by Latour:

“...the very notion of culture is an artefact created by bracketing Nature off. Cultures – different or universal – do not exist any more than Nature does. There are only natures-cultures, and these offer the only possible basis for comparison” (Latour, 1994, p 104).

Latour’s proposition is that what exists: “is productions of natures-cultures that I am calling collectives – different from sociology – men-among-themselves- (i.e. society) as different ... from the Nature imagined by epistemologists – things-in-themselves (i.e. nature)” (Latour, 1994, p 106). For Latour therefore, the

⁴⁸ Ontological Openness, was a term used by both Martin Holbraad and Marisol de la Cadena and discussed in general in the conference, ‘Rethinking difference’ held in Newcastle University, March 2017. <http://www.ncl.ac.uk/clacs/events/rethinking-difference/>

implication is that there is no transcendental fixed outside whether Nature or Culture, but that transcendence occurs at the same time as immanence (Latour, 1994, p 111-121). By bringing transcendence and immanence together Latour considers that what exists is variable ontologies of natures-cultures. According to Latour all collectives are created and are a product of networks of 'quasi-objects/quasi-subjects' (Latour, 1994), i.e. things, which are both constituted as subject and objects. Of significance is that Latour considers all collectives are comparable in that all constitute dynamic networks of assemblages where: "some things will bear signs i.e. conceived as having agency and others that will not" (Latour, 1994, p 106). The implication is that different collectives create and constitute networks and do not simply have a different perspective on an independent world.

The second trend emerging within the discipline of critical anthropology and often associated with decolonial and postcolonial studies, is that labelled as the 'ontological turn' (Escobar, 2007) which puts forward the notion of 'radical alterity' (Holbraad & Pedersen, 2017; Viveiros De Castro, 2004; Kohn, 2015). Whilst these authors may have different positions in terms of what is being considered as 'ontological', they all position a radical alterity in terms of 'taking seriously' the lack of possible commonality or convergence of a referent, not in terms of a cultural perspective but as an acknowledgement of an ontological limit. For Holbraad and Pedersen (2016) alterity is precisely that which is encountered as a 'non-sense', "that which escapes description in the ethnographic encounter" (Holbraad & Pedersen 2016, p 4), providing the opportunity for the ethnographer to become aware of an equivocation. From this analytical position, taking alterity seriously, is not about formulating a description that makes sense of 'other's' cultural perspective but instead requires an ontological openness as to what the 'thing' encountered is.

If what the referent is, can be taken seriously as different, the demand of interculturalism set in terms of Taylor's discussion of accounting for equal worth between different world views described in chapter 1, is not principally an epistemological concern, i.e. different knowledge about the same thing. This also brings into question the decolonial theoretical assumption that what is at stake is

equal worth of different knowledge from an oppositional subjectivity. As Latour describes, relativism only framed in terms of culture separated from nature, creates a continuous cycle of accusation between those that assume 'truth' as greatest correspondence with an independent world and those that assume only culture as constructing 'reality' (Latour, 1994, p 106 -109). As I described in chapter 1, rational thought, as part of the liberal philosophical debate, is extended as a universal capacity of all human beings, implying the 'other' can no longer be excluded from the political debate of formulating a 'common world'. However, this creates a problem over the incomprehension of what is said about the world in the encounter with different social groups. If all human beings are to be assumed able to think rationally, the problem appears to have been potentially resolved through education practice, by assuming incomprehension as temporary, overcome in a 'dialogue across difference' by pluralising culture.

The point of contention as Latour describes, is that from a cultural relativist perspective bracketing off 'the world' implies no dispute is possible since each world-view is self-contained influenced only by culture, the result is that ultimately reality is determined by power. From a decolonial discourse therefore, world is implicitly bracketed off and reality is pluralized from a subaltern subjectivity in contrasts to a dominant subjective position. On the other hand, from a rights based discourse the implicit assumption is that 'the world' is common to us all, therefore all that needs to be accounted for is different cultural perspectives *on* it, the world is unaffected by difference, bracketing off culture. In terms of what knowledge counts, the result from a theoretical perspective accounting for difference only in terms of culture implies pluralism is either an expansion of universal knowledge, which is not really pluralism or incommensurable parallel worlds at the constant threat of disappearance through imposed hierarchical power relations. Pluralizing only culture leaves unresolved the problem Taylor clearly identifies of the intercultural demand for recognition of equal worth over difference.

In Isabelle Stengers' (2005) critique to Kant's 'cosmopolitics' in formulating 'a common world' by leaving parochialism to one side, Stengers suggests that the building of the 'common world' may not be very common since what is of

legitimate concern is already delineated within the existing political debate (Stengers, 2005, p 996). From this perspective the problem of equality within the political debate, runs deeper, by acknowledging that in the political arena, cultural plurality accounts only for differences in disputes concerning the same thing. I consider Stengers raises the issue, similarly to Lyotard's, 'differend', that only what is delineated in the debate is understood as of concern, i.e. is assumed 'in common', anything beyond is excluded, limiting from the starting point the *possible* world in common. Stengers' proposal as an ethical political position is one of 'slowing down' acknowledging that the silence points to the limits of the starting point of the debate (Stengers, 2005, p 1003). Following Stengers' cosmopolitics, Marisol de la Cadena expresses how in Latin America in recent history, a radical alterity has emerged into the political arena, disrupting politics as usual (De la Cadena, 2010), in other words revealing the limits of the world in common as part of the existing political debate. More recently, de la Cadena describes how "‘earth-beings’ thought to have been long buried as superstition are present agents in ‘Andean cosmopolitics’" (De la Cadena, 2015, p 181). Similarly, Blaser (2009) positioning a 'political ontology', considers that taking seriously a radical difference brings into question what can be understood, *is* at the centre of debate within political conflicts. The implication requires a shift, to expand the notion of what is in dispute, considering that: "humans do not go into conflict with their perspective on things; they go into them along with the nonhuman things that make them act" (Latour, 1993, cited in Blaser, 2016 p 546). For Blaser, a radical difference necessarily implies reconsidering that: "caribou and atiku would not refer to different cultural perspectives on the same "thing," but altogether different (albeit not unrelated) things" (Blaser, 2016, p 546). For Blaser the political implication in terms of what is at stake is one about "ontological conflicts rather than cultural differences" (Blaser, 2016, p 546)

Taking seriously a radical difference as part of my ethnographic enquiry in my encounter with an alterity raises a difficult question: how can I know, for example, that frog and sara-sapu are not the same thing? My knowledge is of 'frog' and not 'sara-sapu', so how do I know what is present, or if indeed the teacher is carrying out an equivocation at all? Holbraad's proposition is that "the ethnographic encounter with a nonsense demands an openness in formulating a different type

of description; one that forces a shift of the ethnographer's means of categorizing in terms of a subject/object divide, in making sense of what things are present" (Holbraad & Pedersen 2017, p 4-6). My own proposal is to go half way in relation to these author's proposal. I aim to stop at the acknowledgement of the encounter with a nonsense and so simply position the demand for slowing down, in terms of what I observe. I propose the demand to slow down reflects the limits of what I can know, but more significantly, the limits of what is considered valid as a matter of concern, contextualized in the formal institutional space that is the school classroom. It is, for this reason that I suggest teachers carry out a process of equivocation.

By shifting analytical focus, the teacher's enunciation of knowledge in relation to the school subject, they assume they are teaching does indeed not make sense and is discordant in terms of the ontological subject/objective divide, of that which is authorized as knowledge to enter the school classroom. However, as I argue through my analysis, the function of the school is not principally disputed at a local level in terms of an epistemological concern, therefore this discordance is permitted and goes unnoticed and unchallenged, allow for ontological difference to be present in the classroom.

5.3.2 Describing the process of communication: the mutual making of partial connections.

Following Strathern's (2005) formulation of partial connections, De la Cadena (2015) describes her own ethnographic research as a translation of the process of communication, in constructing a *grasp* towards each other's mutual understand (De la Cadena, p xxv). Marisol de la Cadena, describes her initial frustration at not achieving a full understanding of her friend Nazario's notion of 'suerte' and the following realization when Nazario declined to repeat or explain further, by stating that: "he had already told me enough about suerte to allow me to get as much as I could" (De la Cadena, 2015, p xxv). Significantly de la Cadena's focus is on the existence of their mutual limit to know, acknowledging

that neither is able to know: “that which the other is speaking in the same terms or even in a mutual new hybrid term” (De la Cadena, 2015, p 4).

Of significance in relation to de la Cadena’s reflection is that in conversation, what is grasped by each continues to be different and so a consensus is not reached in creating something new, ‘a mutual new hybrid’. Different and partial connections are made in the effort of explaining and understanding as a continuous and dynamic process. The notion of rejecting a ‘mutual new hybrid’ is important, since this bringing into question the assumption of ‘understanding’, as a dialectical process were the ideal perceived is assumed as reaching a new conceptualization which implies ‘misunderstanding’ can theoretically be settled, at least temporarily, for the process to start again. Considering De la Cadena proposition, I suggest, there is no such settling, since connections are always partial, a new hybrid is never attained, instead the process of grasping an understanding is dynamic for each in communication.

Communication as De la Cadena is describing, is the process of mutual translation extending each other’s understanding, but not completing it by reaching a midway or by revealing what the other knows. If what the other knows, can never be fully grasped, Taylor’s proposition of a shift in horizons by understanding the other’s categories cannot be achieved, since the issue is not one only of an inclusive perspective on ‘the world’, i.e. an expansive epistemological stand point but includes the possibility of ontology as variable. De la Cadena proposes that what occurred between her and Nazario was: “a shared conversation across different onto-epistemic formations...I could not access the original – or rather there was no original outside of our conversations; their texts and mine were constituted in practice and though they were “only” partially connected, they were inseparable” (De la Cadena, 2015, p xxvii). Central, therefore to de la Cadena’s proposal is that communication and what it reveals is within the practice of the interaction i.e. the conversation, it is not the revealing of the other’s world.

Considering Latour’s notion of existence as networks of quasi-objects/quasi subjects, a conversation cannot describe or reveal a different world, it provides a

connection, to different 'networks' not a wide opening of the door from 'one world' to another since there is no way of stepping through. As Latour describes, "there is no ether, only nodes and connections" (Latour, 1994, p 129). For De la Cadena, what is constructed in the process of communication is incomplete, what Strathern, (2005) refers to as 'more than one but less than two' i.e. 'partial connection' (cited in De la Cadena, 2015, p 31-33).

De la Cadena identifies that whilst her work is indeed a translation, it is not a translation of her friend's original 'cultural text' but of the "conversation to understand each other, a labour between them and including the assistance of others" (De la Cadena, 2015, p 3-4). The result of this 'co-labouring' as de la Cadena names it, was the possibility of gaining: "an awareness of the limits of our mutual understanding and, as important, of that which exceeded translation and even stopped it" (De la Cadena, 2015, p 3). She states: "The practices were what my friends did, and the words said escaped my knowing. Of course, I described them in forms that I could understand; but when I turned those practices or words into what I could grasp, *that* – what I was describing – was not what those practices did, or what those words said" (De la Cadena, 2015, p 3).

I interpret the proposal is that translation as an ethnographic process is not a 'translation' of the other's world but a description of the process of communication. What is revealed in this translation of a process of communication is I consider acknowledging that the description is not in terms of the other's perspectives on the same thing, but a potential revealing of the limitations of what can be explained and understood, i.e. the limitations of what can be known by each other. Therefore, in conversations and co-labouring, we are constructing connections and so partially sharing things. I would also make emphasis that the description is in itself only partial since I can only describe my process of grasping and understanding.

