‘Diversicracy’? Endogenous and Exogenous Cultural Diversity and Interculturality in Education on both sides of the Strait of Gibraltar

Abstract

This article aims to analyse the discourses of educational agents on cultural diversity in primary school on both sides of the Strait of Gibraltar (Andalusia, Ceuta and Melilla, southern Spain), as well as the opportunity identified in these discourses for the promotion of interculturality in this Spanish area, from a rights-based approach. To this end, the article analyses the discourses of the technical and political staff of educational administrations on cultural diversity in primary schools, through in-depth personal interviews, together with the discourses of teachers, representatives of family associations and educational unions through focus groups. Based on the data, the article analyses the two models of cultural diversity, endogenous and exogenous, identified in the three regions studied. Within the national scope of this research, this phenomenon has been found in southern Spain on both sides of the Strait only, due to its geopolitical and historical characteristics. The way in which these two models contribute to promoting interculturality in primary schools depends on the recognition of human and citizenship rights. The discourses identified in these two models of cultural diversity, as well as the opportunity they set to address interculturality from a rights-based approach, are discussed in detail in the article.

Keywords: discourses, endogenous cultural diversity, exogenous cultural diversity, primary education, inequality, interculturality, inclusion.

1. Introduction

This article aims to analyse the discourses of educational agents on cultural diversity in primary school on both sides of the Strait of Gibraltar (Andalusia, Ceuta and Melilla, southern Spain), as well as the opportunity identified in these discourses for the promotion of interculturality in this Spanish area, from a rights-based approach.

To this end, the article analyses the discourses of the technical and political staff of educational administrations on cultural diversity in primary schools, through in-depth personal interviews, together with the discourses of teachers, representatives of family associations and educational unions through focus groups. The data analysed come from

two studies obtained in competitive concurrence: a national R+D+i study, in which the authors of this paper studied the three southernmost regions of Spain: Andalusia, Ceuta and Melilla (Venegas *et al.*, 2023); and a regional study, derived from the national one, focused on the Autonomous City of Ceuta (Venegas *et al.*, in press).

The area on both sides of the Strait of Gibraltar is particularly interesting for sociological research because of its cross-border nature (Albornoz *et al.*, 2019; Martín, 2017). It links the Spanish autonomous cities of Ceuta and Melilla, in North Africa, and the region of Andalusia, which form the southernmost part of the European continent. It is the narrowest point between the European and African continents, with only 8.9 nautical miles between Spain and Morocco, and only 49 fathoms at its deepest point. So, it is one of the busiest passages on the planet (El País, 2007). It supports intense maritime traffic in its waters (more than 82,000 ships a year). Its narrow width facilitates transit between the African and European continents, hence its importance for the transit of people (Ramírez 2006). It is also the passage from the Atlantic Ocean to the Mediterranean Sea. It is estimated that 16,818 African migrants have crossed the Strait of Gibraltar to date (International Organization for Migration, 2024).

On the other hand, in the last decades, cultural diversity has become a fundamental characteristic of European societies due to international migration (Lyons-Padilla et all., 2015). According to UNESCO (2005), *cultural diversity*

> Refers to the manifold ways in which the cultures of groups and societies find expression. These expressions are passed on within and among groups and societies (Article 4.1 of the Convention, UNESCO 2005).

Cultural diversity leads to m *multiculturalism*, which appeals to the culturally diverse nature of human society, not only regarding ethnicity, but linguistic, religious and socio-economic diversity (UNESCO, 2006). Although the differentiation of societies according to ethnicity is highly debated in sociology (Estévez, 2015; García-Cano *et al.*, 2018), it could be said that in Spain three ethnic groups can be roughly distinguished. The most numerous is formed by Caucasians. This category is full of internal cultural differences though. The second group should be considered an ethnic minority even though they have been living in Spain since the Middle Ages, namely the Roma. The third group is also made up of ethnic minorities, in the plural, as it is composed of people of foreign origin, who have been arriving in the country in larger numbers since the 1990s (Venegas et al, 2023). Despite this, the identification of cultural diversity as a sociological phenomenon has only come about with the arrival of this third group of population in the

country (Garreta 2006; García-Cano *et al.*, 2018; Andrés & Giró, 2020; Garreta *et al.*, 2020), so that cultural diversity is synonymous with immigration in the case of Spain.

