THE PEACE ACCORDS IN GUATEMALA.

Evaluation of the Educational Policy for the integration of indigenous children.

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Introduction

Education is a fundamental pillar in a society where investing in human capital can make Guatemala a more prosperous nation. Since the signing of the Peace Accords, Guatemala has attempted to implement educational policies to incorporate indigenous populations with the support of international actors. Their colonial past and authoritarian rule have shaped the present state of Latin American countries such as Guatemala. Although Guatemala gained its independence from Spain in 1821, it has encountered many economic, political and social hardships with various international actors. According to a 2018 census by the International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs, Guatemala has a population of 14.9 million, where the indigenous comprise 43,75% of the overall population. Historically, the indigenous have been persecuted and discriminated against from a social, economic and political standpoint. During the 19th century, Guatemala had a commodity-based economy directed by authoritarian leaders until 1945, where the democratically elected president Juan José Arévalo pushed for more social reform. Overall, minority groups such as the indigenous benefited ten years of a more democratic state that protected their rights, also known as the Ten Years of Spring. After a coup organised by the United States due to land reforms concerning the United Fruit Company, Guatemala plunged into a 36 year-long civil war from 1960 to 1996. The primary victims of this civil war were the indigenous community as they were persecuted and victim of genocide; the overall death toll amounts to 200,00 individuals. The end of the civil war was marked by the signing of the 1996 Peace Accords, recognising indigenous people's suffering and the path to granting indigenous rights. The Peace Accords emphasises the need to reform the educational system where the indigenous community is the group that lacks access to basic education.

Although Guatemala has a "compulsory, lay and free of costs" education reform, indigenous people are still denied access to education. According to a 2002 ENCOVI report, 75% of all illiterate people are poor and are located in rural areas where indigenous women appear to be the most targeted. Also, in 2000 Guatemala had an illiteracy rate of 31%, which is far below Latin America's average, coming third after Haiti and Nicaragua. As expected, female illiteracy goes up to 39% and 62% for indigenous women. ENCOVI reports draw a connection between poverty and education while forming patterns between ethnicity and gender, often finding that minorities rank higher in educational gaps. Several official reports attempt to draw correlations between various factors to explain the educational gap and inequalities. For a long time, the indigenous community has been the main target of discrimination in Guatemala, so analysing what institutional patterns and external factors may contribute to this issue's persistence is vital.

This paper will evaluate the educational policies implemented through the Peace Accords from 1996 to 2006 regarding indigenous access to education. The recollection of data through official reports, interviews with NGO members, state officials, and scholars to incorporate theoretical frameworks will contribute to this evaluation. This paper will attempt to answer the central question that will direct this investigation: How have the peace accords contributed to the inclusion of indigenous Guatemalan children in the education system?

Chapter 1 is dedicated to the theoretical framework by incorporating the concepts of postcolonialism, education policies in a state-building process, and finally, interculturalism versus interculturalidad. Various scholars have undertaken the meaning of postcolonialism. They have included underlining concepts such as internal colonialism or neocolonialism to provide a comprehensive overview of this controversial concept. These concepts are essential to consider due to Guatemala's historical events and help foster a deeper understanding of its current institutional tendencies. Secondly, state-building is defined as a section in the peacebuilding process, which Guatemala is attempting to reach with the Peace Accords' signing. The analysis of each national actor's importance in this Peace Building process has raised questions on the accountability of the state towards its citizens and the benefits civil society actors provide during this process. Incorporating this concept remains essential for evaluating educational policies as they would not exist without the Peace Accords itself.

Additionally, the politics of education has sparked many international scholars' interest where big institutions such as the World Bank or UNESCO are put under academic investigation concerning its legitimacy and efficiency in the policies they implement in foreign countries. Wickens interestingly analyses the different approaches of the World Bank and UNESCO about the role of education and literacy. Lastly, the focus on indigenous children requires incorporating interculturalism in comparison to interculturalidad. Language differences reveal a gap of knowledge and insight as one resembles a more Western approach and the other rooted closely to indigenous thought.

Chapter 2 illustrates a historical unfolding from the beginning of the civil war in 1960, the various actors involved, and resistance by indigenous and low-income groups. It examines the conditions that led to the Peace Accords and the construction of the various agencies and organisations in charge of reforming the educational sector.

The purpose of Chapter 3 is to utilise the theoretical framework in context to the historical events with the integration of data gathered from interviewees to examine the Peace Accords. Five semi-structured interviews conducted online or by email, mainly from the Americas, will be included in the analysis. The chapter will focus on the program PRONADE, Bilingual Education and the role of two NGO’s and their objective to provide better education for indigenous children. The successes and challenges of each program and initiative will comprise this chapter with the help of internal insight from the interviewees. With the support of the previous chapters, official reports and data collected during the fieldwork research, the extent to which the peace accords provided better education for the indigenous will define this part.

Chapter 1: A Theoretical Approach

Because its colonial past shaped Guatemala and other Latin American's history and country, it seems evident for scholars to include postcolonialism and to develop its transformative meaning through time. Although this concept is highly used and contested, it has gained much currency in the Global South. It is critical to unravel this concept to obtain an understanding that is conducive to the analysis of its evolution to grasp the complexity of this concept, which seems to include other terms such as neo-colonialism, internal colonialism and globalisation. The importance of globalisation allows us to assess the role and importance of international organisations and their cooperation with governments and their views on their policies, especially those of education. Whether formed by a government or international institutions, education policies have politicised the legal framework that shapes this concept. Therefore, it is essential to consider the nature and purpose of political actors in creating education policies to assess their composition, effectiveness, and reach across a population. The focus on populations and civilisation that policies are destined to raise the question of interculturalism and its relations with a nation's identity. Although the Spanish translated version, interculturalidad, seems similar, they appear to have divergent and opposing views in establishing identity politics, the West's involvement, and creating a united population characterised by shared values. In so, the interconnectedness and richness of interculturalism, education policies and postcolonialism will define the structure and course of this chapter.

1.1 Postcolonialism: the legacy of colonial rule?

Postcolonialism has taken various forms and meanings since previously colonised countries gained their independence. Although some scholars define it strictly by its temporal significance, indicating a historical rupture from Western powers' occupation in formerly colonised regions (Fazal, Lingard & Lavia, 2006). This aspect has been extensively challenged and has ignited the academic debate in international relations regarding postcolonial thought.

Although newly independent countries are not under complete domination and control by western powers, it is necessary to underline that military intervention, political and economic sanctions remain present (Crossley & Tikly, 2004). This debate has more to do with the impact former colonisers have on formerly colonised regions and how they shaped today's globalised world. A historical, social and political examination of formerly colonised territories remains relevant in understanding how Western powers currently marginalise non-Western countries (Nair, 2017).

However, the “post” in postcolonialism does not solely indicate the accomplishment of a country’s reach of sovereignty and autonomy. It rather indicates gradual decolonisation and a transition from colonised based institutional frameworks to a more democratic foundation (Tikly, 1999). Postcolonialism has been criticised for encompassing vast land in formerly colonised territories, geographically reducing their history and evolution to one geographic entity when utilising postcolonial thought (McClintock, 1992 & Loomba, 1998). Additionally, Gonzales Casanova, (1963) brings up the controversiality in the academic field of utilising European concepts in formerly colonised countries without adapting them to their context (Martins, 2018). By Western powers being characterised as the dominant figure in colonial times, postcolonialism allows recognition of past resistance and a continuum of rejection and reformulation of the normative Western culture that now prevails in modern society (Loomba, 1998).

Initially, postcolonialism was more so identified as the protection of colonised civilisations from Western dogmas (During, 2000). The perception of postcolonialism has evolved and now appears to be utilised in the understanding of globalisation, suggesting a continuity of involvement of the international community in current social, political and economic affairs towards the formerly colonised. The central aspect that shapes this reasoning is that colonialism is indeed not over but can be seen as a root cause that has shaped our modern ways of defining capitalism, globalisation and the labour market (Rizvi, 2007). The historical patterns that shaped colonialism, such as the caste system, ethnic and gender stratification, free/forced labour and the process of evangelism, are essential to take into consideration when conceiving how colonialism shapes postcolonial theory (Tickly, 1999).

Scholars such as Dirlik have linked postcolonialism and its effect on global capitalism: “I would suggest instead that postcoloniality is the condition of the intelligentsia of global capitalism” (1995: 356). Globalisation and capitalism seem to go hand in hand in the academic debate of postcolonialism. Despite some disagreeing, Simon During states firmly that “the histories of globalisation and postcolonialism have always been intertwined” (2000, p.385). During the evolution of postcolonial thought as for society and globalism as a whole, colonialism's effects have been made more apparent. Fazal Rizvi has also demonstrated this view, “contemporary globalisation cannot be disassociated from its roots in the European projects of imperialism" (2006: 255). Although there are several theories such as dependency theory, neocolonialism and modernism, to name a few, that can relate and explain how the Global South still face social, economic and political struggles, one has attracted more academic attention.

1.1.2 Internal Colonialism

Frantz Fanon underlines an intriguing aspect, suggesting that: although formerly colonised regions have gained historical and legal independence, they remain "colonised internally, psychologically" (Fazal, Lingard, Lavia, 2006: 251). The terminology of "colonised internally" can be found in internal colonialist discourses, originating from Leo Marquard regarding South Africa (Gonzalez, 1963). Even though internal colonialism has been applied to several European countries, its first appearance in Latin America can be traced back to Pablo Gonzalez Casanova in the 1960s in Mexico. Although neocolonialism also suggests that colonial variables and patterns such as class are still present in formerly colonised regions, it helps to clarify the link between colonisation and their current dependency status (Maldonado-Torres, 2016).

In addition to class-based stratification, internal colonialism incorporates a social-cultural dynamic to that understanding (Maldonado-Torres, 2016). Considering ethnic and social stratification imposed by colonial powers is a relevant component as it persists in modern day societies. However, arguments have been made that the colonial type system had lost some of its weight. Internal colonialism suggests that the characteristics of colonisation is an ongoing system practiced by former colonisers and implanted in current local elites (Maldonado-Toress, 2016). Because institutional discrimination based on race, class and ethnicity in society are intertwined, it is complex to dissociate one from the other.

In Fanon's book *'Black Skin, White Masks'* written in 1952, he provides an insightful perspective in demonstrating how colonisers' ideal of racial stratification has been displaced on the colonised themselves. The notion of "whiteness" has been utilised in both postcolonialism and internal colonialism. As Fanon explains this concept regarding French imperialism, he asserts: "their desires have been changed into another form, carried across into the desire for whiteness through a kind of metempsychosis. Their very desires have been transposed, though they have never, of course, actually become white. They have black skin, with a white mask" (Young, 2003: 144). Though predominantly white Western elites may view the indigenous, ladino and black individuals as lesser than, this stratification has also been found within colonised societies.

This model has been demonstrated in strong indigenous countries such as Bolivia, Mexico or Peru, where discrimination can be identified between mestizo elites and local criollo (Maldonado-Torres, 2016). Stavenhagen (1965), in *'Classes, Colonialism and Acculturation',* explicitly analyses the power dynamic and inequalities between the Ladino and Indian population, illustrating that the Ladino identify more with whites (Chaloult & Chaloult, 1979). However, biologically speaking, they possess phenotypes closer to a caucasian individual yet hold more powerful places in society. He argues that the ladino community are commonly seen as mestizo, where social and cultural factors also determine their status in society (1965). While examining social stratification amongst Indians and the Ladino population, an interesting outcome was made apparent. The Indian community does not have social stratification even though they have social classes and ranks (1965). On the other hand, the Ladino community practices social stratification incorporating similar Western beliefs and values such as land ownership, income, education, and family's descendants (1965).

Internal colonialism is defined in various ways but mainly encompasses the historical motivation of stratification and conflict (Martins, 2018). The connotation of "internal" isn't solely limited to national geographical space. In addition, as Paulo Henrique Martins writes: "it refers to the relational dynamics that cross coloniality from diverse economic and non-economic variables redefining the nature of human agency in the context of both peripheral modernity and global society. […] (internal) refers simultaneously to the tensions between colonised and colonising countries and the tensions between dominating and dominated groups" (2018: 2). This concept of dominating and dominated groups is reflected in Stavenhagen, Havens or Gonzalez-Casanova's work where they recognise the "existence of social relations based on domination and subjection" (Chaloult & Chaloult, 1979: 86).