It is important to note that, de la Cadena does not exclude the dynamic and historical process of shared connections, bounded in terms of relative power relations. For example, she states:

“being Peruvians...Our ways of knowing, practicing, and making our distinct worlds – our worldings, or ways of making worlds – had been “circuited” together and shared practices for centuries; however, they had not become one. In the circuit, some practices have become subordinate, of course, but they have not disappeared into those that become dominant, nor did they merge into a single and simple hybrid. Rather, they have remained distinct, if connected...Inhabiting this historical condition that enabled us to constantly know and not know what the other one was talking about...” (De la Cadena, 2015, p 4)

In process of communication, making partial connections and ‘circuited together’ things and practices (De la Cadena, p 4), must also be understood as bounded and contextualized as a historical process within relative power relations. In my interpretation communication does not overcome different understandings, but neither does it leave understanding bereft⁴⁹. Difference cannot disappear in the formation of a hybrid, but neither are connections with an ‘original’, being made, in any direction. It is in this way I interpret Blaser’s description of caribou and atiku as ‘altogether different (*albeit not unrelated*) things’ (Blaser, 2016, my own emphasis) mentioned above. I suggest, communication, as that requiring and demanding acknowledgement of an ontological openness. Rather than revealing difference, communication as a means of translating and explaining, constructing partial connections, evidences mutual limits to know, and therefore questions the political debate in construction about ‘the common world’, as theoretically inclusive, requiring only that of the participation of those that are marginalized. I consider this reflection unsettles the consensual vision of intercultural education as a ‘dialogue’, whether this be the assumption that learning and questioning across difference can construct a broader ‘world view’ i.e. a ‘fusion of horizons’ or the revealing of the impartiality of dominant discourse aimed at a transformational social process, on the basis of created spaces of ‘real dialogue’ across difference.

⁴⁹ According to Watson, difference should not only be ‘witnessed’ as an existing incommensurability as that assumed within Derrida’s formulation of *differance* but instead communication as a grasping understanding is in both directions in making partial connections acknowledging the limits of knowing and is therefore neither a completing or leaving the ‘other’ in a parallel world. See Watson, M. C. (2014) Derrida, Stengers, Latour, and Subalternist Cosmopolitics, Theory, Culture and Society, Vol 31 (1) pp 75-98

My analysis below, is based on describing my 'grasp' and so more importantly the limits of what I could grasp in relation to that which was enunciated in the classroom. I consider acknowledging the demand for an ontological openness reveals the limit to know what is present, understood as a real and dynamic limit and not simply a temporary state. In taking a closer look at classroom practice, I suggest I do not need to make sense of what 'sara-sapu' is, but can acknowledge that sara-sapu may be present that does not make sense as a frog, i.e. is incommensurable with what a frog is. By taking an encounter with an alterity seriously, I aim to interpret that the teacher's enunciations, whilst indeed making no sense, is not a 'mere babble' (McDowell, 1996, p 81)⁵⁰. In the process of conducting an equivocation, I suggest the possibility of the referent being enunciated by the teacher, may reveal some *thing* not in common and beyond the limits of what I can know it to be.

My analysis evidently is a collaborative work as part of what Marisol de la Cadena's describes as a 'co-laboring' (De la Cadena, 2015, p 15), taking place in communication with others. Though the text is my own description, this involved a process of co-labouring as part of my ethnographic research in conducting and producing a collaborative translation. The process of collaborative translation of classroom transcripts, enabled a slowing down allowing for my encounter with a nonsense, acknowledging the need for an ontological openness in taking seriously the enactment of a radical difference, present in the classroom.

The significance of *my* encounter with a 'nonsense' (Holbraad & Pendersen, 2017, p 4) present in the classroom of Pumamaki, is not as I interpret in terms of an individual experience, but in responding to Stengers' political critique towards

⁵⁰ Wittgenstein describes that a 'babble' is a literal nonsense, similar to a baby's use of sounds. However, Wittgenstein reflects that language cannot be a mere babble since language is public, language is not simply the speaking of what is in one's head as an individual perception of the world, refuting in this way a Cartesian model. (Wittgenstein 2010, p cxxxvii) Wittgenstein, L., 2010. *Philosophical investigations*. John Wiley & Sons. McDowell following Wittgenstein develops the notion of an utterance in contrast to that of a 'mere babble' as follows: "*If a bit of, say, vocal behaviour is to constitute making a novel remark, as opposed to mere babble, it must be capable of being understood by people who would not have thought of saying that themselves. An utterance could not make a place for itself in a comprehending mind from scratch, reshaping wholesale its audience's conception of the possibilities. Even a thought that transforms a tradition must be rooted in the tradition that it transforms. The speech that expresses it must be able to be intelligibly addressed to people squarely placed within the tradition as it stands.*" (McDowell, 1996 p 81)

'what is in question'. My encounter with a nonsense I propose reflects the limits of what is legitimately considered a matter of concern in the space of formal schooling, as part of the existing political debate. I conclude epistemological difference is not revealed in actual teaching practice, since the limits of what legitimately can be considered to be known, are already established. I propose that what classroom practice in the case of Pumamaki reveals, is that what is at stake, is not only a cultural perspective but an ontological dispute, since radical alterity can only be made present by passing unnoticed creating a nonsense, or else emptied as a means of worlding, by being limited to a cultural perspective.

Below I describe and stop at the moment of realization of having to slow down in order to grasp an understanding in co-labouring with others. I attempt to describe as fully as possible the moment which did not make sense, in the encounter with the enunciations made between teachers and students in the classrooms of Pumamaki. In this way, I hope I may be closer to responding more fully to the teachers request described previously, inquiring; 'what do *you* see?'

5.4 Collaborative 'translation' of classroom practice

As part of my research an important element, was my continued formal learning of Kichwa, with a previous colleague and friend. Rumi, my formal Kichwa teacher, has been a significant co-labourer in the work of reflecting and interpreting through conversations creating partial connections. At the time of my research Rumi was in his last year of his 5-year degree course in teaching and linguistics at the state university in Quito. He has for many years taught Kichwa and more recently also worked as an official translator. Rumi in his mid-40s, describes himself as Puruha, born in the highland region of Chimborazo and son of an indigenous leader involved in the fight for reclaiming land rights over the large haciendas during the early 60s. Rumi's own life experience as he described to me, has always been linked to an indigenous political process, personally politically committed though not necessarily as a leading spokesperson.

During my research, I spent many hours with Rumi not only learning Kichwa, but also listening to his explanations, reflecting and sometimes arguing over

educational and other issues. We were both intensely interested in discussing education and difference, so though we shared experiences by the connections we both inhabit, there is also many different connections we do not share. The conversations with Rumi and his explanations over Kichwa were part of the communication process of creating partial connections. Most importantly the work of transcribing the audios I judged relevant, recorded during my fieldwork, were carried out together. In the specific work of transcribing these audio recording, it is important to note that Rumi unlike the teachers of this region is one of those few individuals that is highly knowledgeable of standardized Kichwa and the associated technical/political disputes. Rumi's own vernacular also differs from that of the teachers and students I recorded, therefore transcribing was not always as straightforward as it may appear and on occasions, we had to make consensual choices. However overall, though mostly following the current standardized written format, the transcript stayed as close as we could to the vernacular expressed.

5.4.1 A lesson on: the 'earth's crust'

The transcript and translation below is from my recording of a year 5 primary school lesson, I observed on the subject of the 'earth's crust'. This lesson took place in the largest primary school of Pumamaki, located adjacent to the central square. It is also the oldest school, which I described previously in chapter 2, built with the auspices of the Dominican missionary in the 1960s. The class, unlike the biodiversity lesson described previously was only composed of one grade with 14 children of ages between 10 to 12 years of age. Carlos, the teacher, in his early 40s is a family community member and had participated in the in-situ university teacher training program. Carlos explained that he had trained as a teacher by request of the community many years back as a result of the opportunities to do so through the establishing of IBE. He expressed that initially he had not thought to become a teacher but had grown to enjoy teaching and would continue unless political conditions forced him otherwise.

Carlos initiated the lesson by opening the textbook for natural sciences on the page covering the topic of the earth's layers. The lesson therefore in terms of a

school subject, would correspond to a geography lesson, specifically relating to physical geography. Carlos, drew a picture of the globe on the board and indicated the three layers described in the textbook. He then told the children that for this lesson they were going to talk about the top layer (the earth's crust). Below I reproduce and analyse part of this lessons transcripts, that Rumi and I worked on transcribing and translating together:

	Transcription	Spanish translation	English translation
T	Pachaka kaymi kan. Yachangapak chaypimi tiakun. Pero nukanchikka kaypi kanchik. Imatak kaypika tiyan.	Esto es el mundo. Aquí existe con el fin de que aprendamos. Pero nosotros estamos aquí. ¿Que cosas existe aquí?	This is the world. It exists with the purpose that we learn. But we are here. What exists here?
S	Aycha, Runa	Carne, Personas	Meat, People

(T=teacher speaking, S=Student(s) speaking)

'Pacha' is a Kichwa term highly discussed in the literature relating to Andean cosmology as undifferentiated 'time/space' describes as a conceptualization of 'the cosmos' (Estermann, 2009). Mannheim states how the Dominican missionaries identified the use of 'pacha' as denoting, 'world', 'universe' and 'sky', but strangely in some regions denoted clothing, in reference to covering (Mannheim, 1991, p 135). In everyday speech, as I have most commonly encountered, 'pacha' can be used to speak about specific time and specific space.

In the context of this geography lesson, the teacher seemed to be clearly referring to the concept of a physical world by drawing a diagram of the earth and then pointing to it. Therefore, 'pachaka' here, appears to correspond to the pointing to the planet earth. The next sentence is a little more obscure since in reference to the Earth, the Carlos the teacher statement, "Yachangapak chaypimi

tiakun” (It exists with the purpose that we learn), required some interpretation. In translation, did this statement refer to the notion of ‘learning about the earth’? And, was the teacher making a statement in relation to learn by living on the earth, i.e. through our experiences? This sounded a likely interpretation, since the teacher then moved on to ask; ‘what exists here?’, pointing specifically to the outer layer of the diagram, i.e. the earth’s crust. In response, the most audible child said; “Aycha, Runa” (meat and person). I consider this response is similar to that I described in the previous lesson observation, reflecting what this particular child encounters in his lived experience. For this child, what is most significant is clearly ‘meat and people’. The teacher seems to want to focus the attention specifically on living beings and continued to ask what else they knew exists, as I reproduce below:

	Transcription	Spanish translation	English translation
T	Kawsaypish, Kawsayta charikpish. Imakunatak kaypika tiyan?	<i>la vida también. Los que vivimos también. ¿Que existe aquí?</i>	Life too. Those of us that live too. What exists here?
S	Animales, Chagra, Runa, Pato, Pesca, Gato, Apango, Pishku, Wasi, Muyu.	<i>Animales, Chakra, Personas, Pato, Pescado, Gato, Apango, Pájaros, Casa, Semilla.</i>	Animals, Chakra (family agricultural plots), people, duck, fish, cat, apango, birds, house, seeds

(T=teacher speaking, S=Student(s) speaking)

In response to the teacher’s intervention, the children reply with other things they commonly experience and know, the only thing Rumi and I were unable to translate was ‘apango’. What was apparent so far, was that the teacher was describing the concept of a physical material world, describing the earth’s layers by focusing on the top layer, i.e. the earth’s crust and bringing it to the familiar. The class therefore in considering the earth and what it is, is doing so in terms of what is familiar and significant to the individuals in this classroom. This is a

common and evidently appropriate pedagogic practice. From here however, a curious thing takes place in the process of our transcribing this lesson transcript:

	Transcription	Spanish Translation	English translation
T	Chaypash kawsan. Pitak kangunaman kawsayta karawarka.	Viven otros también. Quien, brindo/compartió la vida a ustedes?	Others live too. Who, shared life with you?
T	Imawantak kawsanchik? Sachawan? Sami muyu tiyan.	¿Con que vivimos? ¿Con la selva? Existe sami muyu.	With what do we live? With the forest? <i>Sami muyu exist.</i>

(T=teacher speaking, S=Student(s) speaking)

Here, after the children have provided a concrete list of things commonly in this forest region, the teacher acknowledges their response, but prompts a fuller explanation, stating: “Chaypash kawsan” (others live also) and then asking: “Pitak kangunaman kawsayta karawarka?” The literal translation of this, is; ‘Who with you life shared’. The semantic English translation could correspond to, formulating the question - ‘who gave you life?’ From a biological perspective, the direct response would be, our parents. However, the teacher continues, asking ‘Imawantak kawsanchik?’ (with what do we live with?) then probing by saying ‘sachawan?’ (with the forest?). This means the initial question cannot be translated to refer to the concrete biological sense of one’s parents granting life but refers to the notion of ‘who is life giving’. If the answer as the teacher seems to position, is the forest, then ‘who’ also seems discordant since ‘forest’ would have to be translated into a ‘who’, i.e. a form of agency.