Yet, in Ceuta and Melilla there have historically coexisted four main ethnic groups, differentiated on the base of their religious specificity (Venegas *et al.*, in press). This means an ethnicisation both intra- and extra-cultural (Tarrés, 2013). In Ceuta and Melilla, the population of Moroccan origin identifies itself as Muslim. A large part of the population in both cities speaks a dialect of Arabic, Dariya in Ceuta and Tamazight in Melilla. Meanwhile, the population of Spanish peninsular background identifies themselves as Spanish and Christian, to differentiate themselves from the Muslim population.

In addition, given that this research is located in the educational arena, it is interesting to compare regions in Spain, as they have their own educational competencies. The Ministry with competencies on Education establishes objectives, competencies, contents and assessment criteria on minimum learning (EURYDICE, 2020). In regions such as Andalusia, with no co-official language, the Ministry manages 65 per cent of the competencies on minimum learning, while in the autonomous cities of Ceuta and Melilla, the Ministry controls 100 per cent of the educational competencies (Venegas *et al.*, 2023).

Within this context, comparative research on discourses about cultural diversity in primary schools on both sides of the Strait results of particular interest in an increasingly multicultural world (Garreta 2001; Diallo & Maizonniaux, 2016; Olmos & Contini 2016; Andrés and Giró, 2020), driving educational outcomes on ethnic polarization and diversity (Gisselquist, 2014), since diversity deals with cultural pluralism in society (Elias & Mansouri, 2023). As Faist (2009) remarks, diversity has a deep relationship with cultural pluralism in society, but Vertovec (2012) goes further by stating that we are living in 'the age of diversity' (p. 287), or even 'superdiversity' or 'diversity of diversities' (Vertovec, 2007; Vertovec, 2023). The school itself becomes 'superdiverse'.

In Spain, education policy addressing diversity has moved from the exclusion of the Roma – who were first kept out of school and then segregated – to more recent democratic models that integrated culturally different students through compensatory education programmes. In the mid-1990s, the arrival of students of foreign origin led to a mixture of compensatory programmes with references to interculturality. They become the most inclusive and cohesive model addressing diversity (Garreta *et al.*, 2020). Yet, interculturality 'Refers to the existence and equitable interaction of diverse cultures and

the possibility of generating shared cultural expressions through dialogue and mutual respect' (Article 4.8 of the Convention, UNESCO, 2005), so those previous compensatory programmes with references to interculturality were far from it (Terrén, 2001; García *et al.*, 2002; Pamies, J., 2023). Educational policies on cultural diversity in Spain were first exclusionary, then multiculturalist (Contini *et al.*, 2016) and recently intercultural (Garreta 2006; Garreta *et al.*, 2020). However, this is true only for students of foreign origin. The lack of educational policies for Roma students shows the white supremacy (Fylkesnes, 2019; Gillborn, 2005) of the Spanish educational system historically.

According to Faist (2009), diversity is a new mode of incorporation. Assimilationism and multiculturalism promote the social integration of migrants in the host societies. 'Yet in the absence of a rights-based foundation the question arises of how social inequality can be dealt with' (Faist, 2009, p. 171), he puts it clearly:

> diversity needs to be grounded in both civil society, as a set of socio-moral resources of citizenship, and citizenship rights in order to become a politically legitimate approach. Otherwise diversity will remain a depoliticized management technique. (Faist, 2009, p.173)

The United Nations Population Fund (2014) (UNFPA) was one of the agencies that in 2003 adopted the UN Common Understanding on a Human-Rights-Based Approach (RBA) to focus on the most marginalised, excluded or discriminated groups in society. Different applications have been developed since then, such as cultural heritage (Logan 2012), health services for young people (Delany-Moretlwe *et al.*, 2015) or development NGOs (Belda-Miquel *et al.*, 2016). Belda-Miquel *et al.* (2016) agree with Lipson (2008) and Faist (2009, 2010) that the rise of managerialism over the last decades has contributed to a process of de-politicisation. To re-politicise diversity means to give diversity back the approach based on rights, more concretely civil, citizenship and human rights. So, Faist (2010) claims the need to trace 'the mechanisms of how differences or diversity turn into social inequalities' (p. 299). In fact, for Social Policy Analysis,

> A rights-based approach guides (…) on how to integrate human rights principles into (…) practice with the goal of developing long- and short-term responses to current social issues that further human rights. (Gabel, 2016, p.4)

Moreover, ‘a rights-based approach aims to directly overcome marginalization by more equitable sharing of resources and power’ (Gabel, 2016, p. 5), so that ‘States have the obligation to improve the realization of social, economic, and cultural rights such as working toward quality education for all children’ (Gabel, 2016, p. 5). In this research, the rights-based approach has been considered as the appropriate framework for analysing discourses on cultural diversity in schools, as a reflection of the society in which they are embedded, with a focus on social inequality as a structural phenomenon, in line with UNESCO (2005, 2006).