Stavenhagen and Chaloult have identified essential variables such as land to play a substantial role, especially in South America. Land defines the Ladino and Indian status where commercial relationships are vital for Indians to play a part in the socio-economic sphere. Stavenhagen states that "The Indian participates in these (commercial) relationships as producer and consumer; the Ladino is always the trader, the middleman, the creditor" (1965: 63). Therefore, internal colonialism attempts at incorporating variables and empirical data that explains and demonstrates the social-cultural legacy of colonialism that has transcended through time and societies, explaining the modern-day inequalities observed in the Global South.

Postcolonialism, internal colonialism and the colonial components that characterise it, shape the current state of capitalism and globalisation. As Simon During noted, postcolonialism adopts a reconciliatory approach in contrast to a critical and anti-colonialist lens (2000). It is essential to address the effects of colonialism within theoretical frameworks such as postcolonialism or modernism to understand the current apparatus of racial, ethnic, class and gender-based inequalities. By standing this acknowledgement impedes the comprehension and remediation towards the current globalisation scheme that interferes with educational institutions, notably in the Global South (Rizvi, 2007).

Policymakers often have to balance the need to address the colonial legacy while stimulating economic growth in a globalised world (Crossley & Tikly, 2004). Burbules and Tarres raise an intriguing question that includes globalisation and state sovereignty in the educational sector in the opening of their book: “To what extent is the educational endeavor affected by processes of globalization that are threatening the autonomy of national educational systems and the sovereignty of the nation-state as the ultimate ruler in democratic societies?” (2000: 4)

1.2 The politics of educational policies in a state-building process

Educational policies go hand in hand with the processes of globalisation, as underlined previously. Education plays a vital role in defining a society and its influence, whether nationally or internationally. The processes through which education is given and instructed include language, science, arts, history and overall values and beliefs generally transmitted to younger generations. The incorporation of education policies in Peace Accords ultimately recognises that education can and is a factor that promotes or attempts at achieving Peace between several conflicting factions in a post-conflict setting (Dupuy, 2008). Within Peace Agreements, education has been utilised to address security, protection and economic issues. In Colombia, enhancing education can prevent individuals from joining armed groups or drug-related gangs, enhancing citizen security within a country (Dupuy, 2008). Dupuy argues that Peace Agreements in El Salvador have used education so that ex-combatants, police officers, or army officers would have access to education to reintegrate them. Naturally, providing individuals with sufficient education, literacy opportunities or vocational training will enhance employment rates and alleviate poverty and possibly crime. Incorporating education as a key or even partial component of Peace Accords naturally becomes a political matter as it is subject to reproduce power dynamics in society (2008).

Understanding what those power structures are and how they shape the educational system is essential to establish when examining educational policies. Jan Mohamed elaborates the “Manichean Allegory”, which incorporates the engrained ideas around the West and the Rest: “a field of diverse yet inter- changeable oppositions between white and black, good and evil, superiority and inferiority, civilization and savagery, intelligence and emotion, rationality and sensuality, self and Other, subject and object” (1985: 63). This analysis allows a deeper understanding of how and why the educational system still exercise racial, ethnic and gender-based stratification as their politics are still subject to colonial thought.

The implementation of a European educational norm can be identified in the languages that prevail in educational systems. Jan Mohamed adds that “The dominant model of power- and interest-relations in all colonial societies is the manichean opposition between Manicheantive superiority of the European and the supposed inferiority of the native” (1985: 63). Comparative Education studies find that European languages are more valued than indigenous ones in the education sector. However, the studies themselves are published in these languages, limiting the intellectual and linguistical scope beyond dominant European languages (May & Aikman, 2003). It is not so much that indigenous languages are naturally less valuable or useful than European ones but more so that they have been ‘othered’ (Crossley & Tikly, 2004). Therefore, the past and present domination and imposition of European languages as a form of colonial practice grants them privilege over others. Additionally, this creates a linguistic imbalance in its educational practice but, most importantly, the gradual disappearance of a culture that lives in language (May & Aikman, 2003).

Addressing educational inequalities persists because the complex colonial forms of power remain engrained within educational systems. Scholars have frequently established that “the colonial empires established Western models of education – although often distorted and impoverished models – all over the globe” (Hickling-Hudson & Matthews & Woods, 2004: 7). Western models are also produced and promoted through international institutions seeking to improve education in the Global South, such as the World Bank or UNESCO.

1.2.2 Literacy: a socio-cultural tool or a market commodity?

In their analysis, Wickens and Sandlin examine the purpose literacy plays within society raging from an economic means to a sociocultural instrument (2007). Through various reports on literacy, the World Bank has used words that characterise literacy as a skill primarily useful for the labour market, therefore mainly funding functional literacy programs. Stressing the purely functional and productive aspect of literacy limits its vast understanding and use across regions. Though institutions view literacy as a functional value for the labour market, it cannot be dissociated from its personal development capacities (2007). Individual literacy enhancement also contributes to overall economic improvement within a community.

Although literacy views have changed over time, UNESCO initially considered literacy as "The process and content of learning to read and write to the preparation for work and vocational training and a means of increasing the productivity of the individual" (Rassool,1999: 7). Literacy and language have now grown into valuable instruments to share culture and dogmas. UNESCO has now defined literacy from a sociocultural aspect: "Literacy is about more than reading and writing—it is about how we communicate in society. It is about social practices and relationships, about knowledge, language, and culture" (Wickens, & Sandlin, 2007: 283). This distinction remains crucial in implementing education policies and the justification of investing the necessary funds to increase literacy rates, whether for economic or cultural reasons.

In the case of international agencies such as the World Bank or the International Monetary Fund, they intend to address educational issues from a macro perspective, not considering the informal sector's influence, cultural differences, or social disintegration, to name a few (Kempner & Jurema, 2002). Although education has been a significant component in tackling economic, security and sociocultural issues, the need to reform education by considering those issues and looking at education and the factors that influence it, requires a microanalytical perspective (Kempner & Jurema, 2002).

As European languages have been and remain the primary taught language, investing in literacy from an economic standpoint promotes the self legitimised use of European language. It also reduces the educational opportunities of individuals learning in their local and indigenous language, therefore characterising language from an economic standpoint, promoting neocolonialist ideas (Wickens, & Sandlin, 2007). This practice is individually and culturally damaging as teaching courses in their local languages could be a tool for social change and raise awareness in recognition of a civilisation’s culture (Bellino, 2016).

As Bellino underlined, education’s role is to prepare the younger generations for their future where education can become a product of transnational justice from a multigenerational standpoint (2016). Bellino expresses the long-lasting effects of historical education where “raising public awareness about historical injustice has been conceived as a collective obligation to shape a new national narrative, a form of symbolic reparations for past wrongs, and a way of acknowledging harm while engaging with the politics of recognition” (2016: 61). In addition to language, education reforms must prescribe an accurate depiction of the country’s history, not only to restore justice but to prevent future conflicts and tensions by including all individuals to redefine citizenship and national identity (2016).

International agencies need to foster and recognise the importance of sustaining indigenous languages when reforming a country's educational system. Western-based organisations such as the World Bank or UNESCO may be portrayed as an essential tool to reform educational policies. However, their Western origins prevail in the policies implemented in literacy programs by favouring European languages in a formerly European colonised region (Wickens & Sandlin, 2007). A linguistic and economic-based system that is implemented and encouraged by European agencies provokes a continuum of dependency (Watson, 1994).

Scholars (Hickling-Hudson, Matthews & Woods) have concluded that education is another market commodity where its principles and functionalities adhere to consumer demands and allow international competition (2004). The more educational policies embrace social stratification and pedagogy of exclusion, the closer this sector becomes part of the international market and performs as an enterprise (Kempner & Jurema, 2002). This perspective questions the cooperative role the state plays in a peacebuilding and state-building process where education is at the core of the discussion.

1.2.3 The processes of State-Building

Although the definition of state-building often varies, a broad understanding of its meaning "refers to the set of actions undertaken by national and/or international actors to establish, reform and strengthen state institutions where these have seriously been eroded or are missing" (Fritz & Rocha Menocal, 2007: 13). State-society relations are at the core of a state-building process as the state is expected to deliver essential goods and services to its citizens (Haider, & Strachan, 2014). At the same time, civil society actors are encouraged to engage in this process productively.

The commencement of a state-building process reveals state fragility in its ability or willingness to accommodate its citizens and implement development programs to reduce poverty or increase education and citizen security (Grävingholt et al., 2009). As state-building theory grows from a peacebuilding process, international actors' involvement in state formation contributes to the debate towards state autonomy, legitimacy, and accountability. The various ways state-building processes are expressed vary from a top-down or bottom-up approach.

A top-down approach essentially constitutes national elites concentrating on state stabilisation rather than focusing on civil society actors and their involvement in the nation-state's reconstruction (Dagher, 2018). This model is often associated with the institutional approach concerning state-building. Though defining this approach has constituted an academic debate, the state is perceived as the central government that attempts to strengthen its governmental institutions (Haider, & Strachan, 2014). The notion of state-building and nation-building has often acquired contested terrain whereby international actors can participate in a state-building process without directly interfering in the nation-building process and the sociopolitical realm surrounding it (Grotenhuis, 2016). From this perspective, state-building can be characterised as a "scientific, technical and administrative process" (Lemay-Hébert, 2010: 14). The academic limitations include undermining civil society actors and their objectification of an essentially unified entity whereby policies apply homogeneously (Haider, & Strachan, 2014).

The legitimacy approach can complement this component where NGO's, unions and citizens actively participate in the reformation of the state's institutions. For Lemay-Hébert, "legitimacy' approach is more concerned with socio-political cohesion and the legitimacy central authorities can generate" (Lemay-Hébert, 2010: 22). In no way is the legitimacy approach undermining the importance of institutional reformation and state capacity, but instead highlights the importance for civil society actors to voice their demands and needs in a state that has previously proved to disregard them.

Although state-building perspectives diverge in the extent to which the state or civil society should partake in this process, it appears to be essential to incorporate civil society actors in the discussion and navigate towards a bottom-up approach than a standard top-down political process. A focus on civil society actors again questions how indigenous individuals participate in society, how national identity is constructed, and how cultural hybridity may conform to the westernised world.

1.3 Interculturalism vs Interculturalidad

Focusing on indigenous civilisations' perspective and participation within a colonised and marginalised country widens the socio-cultural scope and processes that define interculturality. Interculturality has often been opposed and compared to multiculturalism that has yet dominated the academic sphere. Nevertheless, it has received much criticism and has been deemed to foster a westernised view of analysing societies that englobe various cultures and ideals (Aman, 2013).

Multiculturalism is defined as a concept that depicts and recognises the multitude of cultures cohabitating within a society (Aman, 2013). Although the presence of numerous cultures within a society cannot be denied, it undermines the relations they have with one another and fosters this limited understanding that can be traced back to a western-based thought (Aman, 2013). Multiculturalism focuses more on the differences each culture is characterised by, creating a "we" versus "them" perspective, hindering minority groups (Cobb, Lilienfeld, Schwartz, Frisby & Sanders, 2020). Though multiculturalism has promoted identity politics where individuals identify themselves across various criteria such as religion, ethnicity, gender or race, to name a few, to push for identity politics and political recognition (Gutmann, 2001).

It has, however, excluded any understanding of in-person interaction and the transfer of those cultures and values that limits any exchange and creation of new cultures growing from that intercommunication (Gutmann, 2001). This limitation is where interculturality differs and deepens the importance of sharing one's culture, accepting it, recognising it, leaving any hierarchical system aside. Multiculturalism superficially reduces cultures to a factual statistic that composes a society and lacks acknowledging or encouraging the inner diversity and influence one culture has on another (Aman, 2013).