In responding to his own question of who grants life, the teacher states; ‘Sami muyu tiyan’. It was here that Rumi became unsure of how to translate and we were forced to slow down. Rumi was in doubt as to what the teacher was enunciating with ‘sami muyu’.

'Muyu' in kichwa can refer directly to a seed, or bud⁵¹. As a verb 'muyuna' more abstractly refers to a circular action. Mannheim in analysing the significance and complexity over reciprocity as a cyclical, circular motion refers to various terms. He states: "One of the pre-Colombian epithets for the deity Wiraqucha *tiqsi muyu* 'beginning or root circle' (Mannheim 1991, p 91). Mannheim, also describes that making a circular motion with the hands is a common expression for Quechua speakers in general (Mannheim, 1991, p 91). 'Sami' according to the recently updated Kichwa/Spanish dictionary is translated to varieties and also refers to happiness, fulfilment and energy (Ministerio de Educación, 2009, p 122-123)⁵². For Rumi 'sami muyu' could have been translated as 'varieties of seeds' referring to the biological diversity of plants, however, Rumi considered that 'sami muyu' is not equivalent to 'varieties of seeds' or even exactly that of 'the diversity of living things' in a biological sense but is something quite different. He drew a spiral on the note book we had to annotate and explained that, 'sami muyu' is the seed at the centre of a spiral describing this as: "con la existencia de la fuerza inicial" (with the initial force of existence) (Rumi, 2015). My questions and Rumi's explanations took some time, but my grasp of what Rumi was explaining was that *sami muyu* is a point of origin, referring to a form of undifferentiated energy, giving rise to all differentiated beings, it is where life spirals out from, from an undifferentiated life-giving source. In summary as I understood, *sami muyu* is something like: 'the seed of life giving energy'. In this co-labouring work of communicating the translation of the lesson transcript, both the terms 'forest' and 'living varieties' generate a disjuncture. In other words, what 'thing' is the teacher talking about?

I had the opportunity to return to Pumamaki after working on this transcript with Rumi and so felt it important to explore and ask what was being referred to when saying *sami muyu*. My initial interest was to know if *sami muyu* could refer to that which Rumi tried to make me understand in practice or was this simply a theoretical academic concept? I therefore, asked a neighbour further along from where I had stayed in Pumamaki known as a 'curandero' (healer) described as a

⁵¹ From the Kichwa/Spanish dictionary [Kichwa: Yachukukunapa Shimiyuk kamu, 2009] published by the Ministry of Education.

⁵² *sami* – dicha, alegría, felicidad, ventura; fortaleza / [*sami*] – comp. clase, variedad in Kichwa: Yachukukunapa Shimiyuk kamu, 2009, p 122 -123

minor yachak as opposed to the powerful yachaks, what was sami muyu? He did not hesitate in answering and pointing to the horizon he said ‘alla en el monte, es sami muyu’ (over there in the forest is sami muyu) making a circular motion with his hand. He then just walked away, granting no further explanation. Of course, I also had to ask Carlos, the teacher what he meant when he said sami muyu. In contrast, he replied ‘variedad de semillas’. I explained to Carlos the discussion over the transcript I had with Rumi. He showed interest in this and said, “puede ser” (it could be).

In the classroom, Carlos was clearly talking about the earth’s crust made up of physical matter, i.e. material objects, however, in Pumamaki, *sami muyu* could also evidently be something else. I suggest, in this geography lesson, as in the previous biodiversity lesson, *sami muyu* was not identified as anything other than that which made sense as matter, in relation to the forest to be found on the earth’s crust. However, as Rumi and I worked through the transcript, translation became slower again, evidencing a disjuncture between the lesson subject and that enunciated by Carlos, i.e. between ‘things’ that should be understood as material objects and those enunciated as having agency:

	Transcription	Spanish translation	English translation
T	Mikunaka, kawsayta kun. Kay sachá manyapi inti mashi shamurawn. Intika maymantatak llukshiy ushan? Kay sachamanta... amsa, pakalla, ama pay kayman pasakta yaykumuchun nishpa	<i>La comida, nos da la vida. En el borde de la selva el amigo sol siempre está viniendo. ¿El sol de donde tiene el poder de nacer? Por la selva es oscuro, es oculto, no se le permite traspasar.</i>	Food gives us life. On the edge of the forest our friend the sun is always coming. Where does the sun have its energy to be born? Within the forest it is dark, it is hidden, it is not given permission to pass through.

(T=teacher speaking, S=Student(s) speaking)

Here Carlos explicitly mentions the sun as a living entity, firstly as: “inti mashi shamurawn” (a friend that is coming), then in querying: “Intika maymantatak

llukshiy ushan?” (where does it have the power to be born?) This is a nonsense, i.e. an ethnographic encounter that does not make sense, demanding an ontological openness. The sun can only be ‘born’ as I am able to grasp, in a metaphorical sense and therefore the question in referring to ‘the power to be born’, makes no sense. Furthermore, the teacher states: “Kay sachamanta... amsa, pakalla, ama pay kayman pasakta yaykumuchun nishpa”, (it is the forest that denies the sun permission to enter), implying that both forest and sun interact as agents with individual wills.

Further on in the lesson a similar thing is repeated, whereby a ‘soil type’ is also enunciated as an agent, unwilling to give life or to be more precise ‘red soil’, lacks the power that other soils apparently do have:

	Transcript	Spanish translation	English translation
T	Puka allpaka mana vidata, mana tukuy sami vidata payka mana tarpukpi kusha nin. Mana ushanchu. Imamanta?	La tierra roja no tiene vida, todas las formas de vida no tiene, cuando sembramos no quiere dar las variedades de vida. No tiene poder. ¿Por qué?	Red earth does not have life, it doesn't have all the forms of life. When we plant it doesn't want to give the varieties of life. It doesn't have power. Why?

(T=teacher speaking, S=Student(s) speaking)

From the transcript above, I consider the naming of ‘puka allpaka’ (red soil) is *made* to seem equivalent to an inert material, however, it is continued to be spoken as agent, unwilling to provide life, because it is without power. The last statements: “Mana ushanchu. Imamanta?” (It has no power. Why?) indeed make no sense to me.

I interpret that throughout this lesson, there is a disjuncture between the teacher’s enunciations and the theme of the lesson. In other words, ‘the ‘earth’s crust’ assumed as a physical description of a material earth, is actually being enunciated as the ‘earth’s crust’ that is made up of multiple entities with agency.

Assuming an analytical shift in order to take seriously Carlos' enunciations implies acknowledging an ontological difference as that which I do not and cannot know. The denying of an ontological difference would only leave open the interpretation that the teacher is literally making no sense. However, this type of statements occurred repeatedly and are not just a one off, children and teachers are not unsettled by them, they are statements that are publically accepted as making sense. I interpret, in this lesson something similar occurred to that of the lesson on biodiversity, previously described.

My analysis suggests, that teachers are highly aware that what they are required to teach is school subject knowledge and they are doing this by relating subject knowledge to their local context. They are also aware from specific teacher training initiatives and courses, promoting a constructivist pedagogy, that it is important to validate children's own knowledge and experiences. It would seem therefore that these teachers are attempting to conduct an intercultural education following educational trends that position a constructivist pedagogy. However, as previously discussed, overall teaching practice did not portray enquiry and creative production but tended to focus on reproducing content. Therefore, describing what is going on and what pedagogic practice teachers are developing is not straightforward. Carlos could be talking about the sun and forest in a metaphorical sense, but the fact that Carlos constantly enunciates things as having agency implies that it is difficult for him to do otherwise. In talking about the forest, I consider Carlos' intention is, bringing the forest into a geography lesson on the earth's crust as that which is of common experience, attempting to generate equivalence, but which in effect creates disjuncture.

I suggest, the teachers' lived and historical experience of subalternization, means these teachers are intensely aware of the classroom as a space of authority, and so 'things' that do not correspond to official knowledge cannot be openly present. I suggest these teachers are not intentionally describing subject knowledge through enunciations that are discordant. In other words, the teachers' concern is not that of creating a space of equality through revealing epistemological plurality, they are not assuming a politically conscious position, in this respect. Instead I consider, they prioritize making links with what is already authorized knowledge

assuming *equivalence*. The result is that these enunciations, are discordant with things to be known through subject knowledge and therefore do not make sense. I interpret that the teachers are doing something which can be described as opposite to that assumed through a critical intercultural pedagogy, i.e. of demystifying official knowledge in relation to unequal power relations by exploring different ways of knowing. In these lessons, difference is not explored, but included without clashing with the assumed school subject knowledge.

However, what I propose is highly relevant is that in this creating of equivalence, a space is made for divergent agency not to be confronted, and therefore not to be further marginalized or discredited in the classroom as a space of authorized knowledge. A contrast between 'local' knowledge and official knowledge is avoided since divergent agency passes unnoticed. I propose what is taking place is a process of construction of continuous equivocation, as a process of learning. I suggest things of formal school subjects are made to seem equivalent to local things, so that worlding differently is not openly challenged by official knowledge of higher status, instead appearing as harmonious with this higher status discourse practice.

5.5 Domesticating formal education

What takes place appears to be a form of syncretism whereby a dominant imposition cannot be openly challenged but instead is accepted as if representing the same thing symbolically, whilst diverting its meaning and function (See, Sahlins, 1993)⁵³. However, I suggest, if indeed what takes place in classroom practice is a form of syncretism in creating equivalence, taking seriously a radical alterity, implies moving beyond considering only different perspectives on the same thing and consequently the relative power to impose a 'world view'. What is at play, is the presence of different, though as Blaser states, 'not unrelated things'. Whilst I suggest that teachers cannot assume in their role as teachers an

⁵³ Sahlins, M. (1993). Goodby to Tristes Tropes: Ethnography in the Context of Modern World History. *The Journal of Modern History*, 65(1), 1-25, describes syncretism as an on-going process that is not eternally referenced to a past symbolism, but is actualized in the present and therefore is not a vestige of that, ever diluted in the present.

empowered subaltern position, and therefore do not conduct this process of equivocation as a politically conscious act, I consider that neither can this process of equivocation be described as simply a passive unconscious act. Instead I propose the concept of education is being 'domesticated' conducted as a long-term collective process within the struggle to sustain relative autonomy.

