

Article

Teachers' Training in the Intercultural Dialogue and Understanding: focussing on the Education for a Sustainable Development

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Abstract: The present research is embedded in the professional development and research line and in the needs of secondary education and first-year university teachers. We focussed on evidencing the importance of teachers' professional training to include some specific adaptation and skills in intercultural dialogue and understanding -often called Intercultural Competence- because of its direct impact on the sustainable development of human beings, groups, and ecosystems. We investigated the role played by each of the main competencies linked to the following intercultural dimensions: Professional Identity, Ethics and Axiology, Methodology, and Inclusive Education. We used an integrated methodology and a cross-study of data, performed after the obtention of a three-cornered evaluation of results collected in focus groups, interviews, and questionnaires. We were able to show the impact of intercultural dialogue and understanding in the education for a sustainable development pattern. This is fundamental to set up a new ecology of forms, knowledge, attitudes, and educational meanings, further used to update teachers and students' training in sustainable ecology and cultural diversity. Progress made in these complementary competencies - Professional Identity, Ethics and Axiology, Methodology- were appraised by teachers participating in the present study; the latter showing an increased interest and demand for the intercultural competence, after increasing their proficiency in the other complementary competencies

Keywords: teachers' training; teachers' competences; intercultural dialogue; education for sustainable development; professional development.

1. Introduction

Keeping teachers updated is one of the main priorities for teachers themselves and for educational systems too, regardless of perspectives or objectives marked by international organizations, teachers' associations or networks. In this way, the consideration of the fundamental need for capacity development to face an ever-changing world, characterized by vast dependencies, globalization, and uncertainty, is becoming a core priority; educating for new dialogue patterns established with and between diversified cultural partners, migrating identities and human beings to cooperate genuinely with the sustainability of the planet as an objective, [1, 2, 3, 4, 5].

We are witness of a consciousness-raising pattern and emerging commitment, as summarized by the 2020-2030 Agenda; with one of the main goals to attain being that of 'equal rights for all humans, their integral education, respect of diversity and differentiated growth for all human beings and groups'. This statement underlines the value and role played by every being as such and, derives

from their very nature and ecological beliefs. The acceptance of this educational commitment, framed in the specific and rich area of educational training is at the very core of the debate since, every student and culture are part of the educational community and true protagonists, in terms of equal rights, universalization of education, or respect and understanding. Changing educational and attention patterns in schools is the main responsibility of these centres, and educational professionals are a key asset in such a transformation.

Teachers' professional development used to give a proper answer to every culture and student has been researched in many countries; we hereby present a review of the published by the scientific community on the subject, with a particular insight on shifting ecological environments and the presence of diverse societies and cultures, both in Europe and in other continents, with people of different origins facing willingly the challenges of a new and sustainable world.

The present research is centred on teachers' training and development of competencies on dialogue and intercultural understanding [1, 6]. This shows in the consolidation of practical theories and models summarizing the main approaches on cultural understanding and sharing -like the getting to know, think [7a, 8)] and build educational processes, the use of complementary and inter-subjective qualities, some increasingly creative and intense empathy patterns, the sense derived from the training knowledge based on empathy, respect of diversity and project designs or training actions- [5].

The core of the intercultural dialogue competence is included in the dialogic principle [9, 10,11, 12], together with that of the specific building of new virtual environments for intercultural education [13, 14].

The classical dimensions of competencies [15, 16] acquire a more specific tone when education includes some practices, where the newly acquired knowledge is applied. When knowledge is applied to experience, as defined by Dewey, the thinking and learning process are completed after full participation [7], and the new competence is formed by every teacher or group and analysed from visions. The intercultural competency combines knowledge and empathy, both characteristics of human beings, with closeness and understanding actions or cooperation as described by [17, 18], because for them such a competence is based on a civic and communicative culture, capacitating teachers to perform some global thinking that is completed by a local-style action.

The intercultural competence requires some specific qualities which are represented as complementary: namely the intercultural experience, motivation, global attitude, and ability to listen appropriately. These contribute to an action style based on a global perception of people but that attends both the individualities themselves and the stability of traditional cultural identities.

As such, [19] underlines that the holistic and contextual knowledge of another culture provides for its understanding and that it evidences a mutual enrichment, allowing for a better comprehension based on learning and interpretation processes, giving way to a more fruitful encounter and open or shared reflection.