Interculturality's origins are traced back to the Andean region in Latin America as a way for indigenous movements to resist and engage in a decolonisation process (Aman, 2015). Although its meaning and purpose have evolved through time and language, it is commonly understood as a socialisation process between multiple individuals sharing diverse cultures and engaging in a respectful dialogue of culture-making (Zapata-Barrero, 2017). Interculturalism has been utilised to foster more inclusive migration policies, educational policies or identity politics and has begun to enter the political, social and private sphere (Zapata-Barrero, 2017; Aman, 2013). However, multiculturalism does not necessarily equal mutual respect and social cohesion and may promote the status quo (Bussoletti & Estrada Guevara & Landín, 2011).

Interculturalism, seeks to create acceptance and equal treatment between individuals but particularly towards typically marginalised groups and has overall been characterised as an anti-racist tool (Zapata-Barrero, 2017). The individual, societal and political analysis of identity formation and unity amongst various groups or subcultural groups has led to a deeper understanding of what defines citizenship and identity. Interculturalism seeks to undergo a mentality that honours and values differences and links individuals amongst those distinctions instead of excluding them by breaking generalisation, stereotyping and allegorising specific individuals (Chaudhuri, 2002). Although identity politics may either reinforce a cultural, racial or gender-based stigma, it can also be a tool to break this common pattern of excluding those who do not fit into a normative society which is why an emphasis on individual interactions and societal change is essential to undergo political and institutional change.

Because each individual pertains to and performs its culture in various ways, defining a national identity to promote unity is an essential and controversial process that multiple countries have attempted reaching. Scholars such as Justo Sierra Méndez, on the one hand, have determined that educational systems should not instruct children but more so educate them; however, he views language as a tool that could impede on national identity formation (Bussoletti, & Estrada Guevara & Landín, 2011). As previously established, language can lead to discrimination, but Justo Sierra Méndez added the need to have one common language to form a national and patriotic identity within a “national soul”[1] and “national culture”[2] (Bussoletti et al., 2011: 23). This view has been described for Mexico’s case and the need to use Spanish as the primary and only language in schools.

However, this imposition can be particularly problematic as languages’ variety and diversity are then not included in culture formation. Therefore, uniting a population demands a homogenous idiom, excluding those who do not speak the language or have to give up additional languages to embrace citizenship. Instead of seeing the variety as a sense of unity, it promotes European ideals of breaking down components that shape someone’s identity and propagates colonialist ideals of imposing certain criteria, but especially a language that historically is not theirs.

During the XIX’s century, paradoxical claims were made regarding education in the state and identity formation: on the one side, it became a process of liberation but on the other, a mechanism that limits cultural expression and controls specific populations (Bussoletti, & Estrada Guevara & Landín, 2011). In this case, engaging in interculturalism from a civil society standpoint results in the ongoing language discrimination implemented by foreign or national institutions where Western linguistic hegemony prevails and promotes state and civil discord. Arguing that nationalism and cultural unity are imperative to prevent external involvement, he promotes a process that contradicts his discourse as Bussoletti, Estrada Guevara & Landín state clearly: “Curiously, the opposite was done: the population was controlled and subjected to foreign capital”[3] (2011: 24). In this sense, interculturalism has taken various paradoxical approaches in the obtention of cultural recognition where the political and the social cannot be separated but are complementary to achieve institutional and social justice (2011).

For a nation to break this repetitive process of exclusion and political, economic or social domination from foreign powers, one has to form an inclusive national identity that proportionally portrays the diversity that characterises a nation. An additional difficulty that interculturalism has faced lays behind linguistic misrepresentations where an English or Western outlook of that concept seems to differ with its origins back in the 1990s, “interculturalidad”. From an indigenous frame of mind, interculturalidad promotes “restorative justice" as a movement in response to the state's exclusion of indigenous rights (Aman, 2015). From a social and indigenous standpoint, interculturalidad embarks on a decolonisation process, encountering and challenging European knowledge, colonial vocabulary and numerous methods that label indigenous groups as "other" (Aman, 2015).

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[1] Translated by author (*alma nacional*)
[2] Translated by author (*cultura nacional)*
[3] Translated by author

The functionalities of modernity can be traced back to colonial rule and the various racial and social hierarchies established during that period which remain recurring ideals such as knowledge or language where if one does not conform to that modern norm, one is left out and ultimately controlled (Aman, 2015). Interestingly, Quijano complements this train of thought in stating that "it is necessary to detach ourselves from the links of rationality-modernity with coloniality in the first place, and ultimately with all power not constituted by the free decision of free people"[4] (1992: 19). Interculturalidad describes a movement that adopts mechanisms and processes that disengage with modernity which is a synonym and reflects coloniality and Western domination (Aman, 2015). Indigenous thought, knowledge, and practices have been claimed by Europeans and haven't granted any indigenous legitimacy or recognition to them. So, deconstructing and removing colonial traces is imperative for indigenous movements and groups to reacquire what was once theirs and be granted legitimacy (Mignolo, 2007).

Although interculturality and interculturalidad have been defined differently, it is an overall attempt to deconstruct colonial practices in which indigenous or marginalised groups are othered and excluded whereby social movement embarks in diverse processes to decolonise, de-link and deconstruct a western-based modernised world (Aman, 2015). Education has been at the heart of interculturalidad, where courses are offered depicting indigenous histories, languages and values that have previously been silenced (Aman, 2015).

Territory and land also hold a proper place within interculturalidad social movements as it contains knowledge, experience, history and language ascribed to indigenous populations where intellectual thought and dogmas are drawn back to a physical space (Aman, 2015). Because colonisation affected so many areas and fields that constitute a nation and a society, it is hard to find areas that are exempt from colonial legacy, which is why the central purpose of interculturalidad is to deconstruct those imposed dogmas and beliefs, for indigenous groups to assert their legitimate place in society.

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[4] Translated by author

To conclude, it is undeniable that postcolonialism, education policy and interculturalism (or interculturalidad) are more than often intercorrelated and interdependent when examining excluded groups' place in society. Although concepts and terms may contradict and oppose one another, the idea that seems to prevail in all three theories, one way or another, is that globalisation is the recto to colonialism's verso (During, 2000). The proposals examined in undertaking societal and institutional change may differ regarding education or identity construction, but there is an overall acknowledgement that modern societies and systems are not representative and inclusive where the majority benefits from the minority (Hickling-Hudson et al., 2004). Despite minority or indigenous groups detaining a negative western view of being "othered", it is primordial to stipulate that not only is every culture different within that group but that deconstructing the association of different with "lesser than" is a crucial starting point (Quijano, 1992). The ongoing terminology of core versus periphery, social versus political or even modern versus backward, does not hold solely objective intellectual meaning but affiliates these words to specific groups in a strongly stratified and hierarchised world. It is inadequate to dissociate modernisation or globalisation from exploitation, domination, discrimination, inequality, or privilege. This recognition is what all three theories attempt to establish and solve, whether it is ignited by social movements, institutional change, identity politics, educational policies, or a complementary process including all of the above.

Chapter 2: Historical Contextualisation towards a Peace Accords

Guatemala's history from 1954 to 1996 has presented many challenges in the development of indigenous communities due to severe persecution that defines the civil war. Foreign involvement and severe rates of corruption resulted in election interference, coup d'états, and military-led governments. Although the country suffered from numerous authoritarian regimes and violent attacks, the indigenous community has been the primary target for 36 years. This persecution has notably impacted their right to education and their impossibility to attain schools for fear of losing their lives. The state's incapacity to provide safety and education for indigenous families formed the current state of a weak educational system for indigenous children. A disproportionate number of indigenous children, especially girls, suffered and continue to suffer the injustices and inequalities performed by the Ministry of Education of Guatemala. Many indigenous communities were discouraged and threatened if they attended schools where the economic, political, and social situation did not allow for promising education results. These historical overviews encompass military rule, international involvement, the impact on education, and the evolution towards a peace process and the promise of educational opportunities for the indigenous. The signing of the Peace Accords as for other Accords provide a legal framework that defines the protection of indigenous' right, particularly regarding their education with the formulation of several organisations and entities designed to guarantee those rights.

2.1 Authoritarianism and International involvement from 1954 to the 1970's

Indigenous groups in Guatemala have been suffering discrimination and oppression since the Spanish Conquest, where this persecution has not ceased increasing since its independence (Blum, 2001). Foreign intervention in Guatemala has long characterised the country's social, economic and political issues. As the infamous American United Fruit Company was based in Guatemala and the leading exporter of bananas, this implementation led to substantial labour rights violations and political control (Ciment, 2006). Health issues, land distribution and foreign domination defined the United States domination upon rural workers in Guatemala and the rise of discontent. While the democratically elected Jacobo Arbenz politically declared in 1952 that land would be redistributed to approximately 100,000 farmers and the Mayan people, this loss of land for the expansion of banana plantation fields sparked US military intervention (Marcucci, 2017). Operation PBSUCESS was a CIA led coup aiming at overthrowing President

Arbenz in 1954, eventually leading Guatemala into a bloody 36 year-long civil war from 1960 to 1996 (Cullather, 1994).

During the Cold War period, the United States had often justified their implication and involvement in Latin American countries such as Guatemala, defending their coup as a means to repress communism (Poppema, 2009). As the American Colonel Carlos Castillo led Arbenz's removal, he was declared president to favour US interests in the redistribution of land by reversing Arbenz's reform (PBS, 2011). This anti-communist agenda set off massive human rights violations and political dismantling and reformation. Castillo repressed, killed and imprisoned any revolt from labour and peasant movements and suppressed working classes and any pro-revolutionary organisations (Caumartin, 2005).

The USA had established much presence through banana plantations, railroads and American loyalists working in Guatemalan governments in fields. However, the aim here was to dismantle any establishment that did not favour US interests which prevailed in Guatemalan Foreign Policy, directly selecting US businesses (Booth, 2010). Though he was assassinated in 1957, his presidency was marked by a strong sense of political, social and economic corruption and repression upon minority and revolutionary groups, which only worsened when the army General Miguel Ydígoras Fuentes assumed presidency (Marcucci, 2017).

Police and army troops targeted anti-government protestors and members of the Revolution Party (PR) in Guatemala City (Fuentes Cordoba, 2021 and Ciment, 2006). Group leaders such as the FAR (Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias) and November 3 Revolutionary Movement (M13) were inspired by ideologies in Cuba, war strategies and patterns mirroring Fidel Castro's philosophy (Booth, 2010). The November 13 Revolutionary Movement (M13) attracted peasants and encouraged FAR's creation and became its centrepiece to threatening Ydigoras and other military-based governments to come (Ciment, 2006).

Although many died from diverse backgrounds, statistics reported that between 1962 and 1970, the recurrent targets were peasants, union members, rural union organisations, teachers, students and supporters of guerrilla groups (Chamarbagwala, R. & Morán, H., 2011). Guerrilla groups upheld their position, and military operations proved ineffective, mounting to the military overthrow of Ydígoras in 1963 to prevent further elections and guaranteeing military domination (Dombrowski, 1970; Booth, 2010).

An attempt to return to democratic elections took place when former president Juan Jose Arevalo, expressed his desire to run for president in the 1963 elections. As he represented and supported the Revolutionist Party, rising discontent justified the coup by the Defense Minister Colonel Enrique Peralta Azurdia and assumed an authoritarian presidency (Ciment, 2006). Peralta was not solely disliked by Guatemalans but also by US officials as he did not fundamentally support US intervention and control over him and his administration. The FAR organised the assassination of the chief US military adviser, which pushed the US to plot Peralta's expulsion from office, eventually leading to planned elections in 1966 (Ciment, 2006).

Although a revolutionary party candidate, Julio Menendez Montenegro, won the elections, a drastic split of power and values prevailed in his administration with the anti-insurgency defence minister Colonel Carlos Arana Osorio (Ciment, 2006). Osorio was known to have enforced counterinsurgency campaigns, also known as death squads, being overall responsible for the death of 30,000 people in 7 years. In 1964, a US-trained campaign killed overall 10,00 civilians in Zacapa and repressed guerilla groups leading him to gain the title of "the Butcher of Zacapa", wiping out FAR based communities (Caumartin, 2005). As he became president in 1970, he promoted terror as an institutional tool resulting in disappearances targeted towards trade unions, students and censoring the press as a means to spread fear nationwide (Ulrike, 2007).