Greene, (2009) in his work with Aguaruna of the Peruvian Amazon region, describes the active process of domesticating the term 'indigeneity', as the notion of 'customization' a foreign concept (Greene, 2009, p 17). Greene states that the process of domestication, is: "the active struggle involved in redefining and so reducing the tension in the confrontation with that which is foreign..." (Greene, 2009, p 17). According to Greene, it is in this way that 'indigenous' is conceptualized as traditional. In other words, customization "manipulates an unknown concept so as to make it tolerable as own" (Greene, 2009, p 16-17). 'Indigeneity' as a foreign concept, intrinsic to the notion of 'other', is therefore actively appropriated as a political process, by particular social/political actors. Significantly Greene highlights and describes that the limits of redefining, occur between social political actors within relative power relationships in time and in particular spaces determining the possibilities of negotiation (Greene, 2009, p 18). A foreign concept, as I interpret, is that which creates 'other' and so the process of domesticating a foreign concept, is therefore an intrinsically dynamic political process. I suggest what takes place between the production of local discourse and the possibilities of translation of classroom practice, in Pumamaki can be described as the process of domesticating the concept of 'education' so as to make it tolerable and functional to the local political project.

Bringing together Rappaport's analysis of dynamic and highly contextualized boundary formation in order to position an intercultural utopia and Greene's notion of customization, I propose 'education' is in the same way as 'indigeneity' a foreign concept intrinsic to the notion of 'other' in becoming and acquiring a type of personhood. I suggest, that divergent agency passes unnoticed of the disjuncture between the assumed school subject and the teacher's enunciations, is possible as part of the on-going collective political process, that aims to include 'lo nuestro' into the space of the school classroom. Specifically, this means that

the on-going collective political process has resulted in these teachers, teaching in this location, to these children, communicating in their language, about common experiences and practices. In this way, the continuation of what takes place in the school classroom is not disassociated with what takes place outside the classroom, but neither can it be taken for granted. The current context and pedagogic practice is the result of a complex and on-going political process between different social actors, defined by the people of Pumamaki as that which correspond to an 'inside' and that which corresponds to 'outside'.

Whilst classroom observations did not reveal that in their role as teachers, these individuals through their teaching practice assumed an empowered subaltern subjective position, these same individuals were clearly conscious of negotiating 'inside' and 'outside' relations and boundaries. Teachers were aware of legitimizing the children's experiences and enunciations of local practices, therefore when the school subject apparently *could* be brought to relate to the local context, overall teachers tended to do this. The 'environment', the 'forest' and all it contained were regularly part of lessons whenever a tangible link could be made. I propose what is in dispute from a local political perspective has been the notion of 'the school' itself, and not in practice a concern over epistemologies, i.e. contesting ways of knowing. As I have explored historically, this is because in the lived experience 'the school' continues to represent, not a space of acquisition of knowledge but acquisition of citizenship.

The limits and possibilities of continuing to define the school in construction of something own, i.e. 'una educacion propia' (our own education), depends on the limits and possibilities of a continuous and active process of interpretation and translation as part of a political process. In practice, the school as a space of authorized knowledge is not challenged, since this would result in negating a space for negotiating recognition on the bases of sameness as equal political subjects, i.e. citizens. Instead formal schooling as the process of acquisition of knowledge has to be translated in some form that can be understood in relation to 'lo nuestro', so as to not further undermine the possibilities of continuing to construct an 'inside'. I suggest what takes place by teachers who assume a political commitment over schooling linked to a local cultural project are indeed

attempting to balance 'lo nuestro' and 'lo de afuera'. However, this is not possible as an explicit epistemological dispute, but instead I propose can be seen as a long-term process of domesticating 'education' in the formal space the school represents.

From my analysis of classroom discourse I consider 'ancestral education' conceptualized in terms of 'lo nuestro', and 'western education' in terms of 'lo de afuera', are positioned as matters of concern over formal schooling. It is in this way that the utopian demand of an encounter between 'inside and outside' as equals, is made explicit. I propose, the positioning of an 'ancestral education' in contrast to a 'western education' provides the possibilities of interpreting and translating 'becoming educated' so as to be made tolerable with the demand for retaining relative autonomy. This means a process of making sense of schooling, in a form where the tension created between formal education as a means of becoming the 'same' and therefore able to be recognized by the State and a claim to ethnic cultural difference, is made relatively coherent with the long term political struggle for equal recognition. In practice, I suggest this reduces the level of disruption for the continued possibilities of worlding differently.

5.5.1 Questioning 'knowledge' between ancestral and western education

Here I reproduce and analyse the co-labouring practice of transcribing and translating classroom transcripts I recorded from by observations of a particular lessons that took place in Pumamaki secondary school discussing 'Ancestral' verses 'Western' education. The lesson was part of the school subject named as 'Cosmovision de las nacionalidades' (nationalities cosmovision's) that took place in one of the secondary school classrooms consisting only of a straw roof. The students sat on individual chairs dispersed in the shape of a semi-circle facing the teacher at one end where the white board was propped up against two chairs. The class was made up of 18 students of both young women and men, whose ages ranged from 16 to 21 and the teacher, Froilan in his late 40s early 50s.

Froilan is one of the older cohort of teachers and so has many years of experience, he is also one of the individuals who expressed having always wanted to become a teacher. Froilan is a family member of one of Pumamaki's outlying communities and has seven children all of which attend school in Pumamaki. In a conversation with Froilan describing part of his life story, he told me how he had struggled against the wishes of his parents to go to school. He explained that he had very much wanted to go to the mission when he was young, but beyond the first grades, his family hadn't allowed him to continue with his schooling. He described how he believed his parents were wrong and how the local missionary had tried to convince them to allow this promising student to continue, but to no avail. Consequently, Froilan in his teenage years had run away from home to attend the missionary school under the auspices of the Dominican missionaries in Puyo. He described how he had felt disappointed, since in the mission the children and young people were forced to work hard and treated as free labour to compensate for their upkeep, and often discriminated against. However, Froilan emphasised that he continued to think education was necessary and important, 'para ser alguien' (in order to be somebody), but that he also felt it important to respect his community and follow the customs of his upbringing. He said that he had learnt much from his elderly father in law who he lived with and had followed the tradition of getting up before dawn for the 'toma de huayusa'. 'Toma de huayusa' is described as a common Amerindian practice of this Amazon region and is an important part of the ritual practice for interpreting 'dreams'⁵⁴. Froilan stated that his children and wife only took part on occasions.

Froilan had for the last couple of years been given responsibility to teach the subject of 'cosmovision' as a weekly hourly lesson. Important to note, is that in contrast to all other subjects this lesson at the time of my research, had no clear curricula guidelines or associated text-book. This particular lesson, was based on a task that Froilán had given the students previously, to discuss with their families the changing relationships between young people and elders. The students had

⁵⁴ See, Bilhaut, A.G., 2010. *El sueño de los záparas: Patrimonio onírico de un pueblo de la Alta Amazonía*. Flacso-Sede Ecuador, develops an ethnographic work with Zapara indigenous leaders, describing the importance and significance of interpreting a 'good dream', in the process of reclaiming specific ethnic identity as Zaparas.

presented their findings in groups prompted by Carlos, who summarized what was said on the white board (writing mostly in Spanish) and used this to lead the discussion, part of which I reproduce in the table below:

	Transcription	Spanish translation	English Translation
S	Antes maska yayakunawan yachak tukuy punlla kashpa, yachak karkanchik.	Antes más pasábamos con los padres, todo el día se sabía, así sabíamos.	Before we would be with our parents all day we would be getting to know, that way we knew.

S	Kunanpi nikpika, kay educación yachay kunaman shamushpa	Decimos que aquí (refiriéndose al aula), esta educación viene hacia el conocimiento.	We say is that here (referring to the classroom) with this education is where knowledge comes to.
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T	Kanguna nishkangichic Kaycomportamiento con mayores, educación ancestral, consejo constante en la toma de huayusa, nishpa.	Ustedes han dicho que este comportamiento con mayores es educación ancestral, consejo constante en la toma de <i>huayusa</i> , dicen.	You have said that this behaviour of the elders is ancestral education, the constant advice in the taking of <i>huayusa</i> . It is said.
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(T=teacher speaking, S=Student(s) speaking)

The student refers to 'yaya-kuna-wan', which Rumi and I translated as 'con los padres' (with parents). 'Yaya' during the colonial period was translated by missionaries to refer to the term 'father' as biological parent, but also for some time in relation to 'our father' representing the Christian God. This was because 'yaya' address a form of respect to male elders, protectors of the family (Avila,

1987, p 33)⁵⁵. However, as Whitten (1976) analyses, elders for Canelos Kichwa's is regularly described extending beyond those that are 'biologically' alive, not as a symbolic reference but as an actual current relationship⁵⁶. During my own ethnographic research in various conversations, elders and ancestors were also described as present in diverse non-human form, as for example the energy force of the stone belonging to a powerful yachak, again described in detail by Whitten's anthropological research in relation to the communities of the Bobonaza river. By adding *kuna* to *yaya* in this way is pluralized the term for elders/parents and 'wan' is a conjoining morpheme equivalent to 'with'. Therefore, 'Yayakuna' as expressed by the student in this sentence seems to refer to the students' parents in general, but to be noted is that yayakuna may also exceed this specific referent.

The student also states: 'kay educación yachay kunaman shamushpa' (with this education is where knowledge comes) indicating that it is *this* education, understood as what they were currently doing in the classroom, that is said knowledge comes to, in contrast to a continuous daily process of accompaniment with parents. The teacher Froilan makes a further specific distinction with what the student mentions above, in relation to education now and before. Froilan, uses the term 'mayores' and states that the students are referring to a *behaviour* with elders 'comportamiento con mayores' in the practice of the 'toma de huayusa' as ancestral education. Froilan uses the term 'educacion ancestral-mara'. Clearly 'educacion' and 'ancestral' are terms in Spanish, however by adding 'mara' which is a Kichwa term used to indicate greater certainty with what is being said, whilst not claiming to be the direct source of this knowledge, Froilan is highlighting this something, as most certainly true, even if not of his direct experience. Froilan, further specifies that the behaviour with elders in the "toma de huayusa, es consejo constant" (*toma de huayusa* is constant advice). However, translating 'consejo constant' as 'constant advice' creates a gap as that discussed above described by de la Cadena. Of significance in this discussion is that Froilán points to the practice of the *toma de huayusa* as the behaviour with

⁵⁵ For a full description, see Avila, F.D. (1987) *Ritos y tradiciones de Huarochiri del siglo XVII*. G. Taylor, transl. Lima: Instituto de Estudios Peruanos e Instituto Francés de Estudios Andinos.

⁵⁶ See Whitten, 1976, Chapter 5

elders as that which is ancestral education. As indicated previously, toma de huayusa is a specific practice of interpretation of dreams, lead usually by a family elder to gain knowledge given in the dream. From my own experience, living with my Kichwa friends, similarly to that which Bilhaut, (2010) describes in relation to Zapara Amazonians, it is through the interpretation of specific types of dreams linked to a particular state of awareness that requires careful interpreting and provides ‘advice’ communicated by those Others that are more knowledgeable about how things are. Therefore, it is likely that a further gap is created translating ‘yayakuna’ as a direct equivalent only to parents or living elders. Yayakuna could also refer to the advice granted in dreams by non-living elders and significant Others.