The RBA is reinforced by Kymlicka (2010), who claims ‘multiculturalism as citizenisation’ (p. 101). This represents the appeal to re-politicise diversity and equality, when he insists on the need to overcome inequalities, in line with Lipson (2008) and Faist’s (2009) critique of managerialism regarding diversity and the loss of the rights-based approach to diversity that focuses on social inequalities (Faist, 2010). According to Kymlicka (2010), ‘multiculturalism is itself a human rights-based movement’ (p. 102). So, ‘multiculturalism as citizenisation is a deeply (and intentionally) transformative project, both for minorities and majorities’ (p. 104).

The analysis of the data from this research on both sides of the Strait of Gibraltar revealed a first finding: in the Spanish cities of Ceuta and Melilla, in North Africa, cultural diversity is taken for granted as historically inherent to society, denying the need to implement educational policies to address it, while on the peninsula, in regions such as Andalusia, cultural diversity is understood as a result of the arrival of large numbers of immigrants since the 1990s, despite the fact that the Roma ethnic minority has lived in Spain since the Middle Ages. This article is based on this initial evidence, which leads to the identification of two main models of cultural diversity on both sides of the Strait of Gibraltar, based on the discourses of the educational agents involved: endogenous and exogenous cultural diversity respectively. No references have been found on endogenous or exogenous cultural diversity. The latter has only been found in the framework of sustainable development, regarding cultural protection and local biodiversity (Tapia, 2008; Fisas, 2011; Canosa, 2014). The article analyses the discourses relating to each model, which are described in detail below.

2. Methodology

The rights-based approach is the frame this article draws on to cover its objective, namely: to analyse the discourses of educational agents on cultural diversity in primary school on both sides of the Strait of Gibraltar (Andalusia, Ceuta and Melilla, southern Spain), with the focus on social inequality as a structural phenomenon (UNESCO, 2005, 2006), as well as the opportunity identified in these discourses for the promotion of interculturality in this Spanish area.

The article is based on two projects that share objectives, structure, and methodology, using various methodological approaches, including several data production techniques (Berg, 2001) such as documentary analysis, a national survey, semi-structured in-depth interviews, and focus groups (used only in the Ceuta project). This paper focuses on data from personal interviews and focus groups, aiming to explore how regulations and policies on cultural diversity are applied in primary schools. All participants provided informed consent in accordance with Spanish law on data protection.

The interviews let 'understand *why* people act as they do' (Jones, 1985, p. 46). Due to the COVID19 pandemic and the distance of the research team from some regions, the interviews followed three formats: face-to-face, telephone and online. The educational agents interviewed were administrative and political staff from educational administrations and primary school teachers. A total of 43 interviews were carried out.

The focus groups conducted in the Ceuta project were carried out with the participation of significant educational agents such as teachers, family associations of the schools, and education unions. Three focus groups were conducted, each corresponding to an education agent:

1) 4 primary school teachers: 2 men and 2 women.
2) 4 trade union representatives in education, all women: The General Union of Workers (UGT), Workers' Commissions (CCOO), Independent and Civil Servants' Trade Union Centre (CSIF), and National Association of Teaching Professionals (ANPE).
3) 6 representatives from the family associations: 5 mothers and 1 father.

The focus group technique was chosen due to the difficulty of conducting conventional discussion groups in a small community such as Ceuta, where the same people tend to belong to the different educational agents. This technique addressed the knowledge, attitudes, opinions, expectations, conflicts, etc. of each participant considered as representative of a social discourse. The group dimension is key although individual

positions were sought in this group framework (Callejo, 2001). In addition, as Morgan (1996) highlights, this technique 'gives a voice' to marginalised groups, which is line with the rights-based approach.