Our research is looking into the main components and knowledge required by twenty-first century teachers, in diverse contexts, with a particular insight in Spain. Teachers' training is to be professionalized and include some extended learning to know methods and style tools enabling the understanding of people and cultures represented within a particular group. Every human being is then identified openly and mutually though, we determined that the most important dimension for teachers' training is that of learning to do /act within the group and school, together with that of the learning to understand nuclear tensions [20, 21, 22].

Is a new dimension connecting the comprehension of knowledge with action?

From our point of view, the true harmonization between both concepts is synthetized in teachers' *raison d'être*; a substantial ethical aspect showing that, through the extensive dialogue with other human beings, we learn to reject all prejudice, distance and differentiation based on a specific behaviour. It claims for a new proximity, love and true human family united under a common framework [23], that is based on authentic process and commitments that are part of integral humanization.

Which training models and actions can be used to develop teachers' skills and permanent knowledge on intercultural understanding?

This model justification is underlined by specific components evidenced by [24], like some leadership attributes, that are in accordance with the emotional intelligence development, new coaching styles and empathy abilities that are to be developed by trainers and educational programmes; where every teacher is to be considered as a committed and critical ally in this line. As shows in our research, all teachers need to get involved and assume their responsibility, -following their own training/professional competences-, to foment dialogue and understanding between students and families and attain some emotional balance and provide for a real proximity of people and cultures.

Training in transformational and instructive leadership [25, 26] has meant a significant support for research participants because it positively impacted on the improvement of results, and fomented significant progress in both dialogue and understanding of people, usual authentic leaders in uncertainty contexts.

This capacity development approach is broadened to assume the illustration challenge of the true commitment with people and cultures; [27, 28, 29] believe that when every teacher's/professional educator's ecosystem/ concrete working position is potentiated fully, learning can be achieved taking into consideration the know-how and location using a more extended expertise and commitment (professional ethics). Leadership is also evidenced [30] to be a creative synthesis of complementary aspects and elements fomenting a new style of human relationships; where teachers are leaders used as cultural understanding and problem-solving triggers. They help with the real integration of projects between human beings, following new cooperative, understanding concepts and provide for a permanent research line, with shared learning models and forms, based on dialogue throughout life.

Which competences are considered as complementary to reinforce the dialogue and intercultural understanding skills?

In the line of results published by Comprofesu (2016-2020), the UCSG (2018-2019) and many others, we have focussed on four prominent competences in the present study:

- Professional Identity [1, 6, 31]
- Ethical [32]
- Methodological [33, 10, 11]
- Professional commitment to dialogue and intercultural understanding[33, 22]

The fields of such competencies are quite extended and complex when trying to attain a proper development of the intercultural dialogue. However, we decided to research on these to determine their contribution to the intercultural competence, during the teaching-learning and professional development process.

Research conducted in the field have previously underlined the necessity for teachers to apprehend new training challenges, that are considered as essential to achieve the intercultural understanding competence.

1.1. The professional identity dimensions

[29, 31] highlighted this dimension as being a substantive core of teachers' training, considering the state of satisfaction, creative acceptance of the task and integral and responsible execution, together with a permanent overcoming type.

[34], commented on the components of reflexive education, identifying as fundamental the level of consciousness achieved by teachers, and the significance and impact with which they assume and perform their profession: high degree of satisfaction with their profession. [6], evidenced that the performance and quality of the intercultural teaching-learning process are associated with the acceptance and intensification of their professional life, which is reflected in dialogue and cooperation levels with families and students of diverse cultures represented in the group. [6] express that 'the selection of the most relevant training experiences for each teacher, are to represent an object for reflexion and professional development, that is to be analysed further and converted into a basis

for knowledge and consolidation of their own teaching innovative process'. Identification with professional development is higher when teachers assume this is a personal process they can share and develop; when they realise, they can delve on their own knowledge patterns to try and understand the most educational events they experience.

[35], underline that professional development programmes for teachers, have increased the research competence in their daily practice and activity, and have allowed for improved relationships with other teachers within the educational community they belong to. They feel leaders tend to resolve the challenges and contradictions that such programmes have not yet managed to resolve.