Froilan then continues to specify the contrast between ancestral and western education, as I reproduce below:

	Transcription	Spanish Translation	English Translation
T	Kunan, kayman compañero ñuka <u>nisha,kay</u> shamanismo dietatami nisha, porque era educación ancestral, era shamanismo; trabajo, la pesca, la cacería, todo eso entra la educación, pero ahora en la actualidad la educación es occidental, mira occidental tukukunchik. Este	Ahora, sobre esto, lo que ha dicho nuestro compañero voy a decir de la dieta, shamanismo, porque era educación ancestral. Era shamanismo; trabajo, la pesca, la cacería, todo eso entra en la educación. Pero ahora en la actualidad la educación es occidental. Mira, convirtiéndonos/ volviéndonos occidental. Esta educación occidental, no creo que	Now a day, about what our ‘compañero’ has said, I’m going to talk about the diet, shamanisms, because this was ancestral education. Shamanism is; work, fishing, hunting, all this comes into the education. But now, currently the education is westernized. Look, making us westernized. This western education, I don’t think is like this

	educación occidentalka, manashi payrayku ninimi.	es así, con este propósito digo.	(as in like shamanism/ancestral education), it is for this reason that I speak (about this).
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(T=teacher speaking, S=Student(s) speaking)

Here, Froilan describes ancestral education as ‘dieta’ (diet) in relation to Shamanism, which he states also as ‘work, fishing, hunting’, involving all that is ancestral education in contrast to what is education currently, as ‘occidental’ (western). What Froilan appears to indicate is that ancestral education is a completely different practice to that of ‘western’ education, the type of education they are currently involved in as part of formal schooling. The way this distinction is being discussed would appear to address a contrast as across time, i.e. ancestral as past traditional practices, with western as current educational practice. If this was all there were to say, then the discussion so far appears to indicate a nostalgic reflection, however, I suggest the conversation of this lesson has a specific contemporary function, as I continue to explore below.

Froilán says; ‘ahora en la actualidad la educación es occidental, mira occidental, tukukunchik’. The term ‘tukuk...’ was one that also created a pause in the process of co-labouring translation and which Rumi was hesitant to easily translate. Rumi explained to me, that tukuk is ‘convirtiendose’ (becoming) but is also understood as an act of physically turning to face that which determines the process of transformation. Rumi entered into a long explanation on the significance of the direction one is facing in relation to transforming and the importance of facing towards ancestors. It is widely acknowledged as part of Andean cosmovision that ancestors are in front, i.e. you walk backwards facing the ancestors, in contrast to the progressive notion of facing the future. Rather than anchoring this as Andean ‘cosmovision’, which has the danger of essentializing, I consider the moment in the collaborative translation that demanded a slowing down, points to a significant gap and therefore the act of creating partial connections.

In this case, slowing down at 'tukukunchik' provided the opportunity to consider what sort of 'becoming' as an act of 'converting or transforming' in relation to education was being enunciated. Rumi associates the process of becoming with who or what one is facing. The notion of facing in relation to becoming clearly needs exploring as a controlled equivocation. Of interest is that Froilan mentions facing in relation to converting/transforming and describes the direction of facing in opposition to ancestral education by stating: "pero ahora en la actualidad la educación es occidental, mira occidental, tukunchik", (but currently education is western, it faces west transforming us). Facing 'west' in this way can be understood as determining the process of transformation, i.e. of becoming western. However, considering Viveiros De Castro's conceptualization of Amerindian perspectivism, whereby being is perspective, the process of becoming something other, is also a means of knowing from a different perspective. In this way transformation as a becoming something other, may not though of necessarily as fixed or progressive in a particular direction, as corresponds to western philosophical thought.

Froilan makes a remark that I consider implicitly points to the potential gap in the notion of what knowing related to becoming is. Froilan states: "este educación occidentalka, manashi" (this western education is not the same), suggesting that western education is perhaps not the same as what they have been discussing ancestral education to be. It is interesting that Froilán uses the term '-shi' after 'mana' (no or not) since -shi is a term that also distances the speaker as director author of a statement⁵⁷. I consider Froilan is distancing himself as an authoritative source of the statements he pronounces, because it is to do with Shaminism as a process of knowing, i.e. 'ancestral knowledge'. It is not that Froilán does not know about this, which he clearly does, but rather that he is aware and takes care of the significance of authority over what is said, in terms of who has direct experience. Not being a *yachak*, Froilan has not gone through the

⁵⁷ For an in depth discussion and examples of the use between testimonial speech and reported speech in Quechua, see Howard, R. (2012) Shifting voices, shifting worlds: Evidentiality, epistemic modality and speaker perspective in Quechua oral narrative. *Pragmatics and Society*, 3(2), pp.243-269.

yachak's diet, may not have experienced a direct change in perspective as a specialized practice pertaining to particular powerful individuals.

Froilán continues to refer to a potential significant difference in the process of becoming and knowing, whilst continuing to respect and mark distance between relating this knowledge and a *yachak* that can know this:

	Transcription	Spanish translation	English translation
T	Shamanismo yachayshidieta tukurka nin, ñawpa kayna ura pukuran, mana tukuchiskanchik.	Es con la dieta que se convierte el conocimiento, creo. Del shamanismo, dicen. Esto se maduro tiempo atrás pero no lo terminamos. Sin embargo, dicen que es la dieta.	It is with the diet knowledge is converted, I think. Shaminism they say. This matured time ago, but we did not finish. However they say it is diet.

(T=teacher speaking, S=Student(s) speaking)

Froilán states “Shamanismo, yachayshi dieta tukurka nin”, (it is with the *yachak's* diet knowledge is converted) explaining that the Shaminism *diet* is transformed to knowledge. Again, the use of the term ‘-shi’, as well as the word ‘nin’ (they say) marks distance with the direct source of information. However, though what is being stated is distanced from personal experience it is of worth, legitimized precisely in relation to it being passed on and repeated collectively. Here too as previously analysed in the lesson on the earth’s crust, what Froilan says makes no sense to me. Literally what one eats does not in itself provide knowledge. Diet of course be could understood in a metaphorical sense, similarly to the religious practice of fasting, as a process of cleansing. However, considering De Castro’s exploration of Amerindian perspectivism in relation to the practices mentioned, the statement on ‘dieta’ as converted to knowledge itself, is I propose again an encounter with a nonsense enacting the presence of a radical alterity.

Gabriel, the grandson of a powerful *yachak* of Pumamaki when I asked him about the shaman's diet took time to attempted to explain. His explanation did relate to a form of fasting as a careful control over what can be consumed as a form of purifying, however Gabriel's explanation went further attempting to describe that what is eaten enables the *yachak* to become the same as the 'others'⁵⁸ i.e. literally the same form as the other energy force of plants and owners of the forest. What Gabriel was stating was that by becoming the same, that the *yachak* can be seen by the plants, who then according to Gabriel communicates with the *yachak*.

Froilan had previously in reference to marking the difference tentatively between western and ancestral education stated: Este educación occidentalka, manashi payrayku ninimi (This western education, is not I think like this, for this reason I speak). I interpret this chimes with Cadena's description of 'other than human-beings' not in terms of separating between, "*their* beliefs and *my* knowledge' (De la Cadena, 2015, p 14) therefore not a representation of a being, but as existing as named by those identifying as runakuna (De la Cadena, 2015, p 25-30). For De la Cadena 'other than human-beings' simply are, when spoken, "no separation exists between Ausangate the word and Ausangate the earth-being; no "meaning" mediates between the name and the being (De la Cadena, 2015, p 25). Difference from this perspective is not being framed as a difference in 'beliefs' between distinct cultural groups. I argue, difference is not contained only within the boundaries of 'culture' as a subjective way of knowing the same thing, difference is potentially of knowing some *thing* different. In this sense, an enunciation continues to realize difference, by bringing different *things* to light as 'matters of concern' (Stengers, 2005). Considering this, Froilán's, 'reason to speak about this', may have greater significance than would be suggested at first glance. The speaking of ancestral education and the shamans diet I reinterpret as a possibility of making present, that which is not the same thing.

⁵⁸ 'Others' here I interpret as relating to Whitten's analysis of Sacharuna as plural forms invoking, Amazanga, Ninghui and Sungui, see Whitten, 1978 p 839

I suggest Froilan's statements cannot not make sense to me, but neither it is a 'mere babble', since again what Froilan states is publicly accepted, in this case explicitly acknowledged by the students as shown below:

	Transcription	Spanish translation	English translation
T	Zaz, kunanka kay estudios o kay educación Occidental. Estudios de la ciencia escrita dietaka tukushka.	Zaz, ahora el estudio o la educación occidental. El estudio de la ciencia escrita se convirtió en dieta.	Zaz (sound representing a sharp cut or break), now it is studying or western education. The study of written science transformed into the diet.
S	<i>así es, inda</i>	<i>así es, cierto/entiendo.</i>	<i>Yes it's like that, true</i>

(T=teacher speaking, S=Student(s) speaking)

Above Froilan states: "Estudios de la ciencia escrita dietaka tukushka" (The study of written sciences transformed/converted into diet). But, diet in a literal sense is not something that I can accept as an enunciation that makes sense. It demands on my part an ontological openness towards the divide between subject/object from the 'tradition I stand in' (McDowell, 1996). As Foucault describes, saying 'without sense' rejects out right what the other is saying, it rejects the enunciation and most importantly the space of enunciation (Foucault, 1972, p 102). According to Foucault:

"A sentence cannot be non-significant; it refers to something, by virtue of the fact that it is a statement". (Foucault, 1972, p 102)

The students in this class state their agreement and understanding of Froilán's statements, in this way the enunciation is publicly accepted, it refers to some *thing*, they collectively acknowledge.

5.6 Summary

I propose acknowledging the demand for an ontological openness allows these statements not to be easily settled. A slowing down in the process of translation by recognizing a potential gap, enables the encounter with a nonsense, demanding from me an ontological openness towards that which I cannot see and can only grasp at an understanding in communication with others a by making partial connections. I propose shifting the theoretical framing over difference beyond that of difference in 'beliefs' enables different things to be taken seriously as possible ways of worlding differently (Blaser, 2009, 2014 and 2016) in the present.

In speaking about 'ancestral' knowledge in contrast to 'western' knowledge, I propose Froilán is bringing to bare the existence of different matters of concern in terms of what is at stake as 'becoming' as an ontological issue, in this case of formal education. It is in this way that I suggest that the notion of 'ancestral education' is a contemporary concept positioned as a means of enabling the domestication of 'western' education understood as a process of conversion in acquiring personhood. 'Becoming educated' can therefore be contrasted and enacted in relation of the importance of what one is 'facing', with the possibility of *becoming*, understood as transitory, flexible and reversible in opposite directions.

Taking a radical alterity seriously as present in the classroom, enables the possibility of becoming as the process of changing form, i.e. literally becoming 'western'. Significantly, transformation in this context can theoretically be controlled by acquiring the strength to turn back, i.e. to decide which way to face. The strength to control perspective, as the yachak is described having acquired the power to do, also involves not demonstrating fear.

I suggest that the possibility of domesticating the concept of education by including ancestral education into the space of formal schooling, reveals a potential coherence with the importance these teachers place in enabling children to perform publicly by representing and reproducing 'outside' knowledge without fear. In the same way that Nadia describes how her children can successfully

travel between 'lo de aca' and 'lo de alla' (of here and of there) without forgetting, the tension in translating political discourse is at least partially managed by conceptualizing the classroom as a literal frontier, a space within the territory between 'lo nuestro and lo de afuera'. I conclude teachers attempt to orientate their teaching practice towards developing the children's capacity to perform being 'western' without forgetting, and therefore with the strength to turn to face 'ancestral' education. I suggest Froilán, in speaking about ancestral and western education, is enacting the classroom as a literal contact zone, domesticating the school as the space to acquire knowledge by customizing the foreign concept of 'education' in coherence with local discourse, functional to the struggle for relative autonomy. The knowledge of 'written sciences' is made equivalent to the 'diet as knowledge'. I conclude in this way, speaking of 'lo nuestro' is not forgotten but made present, as a radical alterity though able to pass unnoticed as a disruption and therefore unchallenged in the formal space of the classroom.

