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Mapuche political, educational and linguistic demands and public policy in Chile

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ABSTRACT

This article examines from a historical and contemporary perspective the political, educational and linguistic demands of Mapuche intellectuals and organisations and how they have been addressed by public policy in Chile. In particular, the article focuses on the Araucanía Region, part of the ancestral territory of the Mapuche people. We adopt a documentary and ethnographic approach to analyse the context, the development and the transformation of Mapuche demands in a political environment influenced and exacerbated by certain actions by both the state and indigenous organisations. The analysis focuses on education and the tensions generated under Chile's neoliberal economic model, affecting the decisions and everyday lives of families and children, especially indigenous families, in the Araucanía Region.

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Introduction

The neoliberal economic model imposed by Chile's military dictatorship (1973–1990) generated a number of changes in a system of government derived from the country's democratic tradition. The model's installation was accompanied by social and political repression of sectors opposed to the dictatorship and of organisational and social networks, including those of the country's indigenous peoples.

It is, therefore, important to view neoliberalism as a socio-political phenomenon involving a set of beliefs, doctrines and public policies that favour the interests of certain economic sectors (Nef and Robles 2000). This is reflected in an increase in income-related social inequities such as in education.

Neoliberal educational reforms were introduced by the dictatorship in the 1980s. One of its last actions before leaving power was the Constitutional Organic Law on Education (LOCE), which established that parents should be free to choose their children's school and that supply could be provided by any person or institution who so wished (Cox 2012).

The problem posed by the LOCE's underlying neoliberal principle of freedom of supply and demand, however, was to ensure quality (Oliva and Gascón 2016). One effect of this law was the proliferation of educational projects managed by individuals and co-financed

by the state while the administration of public (state) schools passed into the hands of municipal governments, many of which had neither the money nor the administrative expertise to ensure high-quality public education (Puga 2011).

In 1990, when democracy was restored, Chile had a mixed system under which education was supplied both privately and by the state. The state started to play a more subsidiary role (Aedo and Sapelli 2001) but also to spend more money on education, showing concern about quality and designing policies focused on the classroom. For example, a funding voucher to support demand was introduced, differentiating between rural and urban areas. In this way, the dictatorship's model was reformulated in line with the narrative of the transition to democracy, but without abandoning its neoliberal ideology which continued to permeate institutions, including education (Nef and Robles 2000). In addition, since 1993, schools which received state funding were allowed to charge pupils' families, giving rise to state-funded fee-paying schools (*colegios subvencionados*) which started to compete with genuinely public schools.

This restructuring and consolidation of neoliberal education policies by the Concertación por la Democracia (the centre-left coalition which governed from 1990 to 2010) were challenged by a protest movement in 2006 in which secondary school pupils – known as the 'penguins' in reference to their uniform – demanded changes in the education system. These protests marked the first government of Michelle Bachelet (2006–2010). The students' long-term aim was repeal of the LOCE, which they achieved in 2009 when it was replaced by the General Education Law (LGE) (Silva 2007), after two years of preparation and efforts to reach agreement between the different political sectors.

During Michelle Bachelet's second term (2014–2018), various reforms of the educational system were discussed and implemented; principally, a gradual end to the management of state schools by municipal governments and the elimination of the state-funded fee-paying schools, which must opt in the medium term to become either free (public) or entirely fee-paying.

In 2015, a new Pupil Inclusion Law also came into effect. This promotes non-selection of pupils, eliminates shared funding and prohibits schools that receive state funding from being for-profit. A Higher Education Reform bill is currently before Congress and free university education for the poorer 50% of the population has already been assured.

Thus, this article examines the educational and linguistic demands of the Mapuche people in southern Chile's Araucanía Region, which is part of their ancestral territory, in the light of the development of specific indigenous education policies since 1990 and the prevailing educational model. The article is divided into two parts; first, it analyses the role of educational and linguistic demands within the historical Mapuche movement and the development since 1990 of an education policy focusing on indigenous peoples; and, second, it examines three current cases that illustrate the interaction of this educational model with indigenous policy and the demands of indigenous peoples.

The analysis focuses on the politics of recognition (Taylor 1993) applied in Chile as a way of addressing diversity under a neoliberal development model. The politics of recognition seeks to generate spaces for groups which have historically been excluded, promoting affirmative action to settle a historical debt arising from domination, the forced occupation of their territory and the cultural invisibility they have suffered. In Latin America, these policies have been termed 'indigenist policies' (Bengoa 2007; Campos 2002). However, an assimilationist, integrating approach, adopted mainly since the 1990s, has transformed them into policies for the recognition of indigenous rights.