All the interviews and focus groups were transcribed for analysis. The data were categorised and analysed using Nudist NVivo Release qualitative analysis software. The data from the interviews and focus groups were classified correspondiente to two models, endogenous and exogenous, using as criteria the fragments of discourse related to cultural diversity. In a second categorisation phase, the dimensions that make up each model were explored, as the following section shows.

The fieldwork was developed between the last quarter of 2018 and the first quarter of 2021. To guarantee anonymity, each participant was given an acronym, following the regulations established by the national team, as table 1 shows for the participants whose verbatims illustrate the analysis of the article.

Table 1

The starting thesis is that there are two models of cultural diversity—endogenous and exogenous—specific to southern Spain due to its unique geopolitical and historical context. These models influence the promotion of interculturality in primary schools. Achieving interculturality in education requires addressing the structural inequalities embedded in cultural diversity with the aim to develop educational policies that are grounded in civil, human, and citizenship rights, establishing the foundation for a 'diversicracy'.

3. Analysis of results

The data of this research show a phenomenon that it is not observed in any other region of the Spanish territory in this research. It is a result of the way in which cultural diversity is inhabited due to historical, social, cultural and geopolitical factors. The data reveal two models of cultural diversity: endogenous and exogenous. Each model has its own dimensions (see figures 1 and 2), corresponding to differences in the discourses of the participants, as analysed below.

3.1. Endogenous cultural diversity

Discourses categorised in this model all consider cultural diversity as historically inherent to their society. Diversity is intrinsic to society. It is an endogenous principle of social structuring. This model has been found only in the autonomous cities of Ceuta and Melilla, the Spanish cities in North Morocco, Africa.

Nuances in these discourses show three main subcategories. Most discourses accept diversity but take it for granted (54%). Some argue that diversity has already been normalised (33%). The smallest group recognise diversity as a wealth (13%), then see it as an opportunity for interculturality.

Figure 1

3.1.1. Diversity taken for granted

More than half of the people base their discourse on the acceptance of cultural diversity as inherent historically: 'Cultural diversity is inherent to Ceuta; *we are in a border city* where there have always been large migratory movements. (C-E-C-T-M-2)'. These participants understand cultural diversity as an integral part of the idiosyncrasy in Ceuta and Melilla: 'it is something that is so present in Ceuta that it is an intrinsic part of each of the educational units'. (C-E-C-T-M-2).

This explains the endogenous nature of cultural diversity in Ceuta and Melilla and leads many participants to adopt a discourse from which cultural diversity is taken for granted: 'We don't make a distinction of ... well, look, "this boy is like that…" (…). No. We simply talk about the educational level or the situation of the class in general'. (N-E-A-P-H-59). Taken for granted, cultural diversity does not need to be addressed in school:

> *Obviously*[1], this is reflected in the teaching staff and in the classrooms (...) we have teachers and a society that is very open to cultural diversity. So, we don't work in a generative way. We don't work considering that the other is different, but that diversity is practically part of us. We, at least, understand it this way. (C-E-C-T-M-2)

It becomes evident, participants in this discourse claim, that the very social and cultural dynamics and processes in Ceuta and Melilla contain binding elements of

[1] Note how the very terms used account for this obviousness, so that there is no need to work on it in primary school.

intercultural coexistence, such as the various religious festivals that take place throughout the year:

> *Of course*, these are things that I don't work on, because it's already something usual among us... Ramadan arrives, and someone wants to ask some questions... and that's also enriching, because we Christians – who don't know much about their customs – take the opportunity to get to know these types of festivities… or, on the contrary, when Christmas comes. But it's not something we usually work on. (N-E-ME-P-H-30)

In Ceuta and Melilla, cultural diversity is above all ethno-religious, since the religious component seems to be central to the data on intercultural dynamics. Religion shows the same inherence that leads to recognise this phenomenon as endogenous:

> From early childhood, it is true that you arrive at school and... I don't know if... you don't pay attention to whether the children have a Muslim religion or if that one is Christian or… (C-G-C-P-M-9)

The implication of this discourse is that it is only when cultural diversity is perceived as a social problem that there would be a need for ad hoc policies in schools:

> Of course, there is no [education policy] which is specifically responsible for adopting a series of measures to try to address this diversity, but rather it is practically implicit, not only in the education system, but also in teacher training and, obviously, in the city itself. (C-E-C-T-M-2)