[36], they emphasize the value of such socialization process delivered by teachers' trainers and confirm their positive impact on the learning to teaching proceedings. They also find fundamental to work on the subjective visions and intensified build-ups of the professional identity competence, to support intercultural dialogue and understanding.

Comprehension between people of diverse cultural origins has to be based on an open-minded vision provided and developed by teachers, that is consistent with their expectations and needs. Singularly, they have to provide some existential balance and harmony to increase the development of migrants' identity, and attain the objective of a fertile interaction and build up, performed in a satisfying professional environment, always bearing in mind the importance of mutual enrichment generated by these new insights and common perspectives [23, 37].

Professional identity is established on the knowledge and permanent update of one's own culture. When teachers are conscious of the continuous challenges demanded by our complex and confused world, building up the intercultural dialogue competence and education based on understanding, is only possible in a satisfactory environment and with a common approach, that integrates specific cultural knowledge and the full implication of participants. Teachers can then develop responsible improvements in their deontological code, -that are applied from their experiences and understanding between people-, to generate places and times for research on meanings and interrelationship patterns that are based on empathy and understanding. This is fruitful to try and discover the best teaching models and forms [38, 39, 40, 41], because identity consolidation evidences an intensification and more significative implication of the intercultural dialogue.

1.2. The ethic-axiological dimension

We included this dimension in the competence group because it represents the basic and true significance of human dispositions and feelings, when they are responsible and open to fruitful dialogue. Therefore, such training component is included as a key competence for generic and professional development; it improves cultural understanding and enrichment because it accounts for the coherence of consolidated cultural values. This is a nuclear aspect when trying to understand different lifestyles, group structures and milestones represented by scale values that are specific to every culture represented within the group, most particularly those related to identifying traits.

The ethical competence enables teachers to deepen their reflections and find the right arguments to answer every particular case like:

Why do I need to act to understand and grasp better my professional obligations? Why is this moral process good for me? Who is actually deciding what I have to do as a teacher to foment intercultural understanding between people and cultures?

The ethical model has to prevail upon the theological one, and raise the value of the performance of duties characterising the action norms, within communities and with people. [42] reminds us of the importance of identifying both the duties and norms that truly enable the paths ahead.

This competence is characterized by the criteria and integral knowledge/ wisdom that helps building norms. Then teachers find it easier to perform their duties when these norms are clearly interpreted and assumed. However, really makes a difference between professionals is when they identify adequately with and develop such norms during their educational practice. When they assume these values, supported by valid principles in many societies and are ready to accept as mature professionals. Such maturity is evidenced when it contributes to the build-up of principles

and norms endorsing and justifying this 'duty', with teachers' acceptance of their duty towards meaningful society values and norms that are commonly recognized as such.

How can we improve the ethical competence? Do we consciously feel we are less tied to our sense of duty, and reflect less on why we need to perform educational actions based on empathy, dialogue, and intercultural understanding? Do we deepen our reflections on the positive role played by such intercultural understanding and links established between people?

Teachers' professional action is a decision-making process [43, 42], though such decisions need be clearly supported by a project with future, and based on instruments/means and resources. Limits are also to be established for a proper development; excessive competitiveness must be moderated, all cultures are to be integrated fully respecting the idiosyncrasy of each of them. During the process, teachers also face their own issues, demands and challenges or complexities that are derived from situations like pandemics for example. The 2020 pandemic has meant a new way to build relationships, projects and understanding of limits between different cultures inside schools. In this line, [42] underlines the singular value of every student in his/her relationship with the teacher, considered as fully entitled being and developed citizen in our permanently connected and open to dialogue 'globalized world'.

[43] suggests the application of bio-ethic principles to regulate professional activities since they affect teachers, clients and society itself. It underlines the importance of consideration and consciousness of all teachers and the 'benefits' obtained through this professional challenge; since this practice is to be damage-less for participants, which means being committed to other people's wellness through the provision of help and protection for the benefit of society.

The educational practice must be developed, acknowledged and facilitated by other participants recognising this expertise. This is when it can be fully exploited in its instructive and guiding aspects, where complete collaboration and mutual respect towards its expansion is fully represented in its cultural, social, and existential diversities. Reciprocity and necessary joint commitment are fundamental to develop training sessions that are oriented to the full understanding and empathic interaction between teachers and students. Both groups becoming aware of educational acts, used to enhance cultural diversity challenges and complex globalizing focus. Such a self-empowerment and respectful principle towards students, families and society is to be completed with a sense of justice implicating a 'rational and supportive distribution of limited resources.