Aside from raids and targeted killings, education was a tool used to promote hierarchy and "an instrument for ethnocide" (Bellino, 2017; Cojtí Cuxil, as cited in Little & Smith, 2009: 93). Stories reported that indigenous children endured humiliation in classes, were endangered on school grounds and sometimes were denied access to school (Bellino, 2017). The educational system legitimised structural violence and stigmatisation upon cultural, ethnic or symbolical grounds. In the CEH report, a child's testimony depicts the lack of educational opportunities during the civil war "We could not go to school. We grew up with the machete, with fear, terror, pain, and poverty, rather than growing up in peace with education" (Bellino, 2017: 35).

The lack of national unity justified by the need to openly defy and deter all actions, promoted communism to any degree in Guatemala. The spread of the idea that pro-communist individuals will be hunted down and should be reported and denounced as a moral duty in this society rose in President Lucas Garcia's administration from 1978 to 1982 (Janssens, 2021). In his inaugural, he expressed that “Starting from today, Guatemalans can no longer evade their responsibility to actively participate in our search for solutions to the grave problems that overwhelm our country.” (Janssens, 2021: 118). Not only are “disobedient” civilians punished for not following a strict pro-military agenda, they are expected by the military to be actively converted to their regime (Ibarra, 2010). In addition to severe governmental punishment, the economic and educational realm also faced issues during the civil war.

2.2. Economic, Educational and social impacts from the 1970s to the 1980s

During the end of the 1970’s to the 1980s, a strong sense of national terrorism, US intervention and civilians denouncing one another illustrates the efficiency of spreading fear, propaganda and terror under the justification of fighting communism. Although outgoing behaviour nonpracticing national identity by Guatemalans is severely punished, there were also attacks on universities, teachers and students have also been the victim of such repression. The University of San Carlos mostly opposed the military-led regime, which amounted to students receiving death threats and seeking refuge when denounced by fellow students for their political stances (Janssens, 2021). The education sector was a primary concern for authoritarian rulers as they feared that teachers would instruct wrongful ideas to their students where any alliance or cooperation between anti-military individuals would lose their lives as they were deemed to be the enemy of the government (Poppema, 2009).

The economy suffered throughout the civil war, but during the late 1970s, indigenous and peasant populations comprised the majority of rising agrarian unemployment (Booth, 2010). Issues revolving around land had triggered the civil war and continued during the civil war where ladinos or the military would take hold of indigenous private land, but additionally, natural disasters such as earthquakes would comprise their land (Bellino, 2017). Despite modernisation and industrialisation grew from the 1950s until the 1970s, a sharp decrease in shared national income amongst working and middle classes where foreign investors and national elites were the prominent beneficiaries starting 1970 (Booth, 2010). Economic disasters and foreign control of production and prices contributed to the worsening of indigenous people’s conditions. An increase in workers discontent arose in the late 1970s as the rise of armed struggles and revindication contributed to labour movements, including industrial workers and trade unions (Ibarra, 2010).

Figures show an increase in workers who partook in strikes which grew from almost 12 per cent between 1966 to 1970 and reached 80 per cent between 1974 and 1980 (Ibarra, 2010). Between 1981 and 1983 alone, an estimated 100,000 to 150,000 dead or disappeared people was counted in the high indigenous population in the Western Highlands (Jonas, 2000: 11). By 1981, indigenous populations composed 90 per cent of the guerilla groups, with 250,000 poor people supporting them (Ciment, 2006: 438). The slaughtering and relentlessness the government had towards targeting Mayan individuals stemmed from the objective to slower Mayan reproduction, burning their crops, violate sacred places and ultimately scrapping Mayan culture and existence (Marcucci, 2017). The translation and illustration of a repressive regime is not only focused on minority groups such as peasants, women or indigenous communities.

They are the predominant groups that have suffered rape, murder, torture, displacement and other means of repression during 34 years as a means to spread fear (Leiby, 2009). Although there were periods where violence occurred more than others, a correlation can be noticed between the decrease of URNG popularity in the early 1980s and the increase of sexually related crimes (Leiby, 2009). In United Nations reports and scholarly analysis, a clear correlation between ethnicity, indigenous/rural origins, gender and any connection to rebel groups can be identified as the primary victims of persecution, terrorised groups and the destruction of entire communities (Leiby,2009). Targeting the indigenous has long existed, but statistics show that genocide towards them can explain how according to the CEH, 83% of human rights victims are of Mayan origin from 1962 to 1996 (1999). Most massacres and genocide were located in departments such as Quiche, Huehuetenango, Chimaltenango and Alta, where a significant number of indigenous individuals were living (Fuentes Cordoba, 2021).

Guerrilla and URNG groups were found on Indigenous land, explaining the rapid increase of death and exile. There is a growth in the 1980s of indigenous organisations promoting the preservation of their language, cultural and political rights (Fuentes Cordoba, 2021). Because military and counterinsurgency groups had battelled back and forth for years, it became clear to the URNG that a military takeover was not feasible, creating the need to establish political momentum (Fuentes Cordoba, 2021). As the end of the 1980s became more and more peaceful, opening a window for dialogue and peace, the URNG proposed dialogue and negotiations to end this civil war (Fuentes Cordoba, 2021).

2.2 Dialogue for Peace and Indigenous Involvement

The guerilla movement was represented by the URGN in the first democratic elections in 1986 until 1990, promising a change in government and indigenous relations. In a return to democracy in 1985, educational and social programs were less and less a priority due to neoliberal policies by the IMF or World Bank (Poppema, 2009). The education sector had been hard hit, and very few teachers were willing to work for fear of being killed similarly for children, explaining a significantly low enrollment rate of 65% in primary schools and 17% in secondary education (2009: 387). Guatemala ranked 2nd after Haiti, with the lowest literacy rates barely reaching 45% affecting significantly more the indigenous population than the ladino population due to civil war repercussions (2009). The World Bank reports that public expenditures on education in the 1980s levelled at 2.4%, dropping at 1.6% in 1990 in addition to a decrease in government investment in education amounting to 17% in 1980 and only 6% in 1990 (World Bank, 1997b: 38). From 1980 to 1996, Guatemala ranked the country with the least public spending on education in the entire continent with high illiteracy and school dropout rates with no sufficient teachers and classrooms due to this financial shortage (Ruano, 2002).

A Christian Democrat, Vinicio Cerezo, who had been living in exile in the United States, won the 1986 elections, satisfying Guatemalans hopes that a civilian and not a military candidate would lead their country (Ciment, 2006). He had no urge to demand justice for the thousands of victims and ongoing victims during his presidency. He insisted that the insurgents had lost and been defeated, requiring them to disarm, breaking the opportunity for any negotiation (Jonas, 2000). A clear divide and difference in achieving peace were evident between the army, civilians and businesses under his administration. The military ultimately had the last word on these polarising issues throughout his administration until 1991 (Caumartin, 2005).

This stance and attitude did not last long as neighbouring countries were also engaging in Peace Agreements and negotiation processes, encouraging Guatemalans to partake in similar operations. Therefore, a dialogue process commenced in 1990 with URGN members, private enterprises and popular religious groups, ultimately allowing them to engage in discussions with the army and the government to address repression and build a pathway towards democratisation (Jonas, 2000). Though there were constant tensions and discords between factions, UN mediators' involvement in partaking in this peace process due to international pressure began during Jorge Serrano Elias' presidency from 1991 to 1993 (Caumartin, 2005).

Although his government had direct interactions with URGN members in addressing human rights issues, they found themselves at an impasse with Serrano's agenda. He was more focused on imposing a cease-fire than focusing on political, economic, and social issues the country wished to solve (Jonas, 2000). A standstill on negotiations prevailed until 1993 as Serrano attempted an autogolpe to seize utter control, which led to the end of his presidency, entering Leon Carpio into a new government (Jonas, 2000).

As Carpio obtained the support of civil society actors, organisations, and ultimately the United Nations, the journey towards peace gained momentum. A legal and documented process began where an Assembly of Civil Society (Asamblea de la Sociedad Civil) was created composed of indigenous groups, women's groups and NGO's that served as advisors to negotiators (Booth, 2010). This entity allowed grassroots organisations to participate in political negotiations as demand ongoingly rose for minority groups such as trade unions, peasants, or progressive groups to voice their opinion after years of repression of demonstrations and quickly silenced resistance methods (Jonas, 2000). More and more indigenous groups would be represented public spaces more so in education sectors as proven by the creation of the Council of Mayan Education of Guatemala (CEM-G) in 1993, promoting Mayan culture, language and education with the incorporation of 28 non-governmental organisations composing this Council (Asturias, Grigsby and Oltheten, 2000).

In turn, 1994 marked the signing of a vital human rights accord creating a monitoring mission (MINUGUA) and, further on, historical clarifications to assess the 36 years of violations of human rights and refugee resettlements (Cojtí Cuxil, 2002). Another successful event for Mayan populations is the creation of the first National Congress of Mayan Education with the support of the Ministry of Education and UNESCO (Asturias, Grigsby and Oltheten, 2000). Their incentives were to publicly represent the diversity of Mayan language and ethnicity in accordance with the education system with the presence of more than 250 Mayan individuals attending meetings (Asturias, Grigsby and Oltheten, 2000). This led to the Mayan recommendation that Congress supported, financial support from the Netherland and assistance from UNESCO initiating PRONEM: Proyecto Movilizador de Apoyo a la Educación Maya (Asturias, Grigsby and Oltheten, 2000). PRONEM's objectives were to strengthen the National Council of Mayan Education with financial help from the Netherlands, engage in Local Units of Mayan Education dealing with researching and innovating education practices (curriculum, teacher training, educational material…) but also creating a proposal for a Mayan University (Asturias, Grigsby and Oltheten, 2000).

The signing of the Identity and Rights of Indigenous Peoples in 1995 marked a swift change and progress towards indigenous recognition as they constituted 60% of the population (Jonas, 200). The United Nations enumerated several different categories such as protecting their right to practice their spiritual beliefs in public and educational places, which was far from being the case previously: "The Government undertakes to secure respect for the exercise of this spirituality in all its manifestations" (United Nations, 1995: 7). This attempt resembles the ideas and values defining interculturalism to promote and respect indigenous culture to achieve cohesion and harmonious society.

Additionally, as discussed above, the destruction of cultural objects and property representing their religious, cultural or spirituals beliefs occurred, in so, the protection of their gatherings was explained in this agreement: "Temples and ceremonial centres situated in areas protected by the State as archaeological sites" (United Nations, 1995: 7). Interestingly, the agreement also considers temples and ceremonial centres as state property, the motivation being that the State will and should protect it as part of its national cultural heritage (United Nations, 1995). Although legitimising and developing science and technology coming from Mayan intellect was mentioned, education's role seemed to prevail in this document (United Nations, 1995).

A shared of governmental and indigenous decision markers was underlined in this agreement invoking that the educational reform commission would "be composed of an equal number of representatives of the governments and representatives of indigenous organisations" (United Nations, 1995: 17). Educational reform's critical outcomes are translated to a decentralised education system "to adapt it to linguistic and cultural needs and specific features" (United Nations, 1995: 9). There is a necessity to increase the financial budget of the Ministry of Education to implement goals such as: bilingual schools, trained and bilingual teachers, promoting indigenous cultures and values, giving communities an active participating role in curriculums and schools, the creation of Mayan institutions and Universities (United Nations, 1995).

Overall, this document entails numerous aspects of indigenous' lives raging from spirituality, land claims, and educational opportunities, with sections dedicated to the constitutional and legal framework installed to protect those rights that have long been awaited by indigenous groups nationwide. It focuses more on upcoming indigenous treatment and integration in Guatemalan society rather than addressing the 36 yearlong torture, killing, and justice deserved to these indigenous communities without naming any responsible culprits for these murders creating massive discontent amongst the indigenous population (Jonas, 2000).