This absence of intercultural education policies is justified on the base that coexistence makes equality and social inclusion possible to promote social justice since childhood:

> I think they are totally egalitarian. They see no distinction at this age. They don't see distinctions. Talking about ages 3 to 12, I don't think they see a distinction between different cultures. (N-E-ME-P-M-40)

3.1.2. Normalised diversity

As a soft version of the previous subcategory, or rather as a consequence of the obviousness of cultural diversity as an endogenous phenomenon of the two Spanish

autonomous cities in Africa, the second most frequent discourse in the endogenous model considers cultural diversity as normalised: ‘understood as a nationalised and naturalised population’ (C-E-C-T-M-2). This discourse is similar to the previous subcategory, but the focus is not so much on historical inherence as on normalisation derived from this inherence, which makes cultural diversity policies in school equally unnecessary:

> If there is something beautiful regarding Melilla, it is that we are used to this diversity. Perhaps this diversity is, for us, normality. So, I don’t pay attention to it, [...] it’s our daily life. (N-E-ME-P-H-30)

Normalisation makes endogenous cultural diversity a ‘structural’ (C-E-C-T-M-2) principle of social structuring:

> In terms of cultural diversity, I don’t think there is a criterion in terms of organising things by culture. Far from it. It is simply organised by age and according to the criteria of the school. (N-E-ME-P-H-33)

3.1.3. Diversity as enriching

Nevertheless, some participants in the research noted that social inclusion was a consequence of this endogenous diversity being structural in nature: ‘We are talking about a cultural diversity that... we live it in such an implicit way that... I don't know how to explain it... It fulfils a unifying, homogenising, inclusive function between cultures’. (C-E-C-T-T-M-2). Here, homogenisation is not understood as the elimination of differences, but as a space for coexistence:

> They are cities where the coexistence between different cultures and religions is real. Melilla is a city... I don’t know if it is more multicultural than intercultural, that is to say (...) there is a real coexistence of different ethnic and cultural groups, or it is interracial or interethnic. (N-E-ME-T-H-38)

As a result of this normalisation, which in turn stems from the historically inherent nature of cultural diversity, some participants see diversity as an enriching element for their society:

> Diversity, in our case, which we take it for granted, is enriching. We learn from each other. We each have our own customs. We learn to live with

each other. When there is a festival, it is a festival for everybody; and when there is another festival, it is another festival to all, and we don't give more importance to these kinds of things. (N-E-ME-P-H-30)

The result is a model of society in which diversity is the principle of social organisation, leading to a *'diversicracy'*, although this observation is more an ideal of broad consensus than a fait accompli:

> In Ceuta, whatever culture the students come from, they all have the same nationality, (...) so we practically have to go back to the constitution (...) since around the 1980s, when the awareness of the city's specificity and its own identity of *diversicracy* began to take hold. (C-E-C-T-M-2)

3.2. Exogenous cultural diversity

The discourses categorised in the exogenous model of cultural diversity are characterised by considering cultural diversity as a recent phenomenon, derived from immigration in Spain since the 1990s. Diversity is seen as an exogenous phenomenon rather than as something intrinsic to society. This model is dominant in Andalusia but has also been identified in the autonomous cities of Ceuta and Melilla. However, insofar as this model is linked to the arrival of people of foreign origin, it entails the historical invisibility of ethnic minorities, as is the case of the Roma population in Spain, present in its territory since the Middle Ages.

Nuances identified in the discourses let distinguish three main subcategories. Most participants in this model, almost two thirds, seem to understand diversity as a social problem (61%). The smallest group shows signs of accepting diversity but does not see the need to address it in school (18%). On the contrary, the middle group emphases this need (21%) and is the most likely to see diversity as an opportunity for interculturality.