Teachers need to provide for an authentic and pertinent reflection on educational models and practices because education is a fundamental right for all. Every human being and community are entitled to an integral education and needs to be represented using creative, supportive and adequate teaching activities; teachers, educational groups, administrations and learning-teaching communities have a role to play to get a full understanding of participants and a right impulse to optimise resources.

Ethics in education is embodied in professional ethics where education styles, models and didactic methods are paramount. Teachers' conception and evaluation, together with the synthesis of main professional values, used in their daily tasks and, the ethical vision of education practice committed to equity and real fulfilment of people, provides for the full recognition of training actions and trainers and evidences the real understanding of diverse cultures themselves and of their evolutions. This allows for the emergence of a fruitful significance on people and communities. Comprehension between people [42], is to be supported by empathy and emotional harmony [43]. The latter being the most relevant qualities showed for modalities such as relationships based on cooperation, comprehension, reciprocity, and shared experiences.

We need to extend dialogue between cultures using a practical sense of wisdom, more studies on paradigmatical cases, integral questions and challenges altogether with a projected vision of actions [44]. New visions can emerge to answer challenges that are linked to sustainable human developments, and the commitments arising before pandemics or socio-economical crisis. These evidence the axiological aspects that are at the very centre of global and cultural concerns, of human beings. Professional teams need be aware of this when getting implied in this new and complex society.

This is where, the ethical competence is enriched by and actualized by principles like: honesty, selflessness, responsible action and human dignity; where open-minded and innovative professionals create a new style to act in full consciousness and assuming their authentic commitment and performance, when confronting the multiple challenges raised by new technologies, pandemics, social and cultural uncertainties.

1.3. The methodological dimension

The above-mentioned competencies are reflected in professionals' personalities and axiology, while the methodological competence is linked to some adapted and justified norms that are discovered personally or jointly within the group to consolidate the communicative and empathic triggers with students. This enables the development of competencies and comprehension of knowledge that are to be assimilated [45]. The methodological competence summarizes the pertinent knowledge and actions shared by teachers and students to understand messages, apply them, and set up an integral training from a learning-teaching process. The vision of such a competence is concreted into the synthesis of pertinent knowledge, practices, values, and actions used to foment the comprehension of training contents, messages, values, etc. These are culturally relevant and are to be taught at school together with the attention to diversity and openness between people participating in the educational community [6].

The methodological competence helps teachers when building up a methodological system that is adapted to the needs of groups. It allows for improved individual and collective relationships and opens new understanding process and comprehensions between communities like those observed in previously published works [32, 46, 47, 48, 49, 12a, 10], with diverse methods being reported.

[45], have summarized methods encouraging active education, project-based approaches, problem-solving procedures and fractal education, with a particular attention to the application of the dialogical principle [9]. The latter is used as a basis and support for comprehension and understanding, and in provision with empathy between human beings. Intra and interpersonal relationships are deepened, and teachers and students' interaction are improved, with a marked importance for the diary every student has to write during their learning experience to broaden the knowledge acquired.

The didactic methodology underlines the role and significance played by the cultural diversity and represents an integral methodological system that has to be set up by teachers and applied with originality in the group or using virtual means to answer the uncertain and complex situation experienced. The value of every interaction by participants needs be consciously weighted [33, 53]. We hereby present an integrated system based on:

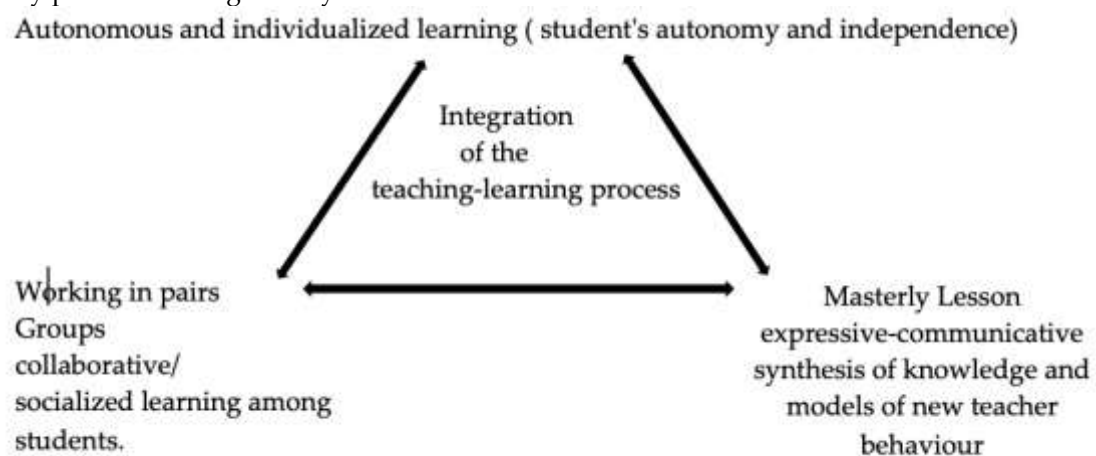


Figure 1. Integrated methodological system.

The setting up of a positive environment for improved understanding and relationships between cultures depends on the advances of the methodological system built by every group and teacher.

All agents/students within the class - virtual group must become autonomous during their learning practice and become more committed with the work performed by it. The balance is gradually established between the theory and real practice/ implication of teachers where dialogue, knowledge and understanding between people and cultures are essential to respond the equity and cooperation goals submitted by the 2030 UN agenda.

The educational practice meant to improve the understanding of cultures needs be enriched with a methodological system that provides renewed empathy for every participant within the group. Actions and decision-making procedures are to put human beings at the very centre of educational institutions where they can learn the key issues and limitations of localized entities. Then all work together inside the community to promote education from a global point of view but considering the true needs expressed in particular contexts, to get a sustainable framework, balance and cooperation between cultures.

The integrated didactic-heuristic methodology [54], is to contribute to activities promoting a sustainable development using a case study [55]. This means is to provide a deeper and holistic knowledge of teaching-learning actions. Such an intercultural competence progress is linked to the build-up and application of methods oriented towards training practices and globalized or complex principles like [(56, 30]. These integrate a new leadership vision of institutions that is projected into the actualization of initial and permanent teachers' training models. Teachers from early schooling to University stages learn to promote formative practices and concepts that are to be used in their daily lives and professions to foster new ways of providing intercultural dialogue and integral and mutual understanding [1, 57].

1.4. The dialogue and intercultural understanding dimension

Getting trained in competences and, most particularly, getting trained in intercultural dialogue and understanding, means participants' acceptance and wide commitment to it. Teachers assume the consolidation of this professional competence sincerely [33, 22, 58], which is fundamental for the future of integral training regarding the understanding and shared education of people of diverse origins that are represented in the class. [54] advocate for a new implication of teachers and the application of a heuristic methodology that complements the didactic sense during the development of teaching-learning process, at the very basis of the progress and achievement of the dialogue competence and intercultural understanding for the whole educational community within the physical, environmental and sustainable environments.

The commitment dimension elevates the expectations of educational professionals and integrates in its methods a new way to consolidate practices fomenting a high level of understanding between participants within schools. Such a vision is consolidated when they finally understand the acceptance modalities of intercultural comprehension, and get pedagogical leaders to assume these challenges as necessary during their professional development, to provide for an innovative research line for all educational entities [30, 59, 60, 25, 61], where managers and directors act as relevant innovators committed to the interculturality.

Progress made in the complementary educational competences like leadership, ecology and new technologies [14] -linked to the sense of being and thought, to the professional identity, ethical commitment and methodological competence- are to be promoted assuming the highest levels of commitment and the importance of research in this field, to provide for an integral education and comprehension of people of diverse cultural origins. Such competencies contribute to teachers' understanding and implication of the intense dialogue between participants, while accounting for the educational environment of schools as a whole and that of every group in their particularities. Full understanding between human beings emerges as such [23], contributing to the establishment of new basis for an improved humanization state between all on the planet with a particular emphasis on complex educational contexts.