A growth in leftist coalitions and political parties surfaced in the mid-1990s with the New Guatemala Democratic Front's creation to present themselves in elections (Jonas, 2000). General elections in November 1995 proved that the URGN were able to suspend military action, a growing number of indigenous groups and committees ran and won political roles as mayor increasing representation and access to the political sphere (Caumartin, 2005). These elections marked growth in left based seats in Congress, revealing a win of the candidate Alvaro Arzú of the National Advancement Party (Stedman, Rothchild & Cousens, 2002). As the civil war had aggravated economic inequalities and social class disparities, the implementation of neoliberal programs increasing privatisation of electric enterprises, financial and fiscal reforms with the liberalisation of foreign exchange characterised his attempt on addressing increasing poverty and bettering the country's status; however, it had some limitations (Booth, 2010).

Arzú's administration engaged in negotiating with rebel leaders and keeping under control the army as for the police, leading to the cease-fire of the URNG as for the military in March 1996 and the signing of socio-political and economic Accord revolving agrarian issues (Cojtí Cuxil, 2002). This 1996 socio-economic agrarian reform recognised that the government has to hold the responsibility of its citizens' well-being, where the 1990's unemployment and underemployment rate reached 66%, shining a light on the high poverty levels (Jonas, 2000:17) However, it does not focus much on land issues, and its measures on job creation are not feasible or existent to tackle these issues (Jonas, 2000).

As civil society actors and indigenous coalitions upheld crucial positions in the government, limiting abuse from the police and reforming this institution, it enabled a process for negotiations within a constitutional framework between the government and the URGN, which amounted to the signing of the Peace Accords on December 29 of 1996 (Cojtí Cuxil, 2002).

2.3 Educational policies in the Peace Accords

Though the signing of a Peace Accord does not necessarily guarantee peace, democracy, and prosperity, there is considerable improvement between government and civil society actors' ability to reach a negotiation point. All spheres amounting from land, language, and political participation contribute to social justice dynamics and its influence on education reform and access for minority groups that the Peace Accords promised to address (Poppema, 2009).

The UN-monitored a Commission for Historical Clarification, published in 1999, estimating the killing and disappearance of more than 200,000 individuals, where the majority were identified as Mayan reaching 83% and other indigenous populations (CEH, 1999). As for addressing those responsible, 93% of the army and security forces are deemed accountable for those numbers (CEH, 1999: 324). A repeating pattern acknowledges the ongoing persecution by the armed forces upon individuals stigmatised by their race, ethnicity, or origin is evident in the report' Memory of Silence' where 600 Mayan communities were a victim of diverse forms of violence (CEH, 1999). Education had often prioritised its ladino population amounting to low enrollment rates as for literacy rate reaching 28% where indigenous boys have on average 1.8 years of schooling compared to indigenous girls twice as less with 0.9% (Poppema, 2009: 387).

In 1996, the 1993 established Council of Mayan Education of Guatemala turned into a federal association of Mayan institutions and organisations named the National Council of Mayan Education (CNEM), having its own rules and regulations (Asturias, Grigsby and Oltheten, 2000). Its autonomous and consultative purpose served as the enhancement of education with the help of roughly 26 NGO's, but also governmental organisations such as DIGEBI (Dirección General de Educación Bilingüe intercultural) and the Academy of Mayan Languages (Asturias, Grigsby and Oltheten, 2000). Mayan activists and leaders, upon meetings and reunions, expressed the necessity to promote inclusivity and live in harmony to share these accomplishments with other isolated Mayan communities (Poppema, 2009).

More and more institutions, commissions and organisations grew to enhance indigenous contribution to educational reforms, such as the creation in 1997 Consultative Commission on Educational Reform (CCRE) in charge of implementing reforms which are divided into six sub-units: intercultural/multicultural education, human resources, social mobilisation, curriculum reform, legal issues and the National Plan of Education 2000-2020 (Asturias, Grigsby and Oltheten, 2000). In parallel, the Parity Commission for Educational Reform (COPARE), created in mid-1997, was in charge of designing and drawing up proposals for educational reforms, and CCRE would implement them (Cojtí Cuxil, 2002). COPARE foresaw several areas in need of transformation in the educational sphere as language, culture, infrastructure, pedagogic technique, and human resources training (Cojtí Cuxil, 2002). As part of signing a Peace Accord, international help and involvement generated the need for the Ministry of Education to create a unit (Unidad de Coordinación Nacional e Internacional del Ministerio de Educación) to coordinate and sustain effectiveness between international actor's assistance and its coherence towards educational policies (Asturias, Grigsby and Oltheten, 2000).

The Peace Agreement incorporates previously written and signed Agreements such as the Agreement on Identity and Rights of Indigenous Peoples in 1995 or the Agreement on Social and Economic Aspects and Agrarian Situation, also dedicating a section on education. In Chapter 2, section A (b) underlines the need to "avoid the perpetuations of poverty and of social, ethnic, sexual and geographical forms of discrimination, particularly those which arise from the divide between urban and rural society" (United Nations, June 1996: 10). Such agreements understand the variety of factors other than ethnicity to create more inclusive educational systems where the need to decrease poverty, redistribute land, and incorporate all forms of values in Guatemala, to increase literacy and overall successful outcomes of education for minority groups.

A CEPAL report underlines the intersectionality between poverty, economic instability, citizenship and political development that education contributed to addressing (1997). An improvement in social equity and competitiveness with better intellectually formed citizens can provide growth in national and international economic possibilities. The persistence of weak education leaves the country with poorly trained citizens and cannot incorporate technical progress limiting economic prosperity and overall social well-being (1997).

The Peace Accord recognises education's importance as "one of the most important vehicles for the transmission and development of cultural values and knowledge" (Universidad Rafael Landivar, 1998: 261). Policies that reflect this idea are portrayed by the need to decentralise the education system to reach more diverse communities. The aim is to accommodate their linguistic and cultural needs, grant parents a role in their children's education and curriculum formation, integrate Mayan culture, hire bilingual and trained teachers, increase the Ministry of Education's budget to sustain their constitutional right to adequate and fair education (Universidad Rafael Landivar, 1998).

The implementation of a decentralised schooling system existed through PRONADE (Programa Nacional de Autogestión Educativa), which was conceptualised during the negotiation period but came to life a few months after the Peace Accords (PA) with the financial support of the World Bank, MINEDUC and a German Development Bank (Poppema, 2009). Although indigenous inclusivity was mentioned in the PA, this program launched without reaching out to the ASC, teacher unions or PA commissions (2009). However, it aims at increasing schooling in rural areas predominantly for indigenous children (2009). PRONADE has implemented Education Service Institutions (Instituciones de Servicios Educativos, ISES) to identify, organise, train and guide parents and community members in the Education Committees (COEDUCAS) responsible for administrating the schools (CIEN, 1999).

Although PRONADE's purpose was to increase educational access to indigenous communities and increase linguistic possibilities by offering bilingual teachers, the government has developed "B'e Quality Schools" in 1998. The term "B'e" stands for a destination, voyage and journey in Mayan, as this program is designed to improve bilingual education and methodological services to provide that (Marques and Bannon, 2003). An emphasis on bilingual education prevailed during the Peace Accord period, which translated to the creation of PRONEBI (Programa Nacional de Educación Bilingüe. It aims at delivering pre-primary and primary bilingual, bicultural pedagogy to indigenous children in Spanish and Mayan languages, resulting in decreased dropout rates, failure, and increased student comprehension (Patrinos & Vélez, 2009 and Marques and Bannon, 2003). Thus, the concept of educational policies is particularly relevant when consolidating the need to increase bilingual and multicultural education for minority groups across Guatemala questioning the role of language in each policy and program.

Marques and Bannon wrote about another initiative aimed at bettering pedagogy being the "Schools for Excellence" program focusing on mathematics, reading writing, democracy, human rights, and girls' education, to name a few (2003). Most importantly, the need to have committees and institutions that evaluated school improvement and effectiveness of newly installed programs called for creating PRONERE (National Program for School Achievement Assessment) by Universidad Del Valle de Guatemala initiated in 1997.

Statistics and reports show a growth in educational reforms' effectiveness translated by an increase allocated to the education budget, reaching 11.8% in 1990 and 13.8% in 2001 (2003: 13). In parallel, the Defense Budget decreased as it reached 13.6% in 1989 and only 7% in 2001, which showed improvement in the State's priorities (2003: 13). Although girls had a higher illiteracy rate than boys in 1995, the impact of Education Reform showed to be effective, resulting in a decrease of illiteracy starting at 42.7% to 37.1% for girls, (1995-2001) and 27.4% in 1995 to 23.7% in 2001 for boys, illustrating the efficiency of schooling although women remain the primary group with high illiteracy rates (2003: 15).

Consequently, primary education seemed to obtain less successful rates showing a 0.7% dropout rate: 7.7% in 1995 and 8.4% in 2001 and a slight decrease in repetition rate scaling from 15.3% to 15.2% in 2001, raising questions on the methods used in primary schools (2003: 16). Although education reform and an overall increase in access to education and policies implemented to reach indigenous communities occurred, a recurrent critique is found in the lack of domestic resources to sustain such policies and guarantee educational quality. Due to a weak tax basis, it disables the Guatemalan Government to pursue education for all, where minority groups such as women or indigenous communities suffer from this economic insufficiency (2003).

In conclusion, the policies implemented by the government and by international agencies attempted to include Mayan and indigenous civil participants into the educational reform. However, they showed a lack of coordination and agreement between factions creating international misfunctioning at times. Administrative difficulties and financial dependency with bilateral and foreign aid impeded the government's ability to incorporate civil society actors' input and complaints to favour indigenous communities' access to education. The diverse composition of national and international funds, organisations, committees and NGO's contributed in various ways to decrease illiteracy rates and address ethnic and gender-based inequalities. An evaluation of multiple programs implemented from 1996 to 2006 remains pertinent to understand the complexity of mechanisms that factor into growing and bettering the educational system, notably for stigmatised communities due to colonisation and a 36 year-long civil war. Although decentralised programs such as PRONADE have been effective for indigenous communities, its framework's organisation and composition raised profound discontent amongst teachers and parents, raising awareness of the struggles indigenous communities continue to face. This program raises questions on Guatemala's state-building process and what approach it considered appropriate to adopt. An analysis of the relations between local, national and international relations raging from civil society actors, NGO's, the government and supporting financial agencies contributes to a better understanding of Guatemalans ongoing struggle for educational equality, opportunity and prosperity.

Chapter 3: Educational Policy Evaluation

The Peace Accords in Practice

This chapter will focus on evaluating specific policies and programs implemented by the Guatemalan government and supported by international actors such as the World Bank to assess the effectiveness of the Peace Accords. Additionally, the role of NGO's, their structure and their experience in providing financial and logistical support for indigenous children across the country will figure in this chapter. To further analyse educational policies, incorporating data collected from interviews conducted across America will permit this chapter to illustrate diverse ideas and experiences. All interviewees had experience or knowledge with the educational system in Guatemala for being NGO fundraisers, civil society activists from the civil war period, academics, or even UN officials that partook in the Peace Accords. Emphasis will be made on bilingual education and how the indigenous community has benefitted from this, incorporating feedback from USAID experts interviewed in this regard.

This fieldwork research presented a wide range of opinions and thoughts on the efforts and goals that Guatemala promised to achieve, highlighting institutional mismanagement, financial increase for education and recommendations for future policymakers. The support of theories and concepts such as postcolonialism, interculturalism and education policies will complement the understanding of positive and negative educational outcomes. The conflict between interculturalism and multiculturalism has figured in several educational instances where indigenous versus western educational perspectives seem to challenge the educational well-being of students and their optimism to achieve a good education. This chapter intends to apply theoretical frameworks and academic debates in examining educational policies, permitting a broader recognition of Guatemala's challenges and successes towards educational equality. This chapter aims to unravel Guatemala's educational structure, understand how educational programs function, the involvement and rhetoric of international actors, and determine to what extent increased access to indigenous children has been achieved through the signing of the Peace Accords.