Nevertheless, recognition policies cannot necessarily transform structural conditions. Various Latin American countries have recognised indigenous peoples in their constitutions, leading to the application of a range of policies. Other countries, such as Chile, only have specific policies at the constitutional level. Despite the difficulties and often slow progress, this new wave of policies has meant significant changes, although without transforming the conditions of inequality on which the nation-states are founded.

In methodological terms, the article forms part of a wider investigation into public policies in intercultural and indigenous contexts, conducted since 2013, which addresses various areas of public policy. The focus is ethnographic and relates to the state's construction of indigenous policy in the Araucanía Region, starting from the design and implementation of public policy at the micro, meso and macro levels.

The analysis seeks to problematise a dichotomous vision of public policies, characterised by the tension between the oppressive installation of a hegemonic model and the resistance of the subordinate social agents. These agents include indigenous people, who fight for their autonomy and decolonisation (Connell 2014). Although indigenous peoples generate their own forms of knowledge, struggle and collective action, it is important to point out that, at least in Chile, they are not isolated from the rest of the 'colonising' society and nor do they function as a single consistent body.

Instead, the approach seeks to show the form taken by political disputes between different groups (often viewed as opposing poles: the hegemonic and the subordinate group) and within the same group in a neoliberal context. This diversity of situations arises in the context of a model of structural racism at different levels of social relations between Mapuche and non-Mapuche (Richards 2013). This vision seeks to draw attention to social processes that are under permanent construction, including policies, where the historical perspective and the point of inflection that opens the way to global or micro social transformations are of crucial importance. However, despite these dialogic transformations, the implementation of the so-called politics of recognition does not change the conditions of structural and economic inequality and inequality of power within society (Hale 2005).

Mapuche educational and linguistic demands and public policy

Viewed from a historical perspective, the educational demands of the Mapuche people are not linear but diverse, reflecting the numerous organisations and strategies originating in the region they historically occupied. It is not possible to talk about 'the' Mapuche movement. Instead, we find different Mapuche movements, understood as a form of collective action, with 'non-institutionalised' or 'non-conventional' tactics, in which participation is voluntary and the goals and ideologies vary (Tilly 2004). As seen in the following, some of these demands are institutionalised but have limitations typical of indigenous recognition policies in Chile.

The demands have shifted from greater access to formal school and higher education to intercultural education different from that offered by the state and, in the case of some organisations, even to an autonomous education system. In order to visibilise the spaces of recognition as well as the determinants and difficulties and the progress achieved, despite a homogenising and, since the dictatorship, profoundly liberal state model, it is, therefore, crucial to analyse Mapuche demands in the light of the history of public policy in Chile.

In the late nineteenth century, the state took possession of the historical territory of the Mapuche by military occupation, distributing the land among foreign and Chilean colonists and the Mapuche themselves. Through so-called *títulos de merced* (title grants), the Mapuche were relegated to small patches of land, called indigenous reductions, reserves or communities, scattered across the Araucanía Region and neighbouring regions. At an early stage, Mapuche leaders started to form organisations to express their demands, including educational demands. In the 1920s, for example, an organisation known as Sociedad Caupolicán pressed for grants to allow the Mapuche access to primary and higher education (Foerster and Montecino 1988; Menard and Pavez 2005; Mariman 2007). This was after the Mapuche had been settled in the reductions and, as a result of the passing of the Primary Education Law in 1920, had been incorporated into the Chilean education system through rural schools inside indigenous communities. Many of these schools, located on land awarded by title grant, became dependencies of the government or the Catholic Church. Another mechanism for providing Mapuche children with access to formal education was through special boarding schools.

School attendance obliged Mapuche children to learn Spanish to the detriment of their vernacular Mapudungun. They were also indoctrinated with the religious and national values that were coming into vogue at the time. As from the late nineteenth century, both the Anglican and Catholic churches sent educational missions to evangelise and educate Mapuche children (Wevering 2003). Some authors consider these a form of colonisation (Bengoa 2007; Poblete 2003) in which a language, a religion and a way of life were imposed in a quest for cultural integration and Chileanisation.

The Mapuche were not indifferent to profound church intervention in educational matters and sought to resist their presence through organisations such as the Frente Único Araucano, which demanded lay education with a rural slant, while the Unión Araucana, which viewed education as a means of integrating the Mapuche into society, was set up as an ally of the Church within the Mapuche social movement (Foerster and Montecino 1988).

Thus, Mapuche educational demands in the first half of the twentieth century focused mainly on access to education, through calls to extend the grant system and for the construction of day and boarding schools.