Teachers' training is performed both at school and in ecological educational environments, where privileged settings impulse the sustainable development of schools themselves and that of societies. The 2030 Agenda objectives -most particularly those stated under the first paragraph-

together with those detailing life and health goals, are meant to foment harmony, sustainability, equity and comprehension between people during the educational process. Visions reported under [62, 63] allow for a new model designed to impulse a constant ecological capital, used to collaborate with new cultures. This is meant to foster respect for ecological resources balance, use and availability and help set a closeness between cultures understanding our planet as a whole, where harmony, respect, second-hand and integral care are part of our universal framework with educational techniques being developed to face complex situation, glocalization and systemization (holistic vision).

1.5. Objectives

1.5.1. General

- To develop competence models for teachers that are based on professional competences training, with a particular insight on intercultural dialogue and understanding.

1.5.2. Specific

- To generate professional development models that are based on competencies.
- To evidence the intercultural competence value for teachers
- To discover the value of progress performed on the professional identity, ethic-axiological, methodological, and integral commitment dimensions, for the intercultural competence development
- To transfer findings on the intercultural competence command to that of teachers' professional development.

2. Materials and Methods

We applied a mixed quantitative and qualitative approach in our study in line with previously published studies like those of [64, 65, 67, 33, 6]. The present study is focussing on the validity and reliability of data, with a specific analysis of intercultural understanding and development and the needs for research linked to teachers' profession. We also highlighted the impact of every person and cultural group within Schools. We also reviewed all open questions included in the questionnaires, the relevance of focus groups and answers obtained to some relevant questions presented personally or with on-line systems. Cooperation of teachers and education specialists has been used to get a broader analysis of these texts, and a complementary interpretation, analysis typification and significance of sources was performed [68, 55].

Questionnaire validation has been carried out by 15 experts and teachers and researchers helped for the comprehension and transformation of data, the analysis of dimensions and their impact on every teacher. The reliability study was carried out using the SPSS. 22 system, evidencing a Cronbach's alpha (.972).

Questionnaire is made of 47 items, gathered under four dimensions/ components: professional identity, ethics, professional commitment and methodologic. Every dimension includes open-ended questions to allow for a further analysis of arguments given by participants. The Likert scale used includes a valuation of 1 (fully disagrees to) to 6 (fully agrees to).

Sample is made of 100 participants corresponding to the relevant populations of our study: experienced teachers, pertaining to the Secondary Education (40% of them) and to the University (35%) and on the other part, of Postgraduate Education Certification students (25%9), participating during their teaching and research training courses. About 38.0% of participants are aged 25 to 29 years; 35% are over 50 and the other 25% are aged 30 to 49. Women are over-represented (64%).

After a full written registry of focus groups, interviews and open-ended questions, we analysed the contents of resulting accounts and completed our triangulation study with experts' opinions and the application of the Atlas ti 8.0 program to ease the presentation and categorization of findings. This altogether enabled the emergence of new leads verifying the coherence of data and the opening

of relevant interpretations that were later verified by researchers and teachers (Ruiz-Cabezas and Medina, 2017).

We set up 3 focus groups with 8 participants each, representing the different knowledge areas and participant characteristics to complete the perspectives and data obtained with the questionnaire.

3. Results

3.1. Quantitative analysis

The factorial analysis applied is considering the correlative value between variables for every competence, associated to that of intercultural dialogue. We selected those reaching a correlation higher than (>0.5), as follows:

First competence: Professional Identity, we ignored (4th, 5th and 9th), Ethic-axiological (20, 24, 25), Professional Commitment (35), Methodology (39, 40, 42, 47) (corresponding ad hoc data from the original questionnaire).

We hereby present the values obtained for each variable identified by the corresponding competence (See Table 1).