Conclusion

The aim of this research has been to investigate how Intercultural Bilingual Education, IBE, is conceptualized theoretically and discursively in the Ecuadorian context and to determine how this is interpreted and translated into classroom practice. My intention was also to explore and achieve greater understanding of the ways in which different social actors continue to formulate, represent and incorporate 'indigenous' knowledge into formal schooling.

At a discursive level, I identify an apparent consensual vision over an ideal notion of intercultural education practice that is intended to promote a critical dialogue between different ways of knowing. Accordingly, an ideal intercultural education assumes that diverse epistemological perspectives will be made visible and be put into dialogue through educational practice. I argue this implies that 'indigenous' knowledge is seen as a dynamic mechanism for developing a critical subjective position that is able to acknowledge diverse perspectives and question a single dominant epistemology. From my ethnographic research on the specific case of Pumamaki, however, I conclude that the conceptualization of intercultural education as a critical dialogue between diverse epistemological perspectives is not what takes place in the classroom. I suggest that instead of making visible a potential epistemological dispute through a critical dialogue, what occurs in the classroom is a radical alterity made present, precisely by passing unnoticed as an epistemological clash between ways of knowing.

I suggest that the school, at a local level, represents a space of negotiation that is incorporated within the continuing political struggle for recognition of cultural difference. I conclude the function of the state school from a local perspective is discursively constructed in correspondence with the broader political objective of sustaining relative territorial autonomy, and the exercising of that understood as internal agency. However, I argue that recognition by the State continues to be based on a single and universal conceptualization of 'personhood'.

I argue that formal education within the territory of Pumamaki is experienced as an inherent tension: school is necessary and functional as a means to demand state recognition of equal citizenship, whilst at the same time it also represents a space to claim recognition on the basis of cultural difference. Balancing and negotiating these forms of recognition with the State, forms part of the continuous struggle to sustain the exercise of internal agency together with relative territorial autonomy.

The results of my research into how IBE is practised in Pumamaki, raises questions over the implicit theoretical assumption that considers intercultural education principally as an epistemological concern. I suggest that what is taking place within the classrooms of Pumamaki is a veiled ontological dispute over 'personhood'. I conclude therefore that IBE on the ground operates in such a way as to avoid any epistemological clash between discourse practices of unequal social status, revealing in the process an underlying ontological dispute as a central matter of concern.

Discursive construction of intercultural education

At the discursive level, I show how the production of political discourse in formal texts positions the local school as a space where official knowledge can be challenged and 'lo nuestro' (that which is ours) legitimized. I conclude that school is clearly understood as part of a political project by teachers and leadership alike, interpreted as a medium for providing possibilities to construct an own cultural project. Specifically, the common aim of schooling at the local level is expressed as "una educacion propia" (our own education) where both 'lo nuestro' and 'lo de afuera' are to be taught. This I suggest reflecting the notion of an 'intercultural utopia' (Rappaport, 2005) conceived as a space where there is equal recognition of difference, formulated as part of the construction of a native political ideology.

I develop the argument that the local school is envisaged as the embodiment for negotiating a space in which to construct equal recognition between difference.

This implies the construction of a cultural project conceptualized in terms of recreating boundaries, whereby the notion of an 'inside' and an 'outside' is the co-production of the continuous dynamic representation of boundary formation by local actors. I interpret that the school in this way is understood as a 'contact zone' (Pratt, 1991), a space to mediate between that which belongs to an 'outside' and that which belongs to an 'inside'.

Considering Rappaport's notion of 'translation' from a particular ethnic subaltern subjectivity, I show how the production of political discourse aims to put into dialogue with dominant society alternative understandings of established concepts, for example, 'Sacha' as opposed to 'forest' as a living entity rather than a material resource. This closely corresponds with a decolonial theoretical framing of a critical intercultural education, envisioning the local school as a space to challenge official knowledge whilst legitimizing difference, i.e. 'lo nuestro'.

In correspondence with the theoretical framing of intercultural education as a critical dialogue between different ways of knowing, I interpret how local discourse assumes that teachers are able to exercise a critical subaltern subjectivity. Whilst I identify an apparent consensual vision of intercultural education from both a rights-based and a decolonial-based theoretical framing, I put forward the argument that these framings diverge over the notion of plurality. Specifically, they diverge in terms of the epistemological perspective that provides the vantage point from which the critical subject is positioned.

I argue that from a rights-based discourse, the critical subject is equated with the 'fusion of horizons' (Taylor, 2002), i.e. the broadening of an epistemological perspective. I describe the proposal of an intercultural educational framed from a rights-based discourse promotes difference as a critical dialogue between those recognized as equals, i.e. human beings with the universal capacity for rational judgement. According to Taylor's (1994) argument, what is known from one particular cultural perspective can only become known and therefore judged by shifting one's own cultural perspective to include this different perspective. In this way, a greater critical and inclusive judgment over what is of worth, can be

gained. I argue, this assumes a process of broadening that which can be judged to be of worth, by shifting that which is known emerging only from a culturally dominant perspective in order to include diverse cultural perspectives. I propose, that the notion of plurality implicit within this theoretical framing whilst acknowledging different perspectives of reality, continues to aim at an epistemological convergence and so, this results the critical subject continuing to be seen from a universal position. In contrast I argue that from a decolonial discourse, the critical subject is understood from an oppositional perspective to that of a 'universal' epistemology. The implication from this theoretical framing is that an epistemological vantage point is derived from a subaltern subjective position, revealing plurality. In other words, as a historically-marginalized knowing Subject, the pronouncement of distinct knowledge from a subaltern subjective position reveals the arbitrariness of a single and universal epistemology. The notion of plurality assumed here, is that of the existence of distinct epistemologies and not the convergence of different ways of knowing.

I suggest that at a theoretical level intercultural education is framed principally as an epistemological concern, whether from a rights-based discourse or a decolonial based discourse. In terms of educational practice, this implies promoting a critical dialogue between different ways of knowing, enabling the development of a critical subject. However, if as I discuss the notion of plurality differs between theoretical framings, the critical subject (in question) is therefore not the same. On the one hand, I propose an expanding though still universal epistemological position is assumed to represent the critical subject, whilst on the other an oppositional epistemological subjective position is assumed. I conclude this results in a deepening theoretical impasse, framing how the implementation of intercultural education is seen on the ground. In terms of education practice, does a critical dialogue across difference imply expanding one's own criteria of worth in order to make a better and more inclusive judgement on reality, or does it imply challenging the notion of a universal epistemology by revealing reality as plural? In either case 'difference' requires becoming known and made explicit.

Intercultural education in the classrooms of Pumamaki

From my analysis of classroom observations, there is little evidence that teachers in Pumamaki's schools are making an explicit contrast between 'lo nuestro' and 'lo de afuera', in terms of a critical dialogue. In the lessons I observed, teachers did not present difference as different ways of knowing that could be put into discussion. Knowledge systems were not explicitly explored and consequently a critical dialogue could not take place, either as a means of enabling a potential broadening of horizons, so as to judge that which is of worth or to reveal plural epistemologies over a universal 'authorized' epistemology.

I conclude that intercultural education as practised in the schools of Pumamaki did not correspond to the theoretical framing from a rights-based discourse. However, it was also the case that teachers were unable to assume a critical subaltern position as that framed from a decolonial-based theoretical discourse. From my observations, teachers did not position 'lo nuestro' in contrast to 'lo de afuera' in order to challenge the authority of official knowledge as a single dominant epistemological position.

From my evidence I suggest that teachers generate equivalence between 'lo nuestro' and 'lo de afuera' by adopting the given terminology of the higher status discourse practice of the later as representative of school subject knowledge. In this way, 'lo nuestro' is presented as though naturally corresponding to the theme of the (formal) school subject lesson. I suggest teachers create an equivocation between their enunciations (statements of knowledge) *with* that of the higher status discourse of science, masking any potential difference between what is being named. Therefore, 'sara sapu' or sami muyu' are named as corresponding with the school subject theme of the particular lesson, be this be a biology or geography. I propose that, 'lo nuestro' is made to appear as equivalent, and therefore legitimized as of the same form and substance as that of official subject knowledge. By so doing, I conclude that teaching practice avoids challenging official knowledge and masks any potential difference between knowledge systems. In effect, my findings suggest classroom practice in its present form

continues to reinforce rather than challenge the hierarchical relation between dominant and subaltern positions.

The same findings can be applied to language use in the classroom. From my analysis, literacy seems to be understood by teachers exclusively in terms of acquiring the 'correct' use of language according to a formal written standard, whether in Spanish or Kichwa. In practice this meant 'Kichwa unificado' was being taught on the basis of grammatical correctness, in reference to metalinguistic technical knowledge, which the teachers were themselves not well acquainted with. Whereas 'Kichwa unificado' appeared to be openly rejected by students as too distant from 'lo nuestro' and felt by them as an imposition from the outside (the community/territory), teachers tended to assess their own language abilities against the 'correct' written standard and found them lacking. My analysis into how literacy was being taught in the classroom suggests that hierarchical relations were reinforced rather than challenged. Perhaps unsurprisingly teachers tended not to assume an empowered subaltern position from which it would be possible to challenge the reproduction of dominant social practice.

On the surface, my research suggests that the teaching scenario in Pumamaki follows the same general trend evidenced from other previous research findings, that intercultural bilingual education as it is practised on the ground takes the form of written lessons in 'standard' Kichwa as a specific subject lesson (Abram 1992, 2004; Contreras, 2010; Martinez Novo, 2014). However, I argue the scenario is highly complex and cannot be interpreted solely in relation to defined cultural specifications whether this is in relation to a standard language used in the classroom or teaching content.

At a political level, I have indicated how the proponents of intercultural bilingual education point to two significant factors that limit the development of intercultural bilingual education. The first relates to a lack of understanding of bilingual education, arising from insufficient discussion and articulation that undermines possibilities for an alternative political project at the local level. The second factor is the inadequate amount of funding that is available for the specialized training

for teachers, and for refining and improving pedagogic materials in the respective ethnic languages. According to this line of argument it would appear that the political and material conditions that would allow for the development of IBE have been absent, resulting in the gap between discourse and practice. From my field work centred on the complex case of Pumamaki, I argue these assumptions for explaining the gap between discourse and practice are open to question. For instance, the leadership of Pumamaki has been able to mobilize collaboration and resources including various experimental in-situ teacher training programs, to develop a relatively stable professionalized teaching body, composed by-and-large of local community members. Therefore, the possibility of establishing and developing schools in indigenous territories that are both part of the state educational system while being under local administrative and political control has been relatively successfully negotiated.

Function of schooling

My research on the particular case of Pumamaki, suggests that the school has been, and continues to be, negotiated on the basis of balancing 'inside/outside' power relations as part of an on-going local political project. Drawing from archival evidence and oral histories, I conclude that until the 1960s formal schooling was seen from the local perspective as an imposition and direct threat to social cohesion and relative territorial autonomy. The first formal school in the territory of Pumamaki was a secular state school established in the early 1940s and was operational until the early 1950s. Through my analysis I show how this state school and others that were founded along the Bobonaza river during this period, responded to the need for a direct state presence in this region, on account of the border conflict that threatened extensive loss of national territory. The schools were set up to provide access to education for the families of military personnel in the garrison posts and were not intended to be used by the indigenous communities within these locations. I conclude, this reveals the Ecuadorian state continued to be essentially blind to the 'Indian' as a Subject. Therefore, categorized as 'other', indigenous communities were excluded from the national state citizen project.