Many of the demands associated with the form and content of the teaching imparted have their origin in the 1930s and 1940s (Turra and Ferrada 2016). In 1939, for example, the Unión de Profesores Araucanos, associated with the Radical Party, demanded that primary education for Mapuche children be bilingual (in Spanish and Mapudungun), while other organisations called on the state to design schooling from the perspective of rural territories and farm production, as well as demanding better training for Mapuche teachers (Foerster and Montecino 1988; Mariman 2007).

In the 1950s, inequality of access to higher education prompted demand for 'Mapuche hostels'. Today, these hostels play a key role in strengthening the Mapuche identity of university students, generating political and cultural capital which can be expressed in social demands addressed to the state (Álamos and Furnaro 2013; Reuca 2010).

Before the 1973–1990 dictatorship, various Mapuche organisations had developed a history of political action and ethnic demands. Many of them brought together different political sectors, leading to their early involvement in institutional politics, and, in 1924, the first Mapuche deputy, Francisco Melivilu, was elected to the Chilean parliament. Their

strategies for political action included alliances with different sectors as well as participation in regional elections and political appointments (Flores and Robles 2007; Foerster and Montecino 1988; Levil 2006).

The military dictatorship brought a profound change in the Mapuche movement (Flores and Robles 2007) since Mapuche organisations, like other political and social sectors, suffered severe repression. It was only in the late 1970s and early 1980s that the Mapuche social base in the Araucanía Region started to organise to resist the dictatorship. This was also the case in the capital, Santiago, to which many indigenous people had migrated since the 1950s. They started to develop strategies and actions under a broad spectrum of ethnic demands, including education and recognition of their language. Nevertheless, as shown in the following, these were probably not their central demands, which related mainly to territorial claims in terms of political influence, autonomy, rights and recognition.

The dictatorship's neoliberal model affected the Mapuche communities of the Araucanía Region in different ways. One of the most important was Decree Law 2.568, which promoted the division of the communities that held their land under title grants. Thereby, under Decree Law 2.568, almost all of the communities were split up, with the clear aim of the cultural and social disintegration of the Mapuche and their assimilation into Chilean society (Bengoa 1990). This process of division, which started in 1978, led to the creation of Mapuche Cultural Centres (CCM), Mapuche organisations under the aegis of the regional Catholic Church that sought to resist this process (Espinoza and Mella 2013; San Juan 2017).

Other organisations emerged from the CCMs, most notably Ad Mapu, which became an important player in the political demands raised by the Mapuche in the 1980s (Levil 2006). Ad Mapu adopted a critical standpoint on education, demanding greater access as a means of remedying high levels of illiteracy. In line with contemporary education politics, Ad Mapu also questioned the devolution of public schools to municipal governments, arguing that it constituted another state attack on the land of the Mapuche communities which it further reduced. In addition, in line with the historical development of previous organisations, Ad Mapu advocated formal bilingual education (Ad Mapu 1982).

Since the restoration of democracy, demands related to territory and development have intensified along with those in other spheres such as education, language and health care, accompanied by different revindictory strategies. In the case of territory and development, revindictory demands have radicalised in some sectors in response to the presence of resource-based companies which, under the neoliberal model, affect rural Mapuche ways of life and the quality of the scarce land and are cited as a constant threat to Mapuche traditions (Pairicán 2016). This has exacerbated conflict between the different actors in the Araucanía Region – Mapuche organisations, the descendants of the colonists and businesses (forestry companies, hydroelectric plants, fish farms, wind-power plants) – leading in some cases to application of the anti-terrorist law.¹

The access to education was resolved under the dictatorship's educational model – albeit without guaranteeing quality – and, today, demands for grants for pupils and for the tailoring of education to agricultural work are no longer a central issue. However, other demands, such as for their own Mapuche education, syllabuses that incorporate different interpretations of history, the revitalisation of Mapudungun and the validation of Mapuche teachers or 'wise people' as educational agents, have intensified.

Mapuche demands and indigenous education policy since 1990

Current Mapuche demands have their basis in the restoration of democracy, the indigenous institutions created by Indigenous Law 19.253 approved in 1993, international legal instruments for indigenous rights such as ILO Convention 169 on Indigenous and Tribal Peoples (ILO 1989) and the UN Declaration on Indigenous Rights (United Nations 2007), and the demands and claims of various indigenous organisations around Latin America.