Figure 2

3.2.1. Diversity as a social problem

Almost two thirds of the discourses in the exogenous cultural diversity model see cultural diversity as a social problem. Several factors are argued in this sense. The first is

the limited way in which the families of foreign origin participate in the dynamics of schools:

> The involvement of these families with the school, to involve with things from the school, the incidence is … if in a normal family it is 80%, for example, in these families it is 20%. (N-E-A-P-M-50)

Secondly, discourses suggest that diversity as a problem is an adult construct that adults impose on children, so that socialisation takes place in an intercultural social conflict:

> Students accept better than parents or teachers that religious diversity is not so important. For children, diversity is not a problem, whereas it is a problem for adults. Working on diversity in schools should be more a matter for parents than for children. (N-E-A-P-H-51)

The third problem observed relates to language. It becomes more evident in Ceuta and Melilla since Muslim population in both cities, of Moroccan descent but nationalised Spanish in the early years of democracy (1980s), maintain their mother tongue, mostly oral. These are dialects of Arabic (Dariya and Tamazight respectively). The language is an intrinsic part of their cultural identity, which they use intra-ethnically, as opposed to Spanish, the official language of the school and society. This issue plays an important role in this discourse, and divides teachers between those who respect its use and those who think that it cannot be used at school because the lack of fluency in Spanish puts these children at a social disadvantage:

> The more closed-minded families take longer to normalise [Spanish] because the use of Dariya is permanent, because they don't even have access to Spanish media and they keep using Arabic media, and that makes normalisation difficult. (C-E-C-P-H-1)

The forth factor refers to greater distrust among teachers towards Roma children than those of foreign origin:

> When people say 'Heredia', or when they say 'Cortés'[2], we already know who we mean [Roma people], then there is no involvement from [these]

[2] Surnames such as Heredia or Cortés are very common among Roma people in Spain.

> families. I'm talking about this type of students [Roma] because other students [immigrants] are very well integrated. (N-E-A-P-M-55)

3.2.2. Diversity accepted, not addressed

As with the data on endogenous diversity, in exogenous diversity there is also a significant discourse which recognises the existence of cultural diversity in primary schools but does not appreciate the need to address it. This is perhaps due to the idea that the educational needs of children are the same for all primary school students, regardless of their ethnic background: 'There is no difference between that child and a Spanish child, one might say' (N-E-A-P-H-52).

A second reason identified in data is the idea that students normalise the phenomenon of diversity, so it does not pose any difficulty for them. Hence, participants think that there is no need for active policies since 'For children, diversity is not a problem' (N-E-A-P-H-51).

This is somewhat reminiscent of the argument about cultural diversity as an adult social problem. Again, this discourse recognises the existence of diversity as a phenomenon of an exogenous nature which, however, does not affect the daily course of the class. Rather, it is emphasised that the problematic view of cultural diversity, of exogenous nature, is the product of some adults, who perceive it as such: 'I don't see that difference between them, it's more the behaviour that we, older people, can perceive' (N-E-A-P-M-50).

The argument about cultural diversity as a socially constructed problem of the adult population is presented in a way that balances, on the one hand, the acceptance of diversity as a social phenomenon inherent to a society in which there are movements of people from different cultural backgrounds and, on the other hand, a certain social conflict that results from it. However, it is made clear that the problem is an adult one and does not exist as such for school-age children, which justifies the absence of educational policies to address cultural diversity in schools.

3.2.3. Diversity addressed

The second more common category emphasises the importance of addressing diversity (21%). It implies the need to implement educational policies that, according to

the discourses analysed, allude to some factors that could generate inequalities among students.

Mother tongue is one of these factors. Personalised attention is often advocated so that pupils of foreign origin, whose mother tongue is not the official language of the school, can learn the latter quickly to catch up with the rest of the class. In some schools, this measure may segregate the child, when it involves meeting an individual need outside the class group to which (s)he belongs: 'When some of these little Chinese kids come without knowing speak Spanish, then, perhaps, a support teacher has been put in place' (N-E-A-P-M-60). In other schools, the child receives support with the rest of the group, within the classroom: 'These students are taken to language immersion; they are given priority support within the classroom.' (N-E-ME-P-M-40)

The second factor means a critique of the strategy of 'normalising' students of foreign origin:

> Melilla is characterised by a great cultural diversity. Demographically, there is not a majority culture. However, the data shows the intention of the system: that Arab students learn Western cultural traits. Little by little they are accepting our culture. (N-E-ME-P-M-29)

Some participants claim that the greater the distance between the majority culture and students of foreign origin, the greater the need for attention:

> We have other Moroccan students who integrated later. But the Moroccan, whether you like it or not, are next to Spain (…). But we are talking about a Syrian child. With this little boy, the tutor is working in a more particular way. (N-E-A-P-M-55)

The data show the differentiation between the 'us' and the 'other'. This differentiation implies the strategy of adaptation of the other to the 'us' that acculturation implies: 'Many of them don't know their culture, because maybe they were a couple of years old, and they adapted to the culture of our country' (N-E-ME-P-H-33). Intercultural inequality is the result.