3.1 Guatemala’s educational structure and organisations: COPARE and CCRE

The Guatemalan Government created educational policies favouring marginalised communities through curriculum reforms, institutional change, and civil society actors’ incorporation within the decision-making process. The Government set out the creation and integration of Universities, indigenous civil society actors and foreign institutions to provide financial or technical help in Guatemala’s institutional reformation.

The primary two committees assigned responsibility to oversee and reform curriculums to incorporate civil society actors are COPARE (the Parity Commission for Educational Reform) and CCRE (Consultative Commission on. Educational Reform). COPARE was delegated the responsibility to write proposals for the educational reform in 1997 (Poppema, 2009). The Parity Commission comprised indigenous organisations representatives for governmental delegates to negotiate policies to translate the Peace Accords commitments into inclusive policies (Asturias, Grigsby, and Oltheten, 2000). The political aspect of this commission entailed inclusiveness of indigenous civil society actors, generating awareness of theses communities’ needs and the compromise of proposals and interests to draft policies that indigenous groups would approve and benefit from (Asturias, Grigsby, and Oltheten, 2000). This segment collaborated with the technical aspect of this commission. Experts in educational improvement participated in the pedagogical methods and designs of these reforms (Cojtí Cuxil,2002).

On the other hand, the Consultative Commission for Educational Reform (CCRE) creation would advise and supervise the realisation of these policies surveilling its implementation. It included vast civil society actors such as teacher unions, main universities, private schools, governmental delegates and the Evangelical Alliance, to name a few (Poppema, 2009). Its creation included professionals and individuals coming various educational backgrounds that defined the Commissions diversity’s richness but can also increase chances of disagreements and unbalanced consensus.

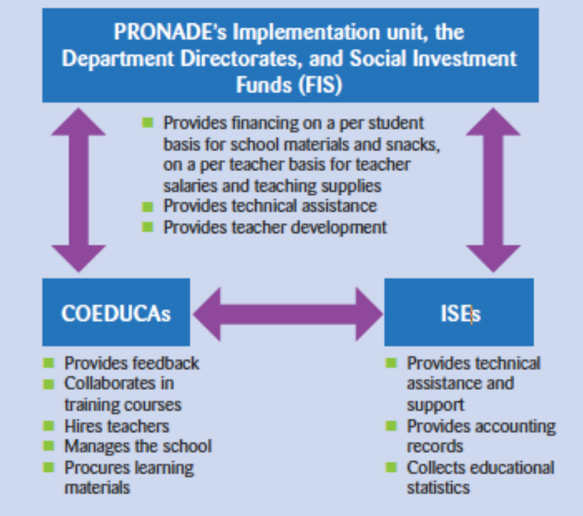
One of the techniques the Government elaborated was the decentralisation of the education sector motivated by the need to incorporate NGO’s, parents and the indigenous community in their children’s education. One of the leading programs implemented with the support of the World Bank was PRONADE, which increased student enrollment across the country but also showed financial restrictions for parents and staff mismanagement attracting much analysis and examination of its results.

3.2 Decentralised education: The Positive Outcomes of PRONADE

A particularity of this program is the self-managed aspect that the Ministry of Education has opted for, which encourages parental involvement (Marques and Bannon, 2003). According to specific regions, parents are expected to contribute financially, to school supplies, construction labour, and maintenance (Gershberg and Meade & Andersson, 2009). This incentive was justified by the belief that parent involvement would provide better cohesion between communities and their school instruction, granting parents more control.

Each school was comprised of education committees called COEDUCAS, composed of parents and village leaders in charge of hiring, firing and supervising the payments of teachers through government funds (Carter, 2012). COEDUCAS were the main entities that granted the local and inclusive aspect of the educational system. NGO's, locals and private companies would take part in this entity instead of governmental workers, which was usually the case (Carter, 2012). As parents mainly composed this committee, their lack of knowledge in the educational and pedagogical sphere was compensated and accompanied by Educational Service Institution (ISE). Figure 1 illustrates the complementary relations each primary institution and organ had within the functioning of PRONADE, which remains crucial in the evaluation of its cooperation and efficiency through its policies and programs (Valerio, 2001).

Figure 1: PRONADE's Implementation Structure


PRONADE's Implementation unit, the Department Directorates, and Social Investment Funds (FIS)
Provides financing on a per student basis for school materials and snacks, on a per teacher basis for teacher salaries and teaching supplies
Provides technical assistance
Provides teacher development
COEDUCAs
ISEs
Provides feedback
Collaborates in training courses
Hires teachers
Manages the school
Procures learning materials
Provides technical assistance and support
Provides accounting records
Collects educational statistics

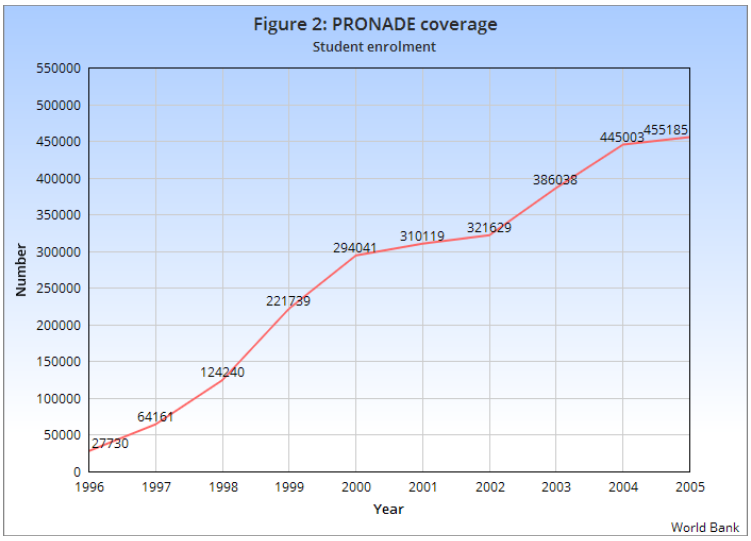
Valerio, A., & Rojas, C. (2001). Education Decentralization and School Management by Local Communities: The Case of PRONADE.

Guatemala City: World Bank. (p.2)

Aside from community-based and parental involvement, another characterisation is its relations with NGOs. They were often contracted by the Government and responsible for covering teachers' salaries, learning resources and snacks. Other specialised NGO's are chosen by PRONADE to cover administrative training (World Bank, 2004).

PRONADE reached impressive numbers determined after ten years of existence with the incorporation of 455 thousand boys and girls in 21 departments of Guatemala (Cameros, 2006). Additionally, in 2003, children aged between seven and fourteen comprised 87% of enrolled students in schools. Three years later, PRONADE offered its services to the majority of those in need reaching 21 departments out of 22 in Guatemala (Cameros, 2006). An attractive financial incentive that defined PRONADE is its cost efficiency structure. Its schools are, on average, 25% cheaper per student than the average rural school (Gershberg and Meade & Andersson, 2009: 191).

Positive outcomes within the schools entail longer time spent in classes, higher attendance and community participation for better retention and higher-grade promotion rates (World Bank, 2004). According to a 2004 World Bank report, PRONADE has improved enrolment, with primary school rates increasing from 72 per cent in 1996 to 89 per cent in 2003. This initiative was responsible for 15.2 per cent of the primary enrolment across Guatemala in 2003 (Rojas, 2005: 4). To illustrate the growth in student enrolment from 1996 to 2005, figure 2 illustrates a total increase of 1541.49% due to PRONADE's schools demonstrating a significant increase and student coverage (Schuh Moore, 2006: 3).



Data from: Schuh Moore, A. & Educational Quality Improvement Program (EQUIP2), Academy for Educational Development. (2006, January: 3). *Guatemala PRONADE Meeting Education for All*. USAID. https://www.edu-links.org/resources/guatemala-pronade

Finally, the approach adopted with a decentralised system resembles the most to a legitimacy approach in a state-building process. There is a strong sense of civil society actor's participation, enabling them to voice their needs and actively engage in the educational reformation through a bottom-up method. However, critics have underlined that by decentralising educational responsibilities, the state creates a distance between its accountability towards its population. It assigns its duties to teachers and a parallel organisation which contributes to the issues and limitations PRONADE has faced.

3.2.2 Limits of PRONADE

It cannot be denied that PRONADE's structure has attracted much applaud and statistical achievements. Its decentralised purpose has also led to many technical, administrative and educational barriers. A focus on indigenous populations demonstrates that those living in rural areas comprise 5.5% of men and 4.8% of women who could not attend schools as there were none in their region (del Águila Mendizábal, 2015: 25). Additionally, because of the lack of financial resources, 23% of boys and 22.5% of girls could not attend schools in rural indigenous areas (del Águila Mendizábal, 2015: 25). These reports show that although increase enrollments appear, those who do not figure in those statistics are predominantly indigenous children.

Financial barriers and restrictions were among the main issues and complaints from parents but essentially coming from the COEDUCAS. The underlying condition that needs to be addressed is that for PRONADE to reduce its cost and be considered a cost-effective program, the costs were transferred to parents' responsibility (Poppema, 2009). Encouraging civil society actors or parents in their children's education limits their leisure time, increases their monetary contribution and makes parents feel this responsibility as a burden, not an advantage (Poppema, 2009). Several parents and workers underlined the lack of monetary funds to provide quality education and sufficient salary. This financial barrier is illustrated by late payments of teachers' wages and not benefiting from governmental contracts as they were limited to a one-year contract with PRONADE (del Águila Mendizábal, 2015).

It is essential to bridge the gap between low pay; low-income families and the persistently high dropout rates children face in rural areas. Though parents engage themselves in this workforce despite the low pay and mismanagement, the primary motivation for this is the necessity and desire for their children to attend school to have a more prosperous future (Poppema, 2009).

However, offering the opportunity to send their children to school is a significant financial burden. They have to subsidise and pay for their education, although the Guatemalan state stipulates that education is free for all (Plas, 2007). It does have tremendous repercussions on the child's ability to sustain high grades when their absence in their parent's household results in a loss of income to the threshold.

A 2000 ENCOVI report illustrates ethnic disparities between rural and urban categories when evaluating poverty in Guatemala. Understanding that indigenous peoples comprised the majority of the poor is crucial when comprehending the lack of educational attendance due to their social-economic status in society (World Bank, 2004). There is an intersectionality between ethnic and regional patterns when examining poverty rates. This graph explicitly illustrates a higher poverty and illiteracy rate for indigenous groups than for non-indigenous ones (World Bank, 2004).

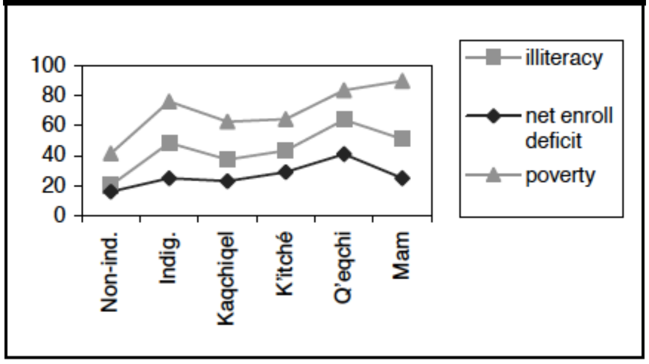


FIGURE 7.2: POVERTY, ILLITERACY, AND NET PRIMARY ENROLLMENT DEFICIT BY ETHNICITY

Source: ENCOVI 2000

World Bank. (2004). Poverty in Guatemala. World Bank Country Study;. Washington, DC. World Bank. https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/handle/10986/15066 (p.95)

Although PRONADE provides services to rural areas, it fails to accommodate the lack of financial resources that characterise the majority of indigenous families and, at some times, may even worsen them. On the other side, it is challenging for families and children to climb the social, economic ladder if they do not have an excellent educational background. Ultimately, indicators showing low income and little education result from social exclusion, which lays in this persistent institutional issue (Perez Brito, n.d).