By the 1960s the role and function of formal schooling from a local perspective underwent a radical transformation. I interpret this change was in response to the unfolding events within the national context whereby only those recognized as full citizens could claim land ownership under the agrarian reform laws and only those considered 'educated', i.e. able to read and write were legally recognized as citizens. Invisible to the State and therefore denied participation in the national political project as citizens, Nadia tells how she and other young people of Pumamaki, responded by transforming the local political organization into a stronger body that would confront the threat of displacement from their historic territorial claim. Whilst it is arguable the extent to which actual levels of formal education played a direct role in the struggle to sustain territorial control at this historical moment, being seen as 'educated' was essential for attaining official recognition as state citizens.

I conclude that the State school emerges and is negotiated from an 'inside' perspective in terms of the need to access and claim legitimate recognition as full citizens, in order to continue to exercise the possibility of internal agency. I develop the argument that the function of schooling for both accessing citizenship and sustaining relative autonomy has generated an intrinsic tension between the need to simultaneously demonstrate 'sameness' and 'difference'. This resulted in a twofold need to become 'educated' and therefore recognized on the basis of sameness and to publicly demonstrate cultural difference in order claim cultural rights. I suggest this inherent tension reflects the political incorporation of the school in the struggle for sustaining relative territorial autonomy and social cohesion.

Based on my ethnographic analysis, I interpret the core concern at the local level over schooling is the relative influence leveraged over administrative and political control, and this is not principally an epistemological dispute. In other words, it has more to do with the possibilities for making decisions over who should be the teachers, school directors and the number and location of schools that are at the centre of the dispute over local schooling. Most importantly is the aim to retain

control over the direct link between the school as a formal institution and the local political organizational objectives of Pumamaki.

During the period of my fieldwork, I witnessed the palpable disquiet within the community that the proportionate level of influence they held over the institutional aspects of schooling were being threatened. This resulted not only in numerous conflicts between local leadership and the external authorities but also in heightened levels of tension among local actors. Rising levels of frustration were clearly perceptible, and teachers admitted to experiencing low morale. Teachers concerns related to the various and often unrealistic expectations over educational outcomes, given the resources available and the particular conditions these teachers and students worked in. However, I also identified an element of this growing tension was caused by the opposing demands placed on teachers by different authorities as a result of, for example, the struggle between local leadership and government officials over differing political objectives regarding the function of the school.

I conclude that intercultural education cannot be applied on the ground as a means of contesting the school as a space representing authorized knowledge, since the imperative of being recognized as full citizens, crucial for sustaining possibilities of negotiating relative autonomy, continues to be based on the recognition of sameness. An inherent tension is therefore created whereby the school is needed as a space that represents authoritative knowledge in order to demonstrate 'sameness' whilst conversely, demonstrating difference and so legitimizing 'local knowledge', in order to claim particular cultural rights and negotiate relative autonomy.

From my observations of teaching practice, I interpret the experience of the classroom, as not one of epistemological plurality whereby a dominant epistemological position can be contested. I argue what is at play, is the legitimate recognition of the community organization as a political actor as part the broader dynamic process of defining 'inside/outside' boundaries in order to negotiate relations of power. This political process is not one that is conducted in

isolation but is part of the national political indigenous project of contesting a specific national project.

The school as a space to access and demand recognition on the basis of sameness, whilst simultaneously demonstrating cultural difference to sustain the exercise of internal agency for relative autonomy, creates an unresolvable tension. I present this tension as one, that in practice, questions the notion of intercultural education as an epistemological concern. I argue that School in the context of Pumamaki, has not emerged primarily as a space for acquiring knowledge, but as a space of 'becoming', i.e. of acquiring a type of 'personhood' by demonstrating 'sameness'. I propose that School from a local perspective is therefore not experienced as an epistemological issue but more fundamentally as an ontological matter of concern.

I further develop the argument that the wider concept of School as it is incorporated into the construction of a native political ideology becomes a space that is envisioned as an intercultural utopia where it is possible to create equal relations of power between 'inside/outside'. This is not however a space of epistemological contestation from a subaltern empowered subjective position. I propose that teachers translate the theoretical decolonial discourse defining intercultural education into a less demanding notion, i.e. where the classroom is reinterpreted as a literal 'contact zone' between that which belongs to an inside and that which belongs to an outside. As such, the classroom is conceptualized as a space to perform 'outside' agency whilst continuing to be able to exercise 'inside' agency. I conclude that the evidence on the ground demands a shift in theoretical analysis, in order to reconsider difference beyond that defined as a particular cultural perspective, to include the enactment of ontological difference.

Presence of a radical alterity

I propose that statements made in the classroom resulting in an equivocation, between local discourse practices and that of higher status scientific discourse, should not be understood as making 'no sense'. The enunciations made by

teachers and students in the classroom do not represent a 'mere babble' (Wittgenstein, 2010/1953) i.e. incoherent, since that which is spoken is publicly understood and accepted as coherent by those present (Foucault, 1972). I contend that the process of creating equivalence masks these statements, by which an 'other' is stated as a Subject, as if in correspondence to scientific discourse. I propose, this assumed equivalence avoids an epistemological clash and enables a radical alterity to be made present in the classroom by passing unnoticed. What is important to note, is that A disjuncture between that which is enunciated and that which makes sense in relation to authorized knowledge is evidently not felt by teachers and students alike. An epistemological clash does not take place because it is not called for as part of classroom practice. Following the theoretical framing in literature described as an 'ontological turn' (Blaser, 2009), I acknowledge these statements as my encounter with a 'nonsense', (Holbraad & Pendersen, 2017), signifying the presence of a radical alterity (De la Cadena, 2010, 2015; Blaser, 2009; Viveiros De Castro, 2004) which demanded an ontological openness on my behalf.

I propose, in contrast to the theoretical conceptualization of intercultural education defined as an epistemological concern, on the ground, educational practice does not involve a critical dialogue between different ways of knowing. My findings suggest 'lo nuestro' and 'lo de afuera' are not explored as potentially diverse systems of knowledge by teachers, assuming a critical subjective position. It could be concluded therefore that intercultural education simply does not occur in practice. However, I propose that educational practice as it takes place in the classrooms of Pumamaki puts into question the theoretical assumption that difference must be revealed, and that intercultural education should be seen in terms of an epistemological dispute enabling different knowledge(s) to be put into dialogue as a means of developing a critical subjective position.

Furthermore, following de la Cadena's proposition of communication as a process of grasping understanding by creating partial connections (Strathern, 2005), I argue that a critical dialogue across different epistemological perspectives cannot settle that which is unknown, by becoming a new mutual

hybrid (De la Cadena, 2015). I interpret that difference, in itself, cannot be settled to that of a mutual known, since difference can never be fixed, but is a continuous process of creating partial connections, in both directions, which as Cadena states 'does not leave the original untouched' (De la Cadena, 2015).

Latour's (1994) description of 'nature's-cultures' implies that what exists is simply the continuous construction of nodes and connections through bringing together immanence and transcendence (Latour, 1994, p 118 and 128). I suggest in the classrooms of Pumamaki an alterity is made present, not from a static 'original' but as the continuous construction of different nodes and connections of 'nature's-cultures' in unequal relations of power. The implication is not only in terms of a way of knowing differently, i.e. a different perspective on the same thing, but acknowledging that what is enunciated may not be something that is held mutually in common (Viveiros de Castro, 2004; Blaser, 2009, 2014; De la Cadena, 2010, 2015). If so, what is being enunciated cannot become known by attempting to conduct a shift in cultural perspective, a further demand is made in terms of an ontological openness in order to accept the possibilities of the limit to know that made present.

I contend, the practice of conducting an equivocation between official knowledge and that perceived as 'lo nuestro' by local teachers, enables a radical alterity to pass unnoticed in the formal space of the classroom, which it does not conform to. Of course, this does not amount to the development of a critical pedagogic process, however the practice of conducting an equivocation, whilst not articulated from an empowered subaltern subjective position, does imply the continued possibility of what Blaser states as 'worlding differently' (Blaser, 2009). By shifting the theoretical analysis so as to acknowledge the encounter with a 'nonsense', the ethical demand created is not simply one of entering into a critical dialogue but one of accepting an ontological openness, recognizing the limits of knowing.

Since formal education entered the local context as a mechanism of being 'civilized', I contend that what has been of central concern is the possibility of contesting a universal notion of 'personhood'. I propose that what occurs in the

classrooms of Pumamaki represents the on-going process of 'domesticating' (Greene, 2009) formal education, implemented as a way of 'becoming'. I interpret that by positioning an 'ancestral education' as part of formal schooling, IBE policy and discourse have been translated locally to contest a fixed notion of 'being'. Considering what has been described as 'Amerindian perspectivism' (Viveiros de Castro, 1998), everyday discourse by members of Pumamaki reflects the notion of 'personhood' as beyond that of specific human characteristics. The concept of 'personhood' is from this perspective not fixed within a human corporeal form; instead a broader understanding of reality is achieved by the ability to change corporeal form from 'human' to 'other' and back again. As de Castro proposes, an Amerindian perspective implies nature is not fixed, whilst culture (i.e. 'personhood') is a constant throughout human and non-human form. I suggest the fundamental function of formal education of converting the 'other' to that of 'becoming a civilized person', has become 'customized' (Greene, 2009), i.e. made tolerable, from a local perspective. I conclude that the political process and teaching practices occurring in Pumamaki represents a re-interpretation of the objective of schooling as that of 'becoming an educated person', in order to be made tolerable in terms of sustaining local social cohesion. By including that named as 'ancestral' education within state schooling, 'becoming' is able to be understood as flexible, transitory and reversible. In this way, I suggest 'becoming' is continued to be made possible as coherent within Amerindian perspectivism. I propose 'lo de afuera' is interpreted as a demonstration of 'becoming western', understood as a transitory form of becoming western without losing sight of the ability of returning to the form of being 'Sacha Runa' (Forest Person). I suggest the naming of ancestral education as an integral part of formal schooling, enables the domesticating of the School from a local perspective, rather than the development of specific 'indigenous' content in the curriculum.

In conclusion what is arguably at stake in terms of the function of local schooling is not an epistemological dispute per se, but the ability to acquire knowledge by acquiring the ability to become Western while also retaining the ability to become Sacha Runa. The School in this way is not a meeting place of different systems of knowledge but is understood as a space of becoming, i.e. of acquiring full 'personhood' as 'Western' without losing the ability to be 'Sacha Runa'. In this

way, both 'lo nuestro' and 'lo de afuera' are present and are conceptualized as embodied in the school classroom. It would appear, the aim both inside and outside the classroom, is for the young people of Pumamaki to learn how to 'face' both directions, i.e. towards 'western' culture and towards 'ancestral' culture, literally to be able to become both. I argue this does not require students to challenge the authority of western knowledge as a critical dialogue. Thus, I interpret the teachers' classroom practice whilst not reflecting that understood to be a critical intercultural education, nonetheless can be understood as a pragmatic way of claiming and exercising internal agency as part of the historical struggle for recognition.

It needs to be said, however, that the possibilities for exercising internal agency and negotiating the institutional shape of the school as part of the political demand to sustain relative autonomy, cannot be taken for granted. The recent political scenario shows how significant shifts in indigenous-State relations threaten the difficult process of balancing internal against external legitimacy over state education locally. I believe the historical emergence of state schooling within Pumamaki reflects the delicate and complex process of negotiating the School as a space to balance the theoretical tension between demonstrating sameness and simultaneously cultural difference, for recognition of territorial autonomy and to sustain social cohesion.