Current public policy is based on the Indigenous Law 19.253 (1993) and the various programmes provided by the state. Articles 28 and 32 of the Indigenous Law legitimised bilingual intercultural education, requiring recognition of indigenous culture and language and the protection of those persons who claim to be indigenous, as well as the development of a bilingual intercultural education system. This law also created the National Indigenous Development Corporation (CONADI) which, in coordination with the Education Ministry (MINEDUC), is required to 'promote plans and programmes to foster indigenous cultures'. The law also stipulates that:

the Corporation, in areas with a high density of indigenous individuals and in coordination with the appropriate state services or entities, shall develop a Bilingual Intercultural Education system to educate indigenous pupils adequately for life in both their society of origin and society at large. (MINEDUC 2011 p. 6)

In addition, the Corporation took over the administration and award of existing indigenous grants.

Between 1995 and 1997, a specialised Bilingual Intercultural Education (EIB) unit was created in the Rural Primary Education Programme, based on a cooperation agreement between the CONADI and the MINEDUC under which it was agreed to develop pilot EIB projects in primary and secondary schools in indigenous zones.

These pilot experiments continued until 2000 when the unit became institutionalised as an independent programme. Two focuses of action were defined in 2001: the training of teachers and specialists in interculturality and bilingualism; and the generation of curricular proposals through support for initiatives to adapt, complement and draw up plans and study programmes by selecting content appropriate to indigenous peoples (MINEDUC 2011).

This programme's objectives included various challenges such as improving the quality of education for indigenous children; strengthening their identity and self-esteem; enhancing their learning through the incorporation of appropriate didactic content; encouraging the learning and appreciation of indigenous languages together with Spanish; incorporating indigenous families and communities in the construction of school curricula; and incorporating teaching/learning methods developed by indigenous families and communities (Treviño 2012).

The aim of EIB policies is not to transform the unequal relations that have prevailed in schools in the Araucanía Region since the beginning of the twentieth century, implying discriminatory relations and a significant loss of Mapudungun under the model of integration and Chileanisation. What they have done is to incorporate elements of the Mapuche culture and language in some classes and external activities, doing so timidly and under a culturalist and often folklorising approach. Clearly, this represented an improvement on the previous situation which, although not modifying relations of power and inequality, did lead to processes of resistance and visibility in the children as well as in the Mapuche teachers, professionals and officials who were the protagonists of these processes.

In 2001, the Multiphase Integral Development Programme for Indigenous Communities (more commonly known as the Origins Programme) was launched. With funding from the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), this new programme sought to achieve the integrated development of the country's indigenous communities. Its actions included strengthening and funding the EIB programme by extending it to schools in rural communities in different parts of the country, with 162 selected for the first phase and 266 for the second.

This programme, which lasted until 2012, helped to gradually incorporate the concept of interculturality – defined as affecting all areas of state activity, although with the bias of being understood as action ‘for the indigenous peoples’ – into different areas of public policy. Little by little, this broader concept has gained ground in various institutions and means that diversity is coming to be considered a value and a right for the whole population, not just the indigenous population.

During this period, Mapuche organisations continued to demand the teaching of Mapudungun in schools throughout their territory (Loncón 2017) and, increasingly, to press for educational autonomy in the form of the establishment of their own schools, technical schools and universities (Mariman 2007).

The concept of interculturality in Chilean education has been limited to a ‘functional approach’ (Tubino 2016) which is reflected in schools with indigenous pupils in the teaching of cultural and linguistic elements, without directly attempting to achieve a structural change in society, and, taking into account schools’ preponderant role in socialisation and the devaluation of indigenous knowledge, helps to redress a history of cultural, linguistic and political repression of the Mapuche. Interculturality in education poses the question of who is the other and what is taught and how in a context of epistemic domination and subordination (Aman 2017), rather than the remediation of this condition.

Despite these limitations, this new context permitted a new way of relating and building the identity of Mapuche and non-Mapuche children, very different from the period before the Indigenous Law. In one of its important effects, this helped to create a generation of students and professionals with a clear Mapuche identity, aware of the process of cultural, linguistic and political dispossession, now understood as a consequence not only of the dictatorship but also of a longer history.

Education reform, student movements and Mapuche demands

The student movements of 2006 and 2011 in the demand for education reform had an impact on the new educational and linguistic demands of the Mapuche. When, in response to the demands of the ‘penguin’ movement, Michelle Bachelet’s first administration decided to repeal the LOCE and pass a new law on education, Mapuche organisations such as Identidad Lafkenche, the association for educational and linguistic rights, and the Mapuche political party Wallmapuwen² started to prepare communiqués arguing that the new law lacked the components needed to strengthen Mapuche education. Specifically, they questioned its Article 3, which sets out the underlying principles of education in Chile, and mobilised in a bid to have the principle of interculturality incorporated into the new law, arguing that the education system was monocultural and monolingual. They also insisted that including the principle of interculturality required recognition and appreciation of Mapuche culture (Red EIB Chile 2007; Identidad Lafkenche 2008). It is important to note that demand for indigenous education in Chile, which was addressed by the new law, is led

by a sector of Mapuche professionals and intellectuals who came to prominence in important Mapuche political organisations during the latter part of the dictatorship or the early years after the restoration of democracy. The other eight peoples recognised by the Indigenous Law would participate only through the Network for Educational and Linguistic Rights in which Mapuche leaders predominate.