An interview conducted with Ann Dempsey[5], a worker in the Cooperative for Education for Guatemala, raised some issues to be leading causes of school dropout and low school attendance for indigenous students which complements the findings with PRONADE. When asked as to what were the reasons why children dropped out of school, this is what she answered:

> *"If you take that low quality of education paired with the aspect that their parents could use help around the house, in the fields, bringing in $1 or $4 a day, picking berries for example, it's ultimately an opportunity cost."*

It is limiting to believe that low educational outcome is solely an education problem, as Ann Dempsey vividly points out. The responsibility of international donors and the Government requires a deep investigation of their perception and position regarding low education and how to tackle this issue for the indigenous community. Simply focusing on education expecting it will fix all economic and social issues is quite inadequate. Likewise, the economic situation is a primary factor explaining the struggles to obtain an education. Reinforcing the urgency to resolve various domains in Guatemalan society will, directly and indirectly, benefit the education system.

3.3 World Bank and USAID involvement: The Economic Ties to Literacy

Essentially, the significant involvement of the World Bank was fundamental in the formation and construction of the programs and its goals as part of Guatemala's leading donors. As discussed in Chapter 1, the World Bank values education policies from a more economic standpoint which is unquestionably illustrated in their report on the structure, goals, strategies and expectations of PRONADE. When stating the goals and expected results, a focus is made on economic outcomes more than bilingual education, better conditions, or ethnic and gender inclusion (World Bank, 1997a). This statement illustrates the Worlds Bank apparatus and design towards this program: "Improved human capital and a more competitive skilled labour force due to an enhanced education system" (World Bank, 1997a: 4). On the report, the "Expected Benefits" section immediately states, "the economic returns to primary education in Guatemala are high". However, they mention expected higher literacy rates and enrollment (World Bank, 1997a: 3).

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[5] 14th, January, 2021. Dempsey, Ann. Director of Philanthropy, Cooperative for Education on Zoom.

It is not particularly detrimental to expect or aspire to economic growth from bettering education; if anything, it can only be a positive outcome for every party involved in the education sector and society overall. Nevertheless, this approach is imperative to apprehend how language has been a central component to indigenous students and how the Government had challenges addressing it. This World Bank report does illustrate PRONADE to include bilingual teachers and bilingual education in indigenous communities. However, it lacks to detail how they would achieve this, and bilingual education also seems to be missing in the "Expected Benefits" section (World Bank(a), 1997).

This omission of bilingual education as an expected benefit is not surprising. As explained in Chapter 1, literacy and language have economic components where European languages (in this case Spanish) are socially, culturally and economically valued more than indigenous ones. This idea and policy translation that indigenous languages are not at the forefront of the governments priorities has also impacted parent's decision to send their children to bilingual schools. This reluctance was mentioned in an interview with Fernando Rubio[6]. He currently is the country director of Guatemala of Juarez and Asociados, which works with USAID. However, he also previously directly worked in USAID (The United States Agency for International Development). When asked about bilingual education and parents' feelings towards this system, he revealed some appealing aspects.

> *Fernando: When one does investigations and asks the parents, "do you want your children to go to a bilingual school?" a significant percentage of them will say no because they want their children to go to schools where they teach Spanish.*
> *When the investigator asks the parents if they want their children to go to a bilingual school, they understand that "Do you want your children only to learn Quichua, for example" when the investigator is implying the instruction is in both languages.*[7]

When interviewees thought they were asked if they would put their children in a school that would only be taught in their language, the answer was no. Additionally, they stress the importance of their children learning academic Spanish, which probably derives from economic motives and the labour force and the more fulfilling outcomes it entails. However, Fernando mentioned that some of the parents he interviewed valued the cultural importance of keeping their indigenous language and their cultural customs, favouring bilingual schools (taught in Spanish and its majority Mayan).

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[6] 16th, April, 2021. Rubio, Fernando. Senior Project Director Juárez & Associates/ Chief of Party USAID on Microsoft Teams.

[7] Translated by author

In conclusion, statistics show that children benefited from this decentralised program but were inconsistent in fulfilling its goals and the Peace Agreements objectives. Poppema's analysis shows that students were suffering from malnutrition, a lack of textbooks and teachers that were not trained or provided a bilingual setting for the indigenous (2009). PRONADE functioned more as a parallel institution than a part of the national education system, which led to problems for COEDUCAS and teachers not communicating their issues because of this top-down hierarchical structure and the impossibility to have unions, although it seemed inclusive when launched. Also, indigenous children benefitted more from a second-rate education system. An impressive rate of less than 50% of the indigenous and poor rural population barely reached 5th grade, higher than the ladino population who have more opportunities. A persistent pattern of treating indigenous populations as second-class citizens were translated to the poorer and less successful resources provided to them. The lack of focus on indigenous populations reflected in the lack of financial contributions from external donors as linguistic accommodation was not prioritised for the World Bank, for example, undermining their importance in society by a more Western ideology. A strong correlation appeared when favouring western global education policies onto a non-western country as economically driven policies, by definition, cannot include prosperity for the indigenous for lack of linguistic skills and demand of labour skills.

3.4 NGO participation

NGO's have played a substantial role in the development and support of educational policies, from building their schools to financial or materially helping poor indigenous communities. Some had direct relations with the governments and its body. Some were independent in receiving financial help from institutions or personal donors across the globe. Either way, they had various experiences providing help for the indigenous in a country that attempted to incorporate the indigenous within its national spirit and educational system.

1. Fundación Guillermo Toriello: The Political Incorporation of the UNRG

Because the peace process engaged with various organisations and groups from the civil war, the Fundación Toriello Guillermo coordinated discussion with the URNG (Guatemalan National Revolutionary Unity) and the institutional body that handled education and curriculum reform. Its three objectives were incorporating UNRG members into the educational reform process, constructing its political party, and accomplishing the Peace Accords' objectives (Domingo Perez, 2021).

Upon discussing with a former member of the Foundation, Domingo Perez[8] entailed some of the successes and barriers encountered. He was a member in constructing programs that aimed at granting literacy, primary and secondary education degrees. Additionally, they supported professionals with degrees from various countries to have their diplomas recognised in Guatemala by public universities (Domingo Perez, 2021).

The incorporation of UNRG members was essential when signing the Peace Accords. This document privileged and promoted coordination and the incorporation of this body within the Government. Domingo Perez remarked on the successes in involving the UNRG within the educational sphere, demonstrating no political problems or signs of violence related to their incorporation, as for other Latin American countries (Domingo Perez, 2021). However, their obstacles did not remain unseen to the Foundation and were mainly due to socioeconomic ones. As mentioned previously, the lack of resources and the presence of a weak state charged with much pressure to comply with the Peace Accords prevailed. In parallel, Guatemala was defined by its major employment problems, social violence, malnutrition, and ethnic and gender exclusion, shown in various human development reports.

Without surprise, the presence of right-wing governments from 1996 to 2006, the growth of the UNRG as a political party encountered obstacles. The creation of a political body was achieved, and its first actions were successful. However, they did not have sufficient momentum when presenting themselves in elections in which they participated (Domingo Perez, 2021). Undoubtedly, incorporating a party that fought to recognise indigenous rights but mainly concerning education promoted their visibility. This group pushed for accomplishing the Peace Accords objectives, but socioeconomic factors rendered its complete success.

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[8] 18th, February, 2021. Perez, Domingo. Member of the Fundación Guillermo Toriello, by email.

2. Kateri Tekakwitha Fund: Education for Indigenous Girls

Another NGO that contributed to indigenous children's education is the Kateri Tekakwitha Fund, established in 1991. This NGO provides scholarships, educational support, career and technical training, and microfinance loans to Guatemalan girls and women through its two premier programs (Sweeney, 2021). While discussing with Kay Sweeney[9] about her program, she revealed some of the obstacles young indigenous girls have in education, mirroring those of PRONADE and other NGOs. Some of them include the belief that girls may not be aware of the opportunities and are often limited to being homemakers or getting married as for being born a girl. Gender expectations and stereotypes that women are inherently less likely to be part of the education system and aspire to careers is particularly harmful to indigenous women but also women as a whole.

Additionally, an issue similar to PRONADE is the lack of schools in or near their villages in rural areas, which ultimately impedes them from having any education or paying more. Even if girls go to other villages to pursue education, it can get tiring and expensive for them, resulting in school dropout or repetition, also present in PRONADE.

Again, economic hardships and a weak tax basis make it difficult for families to send their children to school. This is why scholarships and financial support to girls and their families can bring positive outcomes to them. Although school is meant to be free for all, underlining costs do exist as fees or uniforms, which is an obstacle for many indigenous families. The lack of financial resources is a recurrent source of barrier from most organisations regarding sustaining their goals and providing good quality education. However, Kay Sweeney did shed light on an issue that reveals the expectations and preconceptions of the cost of education:

> *An unexpected obstacle was from the Guatemalan staff. I found their expectations were often low for the students. Not educationally, but in terms of what they needed financially to support their education. They had a mentality of scarcity. They felt the scholarship, stipend, etc. should be enough to 'get by on 'and not necessarily to thrive.*

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[9] 27th, March, 2021. Sweeney, Kay. Managing Director Kateri Tekakwitha Fund by email.

Statistics and reports show that indigenous students, especially girls, fall behind in education and tend to enrol in school 2 to 3 years after the expected age. They are underlining conditions that many ladinos students do not face, which the Direction of this Foundation also underlined (Sweeney, 2021).

Throughout the interview with Kay Sweeny, she illustrated several testimonies from the girls benefitting from these scholarships raised comments as to how their lives would have been without the scholarship unravelling intriguing comments:

> *I would have suffered economically.*
> *I would be a housewife. I might be working in the countryside.*
> *I wouldn't have left a state of ignorance.*
> *Without academic preparation: unemployment, extreme poverty.*
> *I wouldn't have had the opportunity to study and I might be working in agriculture*

These are the main themes and components that indigenous girls raised if they had not had scholarships. Indigenous girls are very much aware of their position in society, whether from a social, cultural standpoint or an economic one. The most common outcome was that they would not have left poverty or even reached extreme poverty and worked in the countryside. It is essential to recall that these are girls or teenagers. From a young age, they are conscious of their status in society and the restrictions they will encounter at a young age, revealing in their statements. The outcomes of these scholarships seem promising and positive as 80% of student graduated from high school in 2005, and 92% of the program participants graduates from middle school (Sweeney, 2021). Challenges persist for young girls that range from time and money spent travelling long distances, a lack of family support, a shortage of economic resources, and a struggle to maintain a minimum grade point average.

Finally, NGOs appear to be facing similar struggles to Government-led programs. A barrier that all interviewees mentioned was the presence of a weak tax basis which hinders the ameliorating of the education system. In addition to linguistic issues in the educational sphere, and regional access, Guatemala's tax system unanimously affects the indigenous community, whether directly or indirectly although the Peace Accords stress the importance of bilingual education and implement various programs and institutions in charge of this task.

3.5 Providing Bilingual and Intercultural Education: DIGEBI

The Dirección General de Educación Bilingüe Intercultural (DIGEBI) was created in 1995, aiming to develop children's bilingual skills in Mayan, Xinka and Garifuna to get an Intercultural Bilingual education in their intellectual and spiritual vocation (Rubio, 2004). Bilingualism has incorporated interculturalism and multiculturality. Experts consider these components mandatory in the national school curriculum to adequately represent the Guatemalan population. Enhancing intercultural education is justified by the need to understand how to build an educational system that recognises and includes indigenous participation (Crisóstomo, 2007). In 2002, statistics underlined the urgency to provide bilingual education to the indigenous as illiteracy is more accentuated in rural areas (44%) than in urban ones (18%). Indigenous individuals have twice as higher illiteracy rates as non-indigenous ones, 47.7% versus 20.4% (Rubio, 2004: 8).

DIGEBI began its implementation, increasing more and more indigenous languages such as 14 Mayan languages due to the support of international agencies. This process engages in reforming the national curriculum, integrating bilingual education and intercultural education. Reports show that educational outcomes of passing grades are higher in DIGEBI schools compared to others (Rubio, 2004). EBI (Bilingual Education) students advance between 5% and 8% more from one grade to the next (Rubio, 2004). Students drop out of school less and complete primary school more than students who are not enrolled in EBI schools (Rubio, 2004).