I argue the encounter with a 'nonsense' (Holbraad & Pedersen, 2017), should be taken seriously and furthermore calls for a 'slowing down' (Stengers, 2005), enabling the acknowledgement of the existing limits over what may be considered a matter of concern within the current political debate. I suggest the case of Pumamaki reveals that what takes place in the classroom relates to an ontological concern, however this concern is not one that can be recognized within the current debate that dominant society has decided is legitimate or even relevant in defining formal education. My intention to adopt an ontological openness in my interpretation over what is enunciated in the classroom, is also an acknowledgment of my partial understanding and equally partial ability to describe the process of 'making present' a radical alterity in the classroom. I suggest classroom conversation between teachers and students takes the same

form as that which makes sense and is enunciated outside the classroom as everyday discourse, which includes the possibility of making utterances that imply non-humans are 'subjects' and 'becoming' is not a linear process but potentially a transient one between distinct forms of being.

The exercise of internal agency cannot only correspond to a local political process but must also relate to possibilities for participating at a national level as a legitimate political actor. I strongly argue that the general political scenario from 2009 has narrowed political participation, consequently this has threatened and limited the possibilities of negotiating and sustaining a political project over schooling that aims to balance the power relationships between inside and outside. The change in the direction of education policy towards directly imposing and implementing highly standardized teaching and learning measures, has, as I evidence, generated a negative impact on the ground. Moreover, I argue that the centralization and standardization of educational policy and politics threatens to further entrench traditional educational methods that legitimize and promote the reproduction of dominant social practices with little, if any, space for dialogue and critique. The likely outcome of current education policy, contrary to official discourse, is the cementing of a two-tier class education system. At the time of my fieldwork, I illustrate the ways in which historically marginalized, rural areas such as Pumamaki have already been disproportionately affected by these changes. The dynamic political scenario at a national level is already showing signs of change and possible shifts in power relations between different political actors. Although as yet, no direct measures have been taken in relation to national education policy, the current president Lenin Moreno (24th May, 2017) has opened a direct dialogue with CONAIE and has granted legitimate ownership over the building occupied by CONAIE in Quito, for the next 100 years (El Comercio Ecuador, 2017). The Ministry of Education has also produced a report evaluating the outcomes of the flagship schools, revealing that these schools have not produced the expected pedagogic and social objectives. The conclusions of this report are that an increase in attendance levels has not materialized, as was intended through this policy, and perhaps more importantly, there is no evidence of improved pedagogic outputs in relation to maths or

literacy which was another key objective of this policy (El Comercio Ecuador, 2017b). The official response to the report by the Ministry of Education, as viewed on the Department's webpage (20th August, 2017), states that greater weight and resources need to be directed towards raising teaching standards. What these changes will bring, we shall have to wait and see, although they do at least suggest a reduced level of tension between the State and indigenous organizations. However, from my research findings and corresponding analysis, I propose a cautious approach in anticipating any major changes to current education policy and teaching practices.

I conclude a critical intercultural education practice is unlikely to be reflected on the ground whilst schools continue functioning as a space principally to demonstrate a set of prescribed citizenship skills in order to access full citizenship status. This debate requires recognizing the inherent tensions of IBE and questioning the theoretical assumptions that define intercultural educational practice. I propose what is required is a slowing down of the impulse to define and evaluate intercultural education in terms of an expected or ideal practice, and to take into account the need of sustaining articulation with long-term local organizational processes. The form intercultural education practice takes in the classrooms of Pumamaki, suggest that the matter of concern over schooling may be outside the current political debate, requiring an ontological openness acknowledging the limits of our own power to know and allowing for difference to exist without the need for it to be revealed or demonstrated.

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Annex 1:

“To have what we now have”: Translation of conversation with Nadia

Nadia - “...para hacer como ahora, ahorita estamos con colegio, muchas cosas, esto trajo la organización. Nos organizamos. Pero sin la misión. Nos impidió... todas misiones nos impidieron...que nos organicemos, que no contemos... Y nosotros nos organizamos. Y así, este hablando en contra, porque decían que éramos comunista. Allí pues que yo entiendo que cuando era pequeña me hacían hincar, [las monjas hacían arrodillar y rezar] y cuando el otro hombre, que hasta ahora vive el viejo Fidel [Castro], que no era tan diablo como ellos dibujaban. Entonces allí que entiendo. Entonces yo me puse, como mi esposo fue el primer presidente de la organización, yo le ayudé conversando todas estas cosas...no había nunca igualdad, éramos tratados como esclavos. Entonces solamente la organización [va cambiar esto]. Ahora nos dicen a nosotros, antes solo comadres nos decían, ahora nos dicen tal persona, los que nos conozcan...Ahora si hay igualdad, nos llevamos con todos, nos peleamos también, antes no podíamos ni discutir.”

“...to do as we are now, now we have a secondary school, many things, this was brought with organization. We organized ourselves. But without the misión. It [the misión] did not allow us to become organized...all missions prevented us...from becoming organized, so that we would not say...but we organized ourselves. And so, in this way, even if talking in opposition, because they said we were communists. It is then that I understand that when I was a young girl [the nuns] made me kneel and pray and when the other man, that up till now lives the old Fidel [Castro] which was not the devil they described. It is then that I understand. It is then that I along with my husband who was the first president of the organization, I helped him to speak about all these things...there was never equality, we were like slaves. Then only the organization [was going to change the situation]. Now they say to us directly [by name] before they only spoke to us

as 'compadres'⁵⁹, now they say by our name, those who know us...Now there is equality, we get on with all, we have disputes as well, before we could not argue.”

Antonia - “Y, ¿que les motivo para organizar?”

Antonia – “And what motivated you to organize?”

Nadia - “Porque nos enseñaron nuestros hombres...y también en ese tiempo Che... Che Guevara, pues cuando estaba junto con Fidel. Entonces mi esposo no sé dónde era esas cosas vino a aprender, porque está en Colombia, por allí. Mi esposo había estado trabajando por allá, entonces vino a decir que la misión nunca va a hacer respetar, solo nos hacer temer. Que tenemos que vivir bien, sin hablar a ellos nada. Porque si discutimos ellos nos tratan de mala gente. Pero no es así, nosotros tenemos derecho de defender la tierra, ellos no nos van a ayudar, ¿cuando?...Así como está pasando ahora con el petróleo. “No nos van a defender ellos”, decíamos. De allí nos organizamos, así hablando a la gente. Y la gente entendió, algunos. (Interview, Nadia, 11th January 2014)

Nadia – “Because our men taught us...and also at that time Che...Che Guervara, when he was together with Fidel. It was then that my husband, I don't know where he went but he came back having learnt those things, when he was in Colombia, round there somewhere. My husband had been working over there, then he came back saying that the mission was never going to respect us, they only want to make us be fearful. That we have live well, without telling them anything. Because if we argue they treat us as if we were bad people. But that is not true, we have the right to defend our lands, they are not going to help us, “when?”...The same as now is happening with the oil. “They are not going to defend us,” that is what we said. From then we became organized, it that way talking to the people. And they understood, some of the people did.

⁵⁹ Compadre in the Oxford dictionary describes compadres as godparents, it is a term introduced during the colonial period. In indigenous areas in Ecuador compadres usually relates to creating a close links between families of different social groups, i.e. differentiated social status.

Nadia - “Esto hubiera sido, si no hacemos, esto era de los colonos. Solo sabíamos que la misión, la tierra de misión católica donde está la Iglesia tenía que ir hasta xxxxx que es decir de ellos, y de allí para ya nosotros hasta Rotuno, y este lado Colonos.”

Nadia – “This would have been if we had done nothing, it would have been of colonos⁶⁰. All we knew was that the lands of the Catholic misión were to go from the where the church is upto xxxx that is to say theirs, and from there to Rotuno ours and all of this side for the colonos”.

Nadia -“Así estaba este curso, la misión había estado ayudando eso. En la Iglesia, indicando “que ustedes van a ser organizados [por] el Estado con la misión van a dar ganados porque esta tierra baldía el gobierno va a quitar todo”. Diciendo que no hacen nada. (Interview, Nadia, 11th January 2014)

Nadia – “That was the plan, the mission had been helping for this plan. In Church they would say “you are going to be organized by the State with the help of the mission, you will be given cattle because these lands unproductive lands the government is going to take all away”. Saying that we did nothing.

Nadia – “Entonces preparado ellos [la misión] para coger la tierra. Por allí están unos mojones que habían puesto. Entonces para organizar eso no hicimos valer pues. ¡Como vamos a dejar pues! Algunos nuestros abuelos han vivido todo esto. Y porque vamos a ir para allá.” (Interview, Nadia, 11th January 2014)

Nadia – “So they [the mission] were preparing to take these lands. There are still over there some markers that they had placed. So we became organized and did not allow that to occur. How are we going to allow, well! Some, our grandparents have lived all of this [indicating with her arm], so why were we to go over there [pointing down river].

⁶⁰ Colono is the name given in the Amazon region to migrants that came to claim land through the agrarian and colonization laws. Currently this term is still in common use, though mestizo is also employed to denote those that are not indigenous.

“Diciendo así la organización si nos apoyaba. Nos ayudaron, los primeros organizadores fueron, Limoncocha y el Napo, FUIN, se llamaba. Y otras organizaciones de los Shuaras era Federación Shuar. Todos ...vinieron a apoyarnos a decir la misión es el que anda haciendo eso, porque no nos ayuda solamente nos hace creer del Señor de la vida del Señor, después tenemos que ser humilde y no tenemos que pelear por la tierra. De gana! Entonces porque ellos quieren coger decíamos...”(Interview, Nadia, 11th January 2014)

“Saying in this way the organization helped us. We got help from those who first organized, those from Limoncocha and Napo, FUIN it was called. And other organizations of the Shuars it was the Shaur Federation. They...all came to help us say that it was the mission that was doing all this, because they don't help us they only make us believe in the Lord the life of the Lord [Jesus], and then we have to be humble and not fight for our land. How's that! Therefore because they wanted to take our lands we spoke...”

Annex 2

“Successful Traveller’s”: Translation of conversation with Nadia

Antonia – “¿Por qué no quedarse aquí en la comunidad y no ir al colegio?
¿No ir a la Universidad?”

Nadia – “Porque, es necesario también, porque como van a enfrentarse con estas cosas como ahora, están enfrentando, es necesario saber lo de allá también pues. Pero que no dejen lo de acá. Pero en cambio hay otras personas que se integran solo lo de allá, lo de acá quieren olvidarse, en cambio mis hijos no están en eso, pues. Primero lo de aquí”.

Antonia – “¿Y cómo se mantiene lo de acá, cree?”

Nadia – “Se mantiene, viviendo como somos, cuando vienen de allá, como somos, como vivimos nosotros, porque los que ya se adaptan totalmente lo de allá, vienen aquí ya no quieren hacer nada, ni siquiera quieren hablar Kichwa, a los niños les enseñan solo Castellano y no saben Kichwa.”

Translation

Antonia – “Why not stay in the community and not go to secondary school or university?”

Nadia – “Because it is also necessary, because how are they going to face these things like we now have to face, it is necessary to know that of over there too. But without leaving behind that of here. But there are people however that integrate only with that of over there, they want to forget that of here, but not my sons they are not of that mind. First that of here”.

Antonia – “And how do you think that of here is maintained?”

Nadia – “It’s maintained living as we are, when they come from over there, as we are, as we live, because those that adapt totally to that of over there, come here and they don’t want to do anything, they do not even want to speak Kichwa, they teach their children Spanish and they don’t know Kichwa”.