The LGE was passed in 2009 and intercultural education was accepted as a guiding concept in response to the indigenous academic and social movement in which the Mapuche had a robust presence (Williamson 2012). One of the articles promoting intercultural education is Article 3, under which the education system must be based on the rights guaranteed in the Constitution and the international treaties ratified by Chile. The right to education and freedom of teaching are fundamental principles. Indeed, Article 3, paragraph L on interculturality states that the education system must recognise and value individuals in their specific original culture, considering their language, worldview and history.

In addition, Article 23 stipulates that curricular adaptations must be made for specific educational needs, such as those related to interculturality, prison schools and hospital classrooms, among others. Bilingual intercultural education is referred to in the section on the curriculum for children, young people and adults, which must recognise diversity of culture and origin, transmitting the language, worldview and history of their culture of origin and establishing a harmonious dialogue within society.

Under Decree 280, issued by the Education Ministry on 22 September 2009, indigenous language and culture were formally brought into the classroom as a new learning area called the Indigenous Language Sector (SLI). This decree established that all schools may incorporate this into their curriculum (for the Aymara, Quechua, Rapanui or Mapudungun languages), starting in the first years of the school cycle and increasing each year progressively through to 2017 when it reached the eighth year of primary schooling. The SLI is compulsory in schools in which more than 50% of pupils belong to an indigenous people (since 2010) or more than 20% (since 2013).

The implementation of this new subject, therefore, comprises three elements: the school's registration with the programme, which implies it will receive support from the EIB programme; curriculum proposals by the school for the SLI's implementation in its specific context; and the teaching duo – a Traditional Educator (a respected member of the local indigenous community with cultural and linguistic knowledge) and the Teaching Mentor (a teacher from the school) – who will be responsible for its implementation in line with optimum pedagogic and didactic standards (MINEDUC 2011; Matus and Loncón 2012; Treviño 2012).

In 2011, during the first government of Sebastián Piñera (2010–2014), a new student movement started, characterised by sit-ins at schools and universities, as well as mass marches. In 2011, the Mapuche Students Federation (FEMAE) was also formed in the Araucanía Region in coordination with the national Chilean Students' Confederation (CONFECH), under the banner of 'free, high-quality education.' During the protests, however, the FEMAE split from the CONFECH on the grounds that the latter was not addressing the issues that concerned indigenous peoples. The FEMAE declared that the state's education reform was racist and ethnocentric, and proposed four measures as conditions for real reform: the creation of a Mapuche university; the teaching of Mapudungun; linguistic reparations by the state; and multicultural and multilingual education in all educational institutions (FEMAE 2014).

Demands in the twenty-first century which, when added to the older ones, increase the complexity of the Mapuche movement, therefore, include the concept of interculturality in education across the board as well as the creation of a culturally associated Mapuche university and technical training institute. Since 2012, Mapuche student leaders, coordinating their actions through the FEMAE, have also promoted their own processes for revitalising Mapudungun through what they call linguistic boarding schools, which can also be led by other organisations and receive state funding. This is an important point as regards Mapuche educational and linguistic demands in that some will be put into practice autonomously but also complemented by support through public policies for indigenous peoples. This is the case, for example, of the Council for Culture (now the Ministry for Cultures, the Arts and Heritage) which will have a unit for indigenous peoples, led by a Mapuche official, to manage and support initiatives of this type.

Finally, in 2015, a new public body, with more influence than the EIB programme (which continued to function), was created. This is the Education Ministry's Indigenous Intercultural Education Secretariat (SEII). Its function is to oversee and safeguard the languages and cultures of the indigenous peoples recognised by the Indigenous Law, promoting an across-the-board design for the implementation of public policies from within the Education Ministry. As a secretariat, it can have an impact on all of the Ministry's units. Once again, in its team of indigenous intellectuals and professionals, most will be of Mapuche origin.

Discourse and educational practice

In this section, we analyse three examples of the recent disputes and tensions that have arisen in education in the Araucanía Region as policies are implemented to meet Mapuche demands and vice versa. These are the cases of bilingual intercultural education, the teaching of Mapudungun in the classroom and giving the language official status at the municipal level.