In Ceuta and Melilla, the education administration argues that schools do not address cultural diversity as part of their education policy, but only when a need is identified. This need is always linked to exogenous cultural diversity, derived from migrations, since in the discourses of both cities endogenous cultural diversity is taken

for granted as an intrinsic part of their identity, as analysed above. Exogenous cultural diversity thus becomes, according to the discourses found in this subcategory, an opportunity to address interculturality:

> Depending on the school where you go, you can get different impressions. That is to say, a school that is clearly committed to interculturality has to be a school where the student who needs help for addressing diversity is included along with the rest of the students. (N-E-ME-T-H-38)

4. Discussion and conclusions

The aim of this article was to analyse the discourses of education agents on cultural diversity in primary school on both sides of the Strait of Gibraltar (Andalusia, Ceuta and Melilla -Spain), as well as the opportunity for the promotion of interculturality in these three regions from a rights-based approach.

As mentioned above, the border nature of this area and the fact that it is the closest point between the European and African continents, explain why it is one of the largest transit areas for migrants in the world. This makes it particularly interesting for research, as their waters, countries, continents, languages, cultures and religions are also borderland.

In this context, the above analysis of the data gains sense. The data found on both sides of the Strait reveal a series of socio-historical factors that let identify two models of cultural diversity in primary school: one that is historically inherent to the society of the two Spanish cities in North Africa, endogenous cultural diversity, and another that is the result of the arrival of immigrants to Spain since the 1990s, exogenous cultural diversity. This is true at least at the level of the participants' discourses. Yet, ethnic minorities such as the Roma have lived in the country since the Middle Ages. On the other hand, exogenous cultural diversity is not exclusive to the peninsula though, as recent migration has also taken place in Ceuta and Melilla.

In the research from which these data are derived, this dual manifestation of cultural diversity was only identified in the area on either side of the Strait of Gibraltar, due to the aforementioned border situation. The rest of Spain's borders are with countries that are also members of the European Union (France and Portugal), where European citizenship currently exists. This finding is the main contribution of this article and has been made possible thanks to the contrast identified in the data by including the Spanish

cities in North Africa in the analysis (Ceuta and Melilla), together with a peninsular region (Andalusia).

Turning to the discussion of these findings, it was important to explore the potential for interculturality within the context of cultural diversity, as highlighted by the two models identified in the research, from a rights-based approach.

First, in relation to endogenous cultural diversity, there is a kind of common thread between these three types of discourse identified in the endogenous model, which range from taking diversity for granted, found in most participants, to its normalisation, to seeing it as enriching and therefore as an opportunity for interculturality. The latter represents just 13% of the discourses in this model. Therefore, interculturality is not a de facto reality in these two historically multicultural societies, Ceuta and Melilla, but rather an aspiration, a political commitment to an ideal model of coexistence, a 'diversicracy', as mentioned in the data. The structural nature of diversity implies 'to establish in some way the rights and duties of the students and the population in general' C-E-C-T-M-2, which contains a first element to substantiate interculturality from a rights-based approach. It consists of something as elementary as granting citizenship rights to all members of a society. Thereby, 'diversity, in our case, that we take it as something natural, is enriching' (N-E-ME-P-H-30). This would give rise to a model of social organisation based on diversity which would such a 'diversicracy'.

However, this observation can be interpreted in two ways, as diversity, while enriching, is understood as 'naturalised' (C-E-C-T-M-2). Viewing this phenomenon as natural, rather than as part of a social process that is constructed, discourages the need to educate for diversity in schools, as it does not require active educational policies. The most extreme discourses in this sense take cultural diversity for granted, as the data analysed above have shown.

Secondly, in relation to exogenous cultural diversity, almost two out of three references to cultural diversity caused by the arrival of immigrants see diversity as a social problem. This shows how far we are from considering cultural diversity as an opportunity for interculturality in the three societies analysed, being one multicultural because of migration in recent decades (Andalusia), a phenomenon which also occurs in the two historically multicultural societies (Ceuta and Melilla).