As Rubio underlined the cultural importance that language has in indigenous families, he also adds that bilingual schools contribute and better indigenous children’s sense of identity (Rubio, 2021). Bilingual schools have gained much recognition from indigenous communities for being seen as the start of acknowledging their linguistic diversity and incorporating it into education, however, many issues seemed to prevail.

3.5.2 Limits of Bilingual Education: A Multicultural or Intercultural Education?

Firstly, the aspect of Interculturalism that DIGEBI sought to promote has been questioned and criticised for not entirely incorporating the indigenous meaning of interculturalism. Although the indigenous see language inclusiveness as a positive, interculturalism is not limited to that and should instead opt to incorporate the structure of indigenous thought (Cumes, 2007). Rubio conducted interviews with various indigenous organisations to obtain information and their thoughts on the education system, where one individual illustrated their frustration quite well:

> *"The issue of indigenous education is not only the idiom or language, because that is what bilingual education is all about. It focuses on the competencies of idioms, writing, reading, comprehension, etc.; but the content of the education itself such as the values, principles, methods of education itself are not of the concept and philosophy and practice of indigenous peoples."*[10] (Rubio, p.44, 2002)

In this sense, even a sector that focuses on the indigenous does not seem to meet their needs. Critics of bilingual education have questioned why bilingual education should only be offered to indigenous populations. Again, it creates different sections and sets of education depending on one's background, language and geographical location, which implicitly leaves room for discrimination and marginalisation. Indigenous activists and scholars have underlined the need to offer bilingual education to all students, even the ladinos, to promote indigenous inclusion to the indigenous and the rest of the population, which has otherwise ceased to acknowledge their importance (Cumes, 2007).

In pre-primary school, their native language is developed and they start to practice their oral skills of the second language (Universidad Rafael Landívar, 2001). With time, in the first grade of primary school, their native language decreases. An increase in the second language is made apparent. Towards the end of their education, reports show that the sole use of the second language prevails around fourth grade (Universidad Rafael Landívar, 2001). The lack of investigation and attempt to create an inclusive and accepting country is shown when teachers were asked how to support multiculturalism. Statistics show that 22% stated that it could not be taught, and 21% said they did not know or need special training (Cumes, 2007). Educational policies should not be mechanical and purely horizontal but a clear understanding of the issues, how to tackle them, and what factors affect education to address the surrounding issues.

Scholars consider assimilation as a tool to tackle segregation but ultimately chooses a Western-based culture upon the indigenous where the goal is to reach a homogenous society which alienates diversity (Cumes, 2007). In a way, assimilation resembles multiculturalism: noticing that differences exist is a start, but this approach is not the correct and peaceful way to address social and economic disparities.

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[10] Translated by author

Naturally, the geographical aspect of reaching each community seems to prevail in each program, whether PRONADE or bilingual education. PRONADE has a requirement of a minimum number of students to build a school. Because of the widespread indigenous community, it also seems complicated for schools to open and offer their EBI services for lack of sufficient students. Plus, there would have to be sufficient teachers to provide EBI services to each region and have the linguistic background to sustain DIGEBI goals. Also, teachers would have to be certified, which seems like a doubtful requirement to obtain (Rubio, 2002).

Discussions with Fernando Rubio underlined an important factor that lays in bilingual education and the purpose of its growth. Although parents and the indigenous have fear of expressing their culture through language and customs, this has translated to the lack of academic native language and a low presence of Spanish skills. Subsequently, Rubio adds that *"And finally the language of commerce is the lingua franca, Spanish."*[11] Justifying parents desire for their children to learn Spanish for economic reasons.

As the Peace Accords underline the importance of respecting indigenous religious and cultural norms and the manifestation of its expression a contradiction appears in schools. Interestingly, teaching would be in Spanish, and it would be characteristic that students wear western uniforms even though the use of Mayan "traje" (costume) was allowed (Cumes, 2007). Although no data indicates the prohibition of indigenous students wearing their cultural clothing, the incitation to wear western attire indicates that European influence persists in class.

Bilingual education through DIGEBI has unraveled financial, administrative and cultural deficiencies within the system. The idea behind bilingual education is a notable improvement for the indigenous community, but it is implemented so that European influence persists to surface. This influence is made apparent with the western idea of interculturalism compared to the indigenous approach of interculturalidad as a form of indigenous intellectual and spiritual reflection that encompasses more than language which has been demonstrated in Chapter 1. The government has failed to implement these ideals rooted in the indigenous community and limits their growth and representation through society. Offering bilingual intercultural education other than to the indigenous seems to be a sustainable and logical policy orientation if true equality and acceptance of such a diverse society are achieved.

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[11] Translated by author

To conclude, the implementation of educational policies has gained momentum and has undeniably positively contributed to children's academic growth. The creation of decentralised schools through PRONADE, in theory, incorporates the Peace Accords agreements in including the indigenous in the decision-making process and the involvement of their children's education. However, a hierarchical structure rooted in Western principles raises the question of legitimacy and responsibility the Government attempts to acquire in a state-building process, especially with the shift in the ruling political parties in Government. Although indigenous pedagogy received criticism, all interviewees unanimously agreed that regardless of these limitations, the Peace Accords did factor in addressing those predicaments and opened a window for negotiation and reformation. The educational system goes beyond public policies and the Ministry of Education, especially during a Peace Process. By definition, international actors are involved, but their Western and historical composition will inevitably prevail in implementing programs that challenge the role and process of state-building. Plus, it appears that all criticism includes the recognition of a weak tax basis, administrative discord, and a non-inclusive labour market in regards to the indigenous. Interculturalism was a promising attempt to promote indigenous thought but failed to meet their outlooks or did not grasp indigenous intercultural thought's complexity. If the educational sector and the labour market do not include indigenous languages, they may suspect profitability in increasing and promoting indigenous languages. Colonial practices have been recognised in public policies, which questions the influence of postcolonialism in educational policies. Progress has been made, but the Government's need to address education through a wider lens is at its peak. The Government has to include the economy, land, international actors and the health care system to achieve sustainable educational results.

Conclusion

It is expected that when evaluating or analysing a country's educational system, contradictions and limitations are to rise. The fundamental reoccurring component that fosters all inequalities and disparities is globalisation. From an academic standpoint, the current apparatus of globalisation cannot be understood or dissociated from colonialism. Many contradictions have fueled the debate, but the common component that scholars, NGO workers, activists or UN officials seem to reveal explicitly or implicitly is the hierarchical structure of globalisation.

Economically speaking, it seems evident that developing countries need to remain so for developed (western) countries to maintain their position. Not that all countries cannot equally, peacefully, democratically and fairly participate in international trade and national prosperity in a globalised world. However, due to historical events and current resistance to challenge educational discrimination, the functioning of globalisation does not promise radical change in the years to come. Most importantly, it remains complex to address national educational issues in a colonised region that partakes in a globalised world. When the former and current system benefits the West, there is little incentive to reform and challenge education inequalities. It is economically advantageous to preserve the current state of education systems as low-income labour outcomes allow Westerners to profit and grow. Some of the motivations to deconstruct this colonial type system are often moral. Enhancing education for those who have been deprived can allow these communities to reach better conditions, escape low-paying labour, provide social and cultural integrity.

The World Bank confirms the economic drive in education instead of a social and cultural incentive. Analysing how educational reforms work and fail is primordial and insightful for researchers. However, one must consider why Guatemala has suffered from such disparities for centuries with little or slow change. Considering that educational reform is a complex process is adequate. However, one must compare how economic incentives and international trade agreements are more accessible than educational and social-cultural justice and redistribution. The current and former globalisation apparatus focuses on short-term gains rather than long-term human capital and prosperity. By focusing on short-term benefits, many countries have little to no incentives to include all their population in universities, as labour demand will not cease to grow. From an international standpoint, when demand increases, labour and land are fundamental to sustain an economical drive. Education is at the core of citizens lives and concerns, whether they are pushed towards universities or land farms.

The intersectionality and complexity were unravelled in the data recovered from interviews with officials or NGO workers. When discussing educational inequalities, regardless of the program the state attempted to implement, the labour market, the role of language and the importance of land always arose. Because globalisation is tightly correlated to employment outcomes, it touches the realm of education that serves to prepare students and children for the workforce. Other issues hold globalisation as a source of explanation, such as ethnic conflicts, environmental issues or gender inequality. Each democratic state is responsible for addressing those issues which can be possible through education, promising long term effective results and change. Governments are now put in a position where they either favour minority's needs or comply with global consumer demands leaving equality and citizen prosperity aside.

This analysis has shown how political parties have positively or negatively influenced the compliance of the Peace Accords and the attention given to indigenous children, which questions the efficiency of a state-building process that may depend on ruling parties regarding human rights. In theory, international involvement and support can only benefit a state that may not have the mediating or financial resources to address its domestic issues. Nevertheless, the national government forms its educational policies, setting its own priorities where the international community has little immediate influence on this decision-making process. However, this should not be an argument to remove any responsibility that international institutions hold when providing support to needing countries. As authors have argued, education has become a commodity, subject to political influence and oriented to the global market.

Because economic ties are linked to education and the development of those programs, indigenous communities received a Westernised form of education, leaving aside indigenous thought. Westernised education has proven to appear in parent's view of bilingualism, where less and less value is placed on indigenous dialects. European languages have prevailed as for the dogmas and institutions that previously colonised the Americas. Striving to unite a nation by offering one single European language is a step backwards and sequentially the continuation of colonisers attempts when they first came to the Americas. Little room is given for indigenous scholars, indigenous children and especially women across Guatemala, perpetuating internal colonialism.

Firstly, a serious need to reform Guatemala's economy and tax basis is vital for indigenous children to play an active role in society and breakout from this exclusive society. In the future, the Guatemalan Government should institutionalise and nationalise similar programs such as PRONADE and integrate it as part of the national education system. The initiative of including parents is a positive one. However, the structure left parents with serious financial charges and responsibilities with little place to voice complaints which the government could address.

Secondly, to ensure long-lasting working programs, they must be protected from being dismantled due to the change of political parties in government. The right to education and the protection and implementation of indigenous rights to education should not be subject to political opinion and interference, which has been an issue in the past. Regardless of their leader, the Guatemalan government should still pursue the peace accord goals to respect, promote, and include indigenous properties and culture as mentioned in legal documents.

Thirdly, redistributing land to those communities will favour ladino/indigenous relations and restore justice to the communities suffering since the civil war. The economic ties attached to land caused the beginning of a 36-year civil war; granting back land to peasants and indigenous communities will lessen the chances of renewed conflicts between factions. Furthermore, providing constitutional rights to the indigenous regarding their land would also benefit the environment and serve as protected areas exempt from agricultural and labour exploitation.

In general, Guatemala has to aspire to engage with its diverse country to allow indigenous individuals to participate in the political realm. The Peace Accords was the first initiative to label and acknowledge the limits of the Ministry of Education, which is a step in the right direction. However, it has not fully accomplished and provided the goals entailed in the Peace Accords for lack of coordination and funds. The decentralisation allowed the indigenous to actively participate in constructing their children's education but was also criticised for providing 2nd class education which added more issues and constraints to impoverished communities. Studies show that education has improved overall, but there are still many reforms and attention given for the indigenous to be valued and treated equally in modern-day Guatemala.

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Interviewees:

14th, January, 2021. Dempsey, Ann. Director of Philanthropy, Cooperative for Education on Zoom.

14th, January, 2021. Mejía, Rony. General Director for Guatemala Operations at the Cooperative for Education by email.

5th, February, 2021. Carter, Jacob. Project Director, Nonprofit Governance and Consulting, Technical team leading Leamos Juntos, on zoom.

18th, February, 2021. Perez, Domingo. Member of the Fundación Guillermo Toriello, by email.

27th, March, 2021. Sweeney, Kay. Managing Director Kateri Tekakwitha Fund by email.

16th, April, 2021. Rubio, Fernando. Senior Project Director Juárez & Associates/ Chief of Party USAID on Microsoft Teams.