Bilingual intercultural education

One of the main repercussions of the LGE is that the national school curriculum is in a process of transition. The Framework Curriculum is being changed to the format of Curricular Bases, implying that subjects are no longer defined by specific minimum content but by Learning Objectives (OA), which include competencies, attitudes and knowledge intended to further pupils' integrated development. In other words, it specifies what pupils must learn, rather than what teachers must teach (MINEDUC 2016).

Eleven years after the law's introduction, this transition is still not complete. Most subjects in the national curriculum have been reformed apart from, however, the one exception of the SLI.

The new curricular bases proposed by the Education Ministry are not compulsory for any subject, including the SLI. Schools can create their own plans and programmes, and some in Mapuche environments have developed EIB programmes. In 2016, various meetings were held with representatives of indigenous peoples about the implementation of curriculum changes.

The issue faced by the officials had to do with participation mechanisms and the fact that the methodology had not been designed by the indigenous people themselves. EIB has been introduced in various schools in the Araucanía Region but today, under the SLI model, it is strongly questioned by some Mapuche sectors. They dispute not only the content but also how and by whom the policy was designed.

For Caniguan (2008), Mapuche intercultural education should be tailored to needs that are relevant to local situations and teachers must be able to give pupils tools for developing both the local and countrywide culture, allowing them to apply knowledge derived from the Mapuche world in their everyday lives. This is in line with Ladson-Billings (1995), who asserts that teachers must foster equity and social justice for all their pupils and teach in a culturally relevant way. The conception of Mapuche intercultural education as a teaching philosophy that integrates their worldview immediately raises the question of the content of intercultural curricula, calling for an understanding of the values present in the Mapuche culture in non-school contexts that can be brought into the classroom.

According to Carihuentro (2007) there are some notions and concepts of the Mapuche culture for inclusion. He bases his argument on recovering the notion of *che*, or person, considered an ideal model in the Mapuche culture, with certain attributes to which people should aspire. Thus, the notion of *che* is seen as part of an everyday construction process in which the individual may even go backwards, depending on his actions.

The Mapuche culture includes values which encourage individuals to pursue integrated development in order to become good members of Mapuche society. There is, therefore, a sort of mandate by the Mapuche community to aspire to the category of *kimchegeaymi*, a person with knowledge/wisdom. This implies that Mapuche education is determined by everyday life, articulated by concrete, practical spaces such as the *ruka* (house), *lelfün* (fields) and *küzaw* (work) as well as ceremonies and all of the different occasions when social interactions take place (Carihuentro 2007). Although Mapuche education is understood as a series of practices in everyday contexts and rituals, which guide the pupil towards the notion of *kimchegeaymi*, it cannot be divorced from Mapudungun.

Based on the paradigm of Mapuche knowledge, Loncón (2014) suggests how intercultural education could draw on the ancestral knowledge of the Mapuche which fosters *kümen mogen* (living well). Her proposal aims to understand education beyond the economic field in line with the Mapuche worldview as a sustainable, harmonious way of understanding the world. It is important to note that this conception of what should predominate in Mapuche education is based on values that correspond to the ideal of what is Mapuche as also occurs in the case of non-indigenous education. It corresponds to the 'should be' of the pupil, which the school and its teachers should foster to the benefit of the common good.

The main criticisms levelled against the EIB programme implemented by the Chilean state are that it reproduces the epistemological differences between home and school (Quilaqueo, Quintriqueo, and Torres 2016), and that plans and programmes, which are designed from the Education Ministry's centralised standpoint, ignore the local knowledge present in the communities (Quintriqueo et al. 2017). What is indigenous – and, in this case, Mapuche – is, in other words, centralised and homogenised by the Mapuche themselves from positions in public institutions and spaces of power, building the 'should be' of the Mapuche which should be taught by schools in the programme.

Teaching Mapudungun in the classroom

Referring to the institutionalisation of the SLI, Quintriqueo (2009) states that the national curriculum still follows a western logic because the SLI has only a small place in it.

Schools' deep hegemonic structures are reflected in a curriculum that is less permeable to this policy of recognition of the indigenous language, which takes second place to national content. Similarly, indigenous knowledge is relegated to specific contexts such as the 'rural', the 'community' or specifically indigenous matters (Aman 2017).

Another criticism of the curriculum is that it fails to consider the differences between the different Mapuche territories in the Araucanía Region (the coast, the Andes and the central valley) and education programmes, because they are centrally designed, homogenise content and the way it is taught, and lack relevance to local situations (Araya and Bolomey 2015). A third common criticism of the government's intercultural policy, raised by intellectuals such as Loncón (2014), is that intercultural education focuses on Mapuche pupils, rather than applying countrywide. It is true that, in theory, teachers can incorporate material and methodologies that would make their classes more relevant. However, in practice, they are restricted by a university training that has only belatedly incorporated interculturality and cultural diversity and by the education system's standardised tests and a teacher evaluation system that pressures them to focus on content rather than pupils' learning processes.