Several factors might be identified in the discourses analysed. First, there is the difficulties faced by families of foreign origin in getting involved in school life. As

Palaudàrias (2017) claims, this makes it necessary to define the model of family participation in the school, considering how this is conditioned by the context, opportunities, roles and contents. Starting to recognise the right of families to participate can contribute to fostering an intercultural climate inside and outside the schools.

A second factor in the discourses is that children's primary socialisation takes place in a conflict-oriented rather than intercultural model. Teachers consider this to be the result of family socialisation rather than school socialisation. This explains why one strategy to promote interculturality is to work with families in school (Palaudàrias, 2017). Hence the importance of favouring and re-establishing links (family of origin, people of reference and extended family in the territory) which are fundamental in the configuration of personal and social identity (Cortès Izquierdo *et al.*, 2023).

The third factor identified as a problem is language, when the mother tongue is different from that of the host country. From the rights-based approach, we can introduce the proposal by Kymlicka (2018) to fund bilingual education or support the mother tongue. In the case of the two autonomous cities, where endogenous cultural diversity has been found, this issue becomes even more problematic. As previously noted, a large part of the Muslim population, coming from Morocco, speaks a dialect of Arabic (Dariya in Ceuta, Tamazight in Melilla), which is far away from the formal culture of the school. Teachers who see it as problematic identify it as an exogenous cultural element, rather than as an endogenous feature of the 'diversicracy' described above. So, far from following along the lines suggested by Kymlicka (2018), this is the rights-based approach to interculturality (Chichizola, 2021), there exists an 'othering' which results in social conflict, since it is seen as challenging the social norms of the majority culture. In this case, although linguistic diversity is endogenous, it is perceived as an exogenous element of inter-ethnic relations, socially problematic.

A fourth factor identified in the data as a social problem is the consideration given to the Roma population. In the discourses analysed, the Roma population, despite having lived in Spain since the Middle Ages, is equated with the rest of the ethnic groups that have arrived in Spain in recent migrations. This finding is indicative of the 'white supremacy' (Fylkesnes, 2019; Gillborn, 2005) that has historically characterised the treatment of the Roma population in Spain.

From an intercultural perspective, the data show that two out of ten references in the endogenous diversity model highlight the need to address cultural diversity in schools,

which is the focus of this research. The need to incorporate cultural diversity in education policies can, in fact, be considered as a strategy to promote interculturality (Guilherme, 2019). These discourses contain relevant arguments in line with the interculturality approach, based on multicultural citizenship rights through the implementation of educational policies.

One of these strategies is founded on the bilingualism promotion, which can include, in addition, a multicultural curriculum (Kymlicka, 2018). Another strategy consists of ending the use of the term ‘second generation immigrants’ for people who are born in Spain and have full citizenship rights. This way, the othering and inter-ethnic divisions are eradicated in a bid to open spaces from existing multiculturalism towards interculturalism based on human and citizenship rights.

However, as mentioned at the beginning of the article, it becomes crucial to start from the structural analysis of equality, which has been gradually depoliticised (Junter & Sénac-Slawinski, 2010), to proceed to the re-politicisation of diversity (Chichizola, 2018), through the structural analysis of inequality that underlies cultural diversity as a sociological phenomenon (Duru-Bellat, 2011). This is of special interest given that the three regions in this study are increasingly multicultural since the 1990s, especially Ceuta and Melilla (Mohamed *et al.*, 2023).

The structural and historical nature of diversity implies the recognition of the rights and responsibilities of students and the population in general. This means recognising the citizenship of all people as members of a society. This recognition of rights is the basis of interculturality in a rights-based approach. Diversity is then understood as an enrichment. The result is a model of social organisation based on diversity, i.e. ‘diversicracy’.

Concerning primary school, the challenge is to see cultural diversity as an opportunity for interculturality towards ‘diversicracy’. This means applying what has been learned about coexistence and socio-cultural organisation in endogenously culturally diverse societies to exogenous culturally diverse societies. In addition, Roma population must be recognised as part of the Spanish society historically. In fact, this diversity, together with the ethnoreligious diversity in Ceuta and Melilla, makes Spain a country with historically endogenous cultural diversity.

From these results, it can be concluded that recognising the structural nature of diversity and the underlying processes of social inequality and moving from othering to recognising the human and citizenship rights of people living together in a society, is

shown to be an excellent re-politicisation strategy to foster interculturality in our increasingly diverse and multicultural societies.

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