As indicated earlier, the SLI is taught jointly by a Traditional Educator and a Teaching Mentor (Castillo et al. 2016). Traditional Educators, who are selected for their Mapuche linguistic and cultural attributes, may be from the community where the school is located or a neighbouring one but, in practice, are often from an urban area or a more distant community. This occurs because of their need to accredit these cultural attributes and the precarious and still largely unrecognised nature of their role in the classroom. It is, for example, common to find educators who are not proficient in Mapudungun and, as a result, lack recognition in their home community, despite being recognised in other communities that place greater weight on cultural content. Other common complaints include the limited resources available, delays in payment of educators' fees and that, in schools, they are not recognised as educational agents in the same way as teachers. Once again, this Teaching Mentor–Traditional Educator relation reproduces the inequalities between a legitimised western 'educator', with a university degree, and an indigenous 'educator', without this qualification, whose knowledge is belittled by the dominant society, despite their legitimacy in the eyes of their own community and people as 'wise persons'.

This situation as regards the functioning of the SLI reflects the difficulties of implementing this government initiative. One important point is that it does not seek to address the linguistic inequality between Mapudungun and Spanish, which would require a policy that goes beyond hours of teaching. As a result, the role of the Traditional Educator reproduces not only the system of domination and hierarchy in the classroom with the teacher and other educational agents, but also the position of the language in the classroom and the country. Although many educators have, through their own efforts, achieved recognition in their schools, the way in which they are hired and paid mirrors an historical situation of inequality that is reinforced by Chile's model of education.

Reflecting on the educational benefits of incorporating Mapudungun in the national curriculum, Loncón (2014) suggests the concept of linguistic decolonisation, defined as a process under which indigenous languages and Spanish are treated symmetrically. She

also notes that the current policy under which only schools where at least 20% of pupils are of indigenous origin have to teach their language impedes the development of real interculturality in the country as a whole. As it is not a two-way process, intercultural education is conceived as only for minorities. This reinforces the view that it does not address historical, political, educational or linguistic inequality and that these programmes represent an effort on the part of the state to contain indigenous demands without tackling the underlying causes. Thanks to the work of some academic and intellectual sectors, officials and indigenous organisations, complemented in some cases by the work of people of non-indigenous origin, it has been possible to make progress that is reflected in actions of recognition and the positioning of indigenous problems at the regional and national levels.

Mapudungun as an official language

The town of Galvarino in the Araucanía Region has recognised Mapudungun as an official language. This process of socio-linguistic change began in 2013 and culminated with the decree passed by the Town Council on 17 February 2015, following its ratification by the Office of the Comptroller General of the Republic on 20 June 2014.

In the Galvarino municipal district, Mapuches account for at least 70% of the population and live mostly in the district's rural areas. This was the first municipal government to respond to one of the Mapuche people's current linguistic-educational demands.

This came about as a result of a combination of factors: the demand presented by the Mapuche Territorial Council of Galvarino (an organisation of traditional Mapuche communities in the district) and its active participation in the process, the election of the town's first mayor of Mapuche origin (2012–2016) and the support offered to the Town Council by other players such as members of the Mapuche political party, Wallmapuwen. The adoption of Mapudungun as an official language has been established as a linguistic planning policy, designed in line with the main needs and requirements of Mapuche communities and agents who are working actively to maintain Mapudungun.

Under the municipal decree making Mapudungun an official language, the municipal government is now obliged to implement systematic measures to foster bilingualism and to teach and revitalise Mapudungun in the district's public spaces and institutions. To achieve this, it has agreed to take the following measures: create an Institute of Mapuche Language and Culture; help to revitalise and standardise the language in institutions and civil society; promote the language's use inside the town hall and in its development programmes; seek funding for putting the decision to make Mapudungun an official language into effect; and ensure that Mapudungun is taught at all levels in the district's schools. One of its first steps was the creation of the Institute of Mapuche Language in 2016.

Under the Mapuche mayor, both the municipal government and the Mapuche Territorial Council took a series of measures to make the decree a reality. They included familiarisation and awareness seminars, curriculum adaptations in specific sectors and training for the district's Traditional Educators.

This initiative constitutes a social and political victory and sets a precedent for other projects currently in progress, such as making Mapudungun an official language at the regional level. However, its implementation was hampered by a deterioration of relations

between the key local actors in the process. This is attributed to a number of factors that include the distance between the position of the Mapuche leader who is elected as mayor, an institutional role, and that of his peers who remain in their community, and the selection of Mapuche intellectuals belonging to a political party, many not native to the district, for posts in the municipal government, rather than locally connected candidates. The difficulties are a result of Galvarino's position as the first district in the country to adopt an indigenous language as an official language, raising the question of whether the leading role in this achievement was played by the municipal government as an institution or by the communities. The two parties are still discussing and developing a way of working together and this has been complicated by the failure of the Mapuche mayor to win re-election for 2016–2020. Although Galvarino's decision is an important achievement, it does not guarantee the redressing of the linguistic condition of Mapudungun. That would call for a profound structural change, implying Mapudungun's internalisation and recognition on the same level as Spanish, but starting from a condition of inequality and loss.

Conclusions

This article has analysed the relationship between Mapuche educational and linguistic demands in the light of public policy under Chile's neoliberal educational model. Three cases have been used to show the tensions and contradictions that occur under this model, hampering the implementation of indigenous rights in education.

The educational demands of the Mapuche have moved from a demand for access to formal education, facilitated by scholarships and the creation of residences, to more complex demands in which the intercultural education proposed by the state is questioned at all levels (pre-school, school and university) as regards its contents and because it targets only indigenous people. The Mapuches' demands today also include their own forms of education and revitalisation of their language as the political rights of an indigenous people.

Public policy on education has sought to ensure greater access to education through the construction of more schools with boarding facilities (many located in Mapuche communities) and an increase in the number of grants available for indigenous children and young people, as well as by encouraging Mapuche parents to send their children to school as a means of assimilating and educating this people within the nation-state (Donoso 2008). The state took measures to facilitate the access of Mapuche students to university only rather belatedly, with part of the improvements occurring in the second half of the twentieth century, but it nonetheless generated the conditions for the creation of agricultural or industrial technical training institutes in a clear attempt to create labour. Today, access to education is ensured, except in the case of higher education where the progress achieved remains insufficient from the standpoint of many indigenous students who, because of the deficient quality of the schools they attended (generally, public or state-funded fee-paying schools), are excluded from universities with higher admission requirements. Because those with more resources have access to better-quality schooling and, therefore, to universities that enjoy greater recognition, this reproduces inequality and historical gaps, implying that indigenous students have to make twice the effort if they are to surmount these conditions of exclusion. Although the discourse of the neoliberal education system assumes equality of opportunity, this does not exist in practice (Castagno 2009).

Current questioning of the system seeks to improve content and its appropriateness and to trigger real processes to overcome historical inequalities in a framework of political rights. On the basis of the central questions analysed here, it is possible to conclude that, despite the improvements in visibility and positioning of educational content corresponding to the Mapuche culture, the education system continues to reproduce inequality. The reasons for this include the fact that intercultural education has focused principally on indigenous children and young people, targeting Chilean students only marginally, and that the content of programmes lacks context, is culturalist and tends to homogenise the Mapuche culture. In addition, the role of the Traditional Educators – who are, in many cases, a key figure in the Mapuche community due to their knowledge – lack the institutional recognition that would allow them to do their work on equal conditions with the school's other educational agents such as teachers. Progress in areas of recognition as important as the co-officialisation of the indigenous language is, moreover, hampered by internal Mapuche processes as well as by limited political recognition and a lack of effective processes for their implementation by the public system itself.

This analysis of Mapuche educational and linguistic demands and the related educational and indigenous policies provides an insight into the interconnection between the two processes and the specific political context. Mapuche demands have changed and deepened in the context of a democracy limited by the predominant neoliberal model. International legal instruments and the pressure exerted by indigenous peoples in Chile and Latin America in general have brought progress within the system based on the recognition of indigenous political rights. However, historical conditions of inequality and ongoing limitations on rights and recognition policies are apparent at the micro level, such as, for example, in the implementation of the EIB programmes, the conditions of dialogue between the different indigenous and non-indigenous actors, the role of the educator with respect to that of the teacher and the officialisation of Mapudungun, and the way in which the language's loss is addressed as well as in the fact that public policy tends to address Mapuche demands, rather than the less visible demands of the country's other indigenous peoples. Today, at the regional level, demand for the recognition and revitalisation of Mapudungun appears to be paramount and, under its umbrella, other demands such as that for Mapuche education and self-management of the different levels of education may come to the fore. However, it remains to be seen how public policy will respond to this process of linguistic co-officialisation.

Notes

1. A law introduced by the dictatorship and reformed on several subsequent occasions; its object is to define and punish terrorist crimes and its application has been biased against the Mapuche, infringing their right to be tried by an impartial court (Aylwin 2004).
2. These organisations are representative of today's Mapuche political world.

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