	1	2	3	4
PROFESSIONAL IDENTITY				
1. Teachers need to get trained in migrant identities competencies.	,83			
2. Disagreements between people and cultures must be specifically worked on during teachers' training.	,80			
3. The dialogic principle is to be worked upon by every teacher due to its high impact on cultural improvement between cultures.	,79			
T4. he diversity of cultures presents vast challenges for teachers to attend. They must get trained in their knowledge and analysis.	,77			
5. The analysis of interactions between people from diverse cultural backgrounds is essential for teachers' professional development.	,70			
ETHIC-AXIOLOGICAL DIMENSION				
6. Teachers need to get competences to understand the role played by the intercultural dialogue in learning-teaching process.		,78		
7. Value analysis of the specific cultures represented in the group is key to improve the teaching practice.		,80		
8. Teachers' competencies in positive attitudes towards intercultural dialogue at school is fundamental.		,74		
9. Teachers' training in reality-based accounts workshops to favour intercultural understanding is fundamental.		,78		
10. Migrant issues knowledge is to be used as a basis for teachers' professional development actions and models.		,78		
11. The generation of cultural understanding and cooperation with migrants' identity/ and expectations is basic to foment teachers' training models.		,77		
12. Migrants' values and lifestyles need be used to characterise teachers' practice.		,74		
PROFESSIONAL COMMITMENT DIMENSION				
13. Teachers progress in their professional development when they prioritize works based on intercultural dialogue.			,80	
14. Teachers appraise interculturality as a function used during the integral education of students and families.			,76	
15. The learning-teaching process is to be adapted to the dialogue between teachers and students.			,64	
16. Teachers have related their professional development with that of migrants at school.			,70	

17. Teachers' experiences in the groups express their commitment and feelings with migrant people.			,71	
18. Teachers widen their professional culture when fomenting an integral education of people of diverse cultural backgrounds.			,91	
19. Families and migrants contribute to the professional development of teachers.			,72	
METHODOLOGICAL DIMENSION				
20. The ethnical and cultural dimension needs be included transversally in education programmes established by schools.				,78
21. The attention to cultural diversity of students' needs be present at fundamental stages of the learning-teaching process.				,80
22. Teachers need favour the active experience and exploration through research works performed by the group.				,63
23. Teachers need build up an integrated methodological system answering the diverse expectations and cultures of students.				,87
24. In multicultural contexts, teachers need to establish an educational program that accounts for the significative cultural context of every student (familiar and communicative means).				,91
25. The promotion of dialogue between different cultures implies that teachers need take into account the social environment of groups: values, beliefs, habits and expectations.				,86

When selecting the most valued variables (questions) among the four competencies (components), we verified that each of these values had been weighed with over .70, except those corresponding to questions number 15 and 22 that obtained .64 and .63, respectively. The most notable correlations corresponded to questions number 18 and 24 with .91.

We enlarged our factor analysis, using the KMO statistics (Table 2), requiring of an inter-correlation of variables. Results collected present a value of .518 for KMO, indicating the acceptance of the model. This analysis was further complemented with Bartlett's Sphericity test and reached a 0.815, indicating that the proposed model of competencies is highly significant, with a Chi square probability of 376 with $p < 0.01$.

Table 2. KMO and Bartlett test.

Medida Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin sampling adequacy		,815
Bartlett's sphericity test	Aprox. Chi-cuadrado	376,385
	gl	45
	Sig.	,000

Variance is further examined and surveyed with a squared loading total of sums for rotations, presented in Table 3.

Table 3. Total variance explained.

Component	Initial self-starting values			Extraction sums of squared loading total			Rotation sums of squared loading total		
	Total	% of variance	% cumulative	Total	% of Variance	% cumulative	Total	% of variance	% cumulative
1	15,1	56,1	56,16	15,165	56,16	56,16	5,833	21,603	21,6
2	3	11,13	67,29	3,00	11,13	67,29	5,26	19,51	41,1
3	2,03	7,52	74,82	2,02	7,52	74,82	5,17	19,14	60,2
4	1,21	4,48	79,30	1,21	4,48	79,3	5,14	19,04	79,30
5	,96	3,58	82,89						
6	,87	3,23	86,12						

7	,72	2,69	88,82						
8	,55	2,07	90,89						
9	,51	1,91	92,810						
10	,42	1,55	94,367						
11	,37	1,37	95,744						
12	,25	,95	96,694						
13	,21	,78	97,474						
14	,16	,605	98,078						
15	,14	,544	98,623						
16	,12	,455	99,078						
17	,081	,301	99,378						
18	,055	,205	99,584						
19	,042	,154	99,738						
20	,029	,109	99,847						
21	,022	,080	99,927						
22	,011	,042	99,969						
23	,006	,021	99,990						
24	,002	,008	99,998						
25	,000	,002	100,000						
26	0,0009	,000	100,000						
27	-1,252E-16	-4,636E-16	100,000						
Extraction method: analysis of principal components									

Once the feasibility of the factorial analysis is determined, we proceeded to find the explained variance, and observed that for the four components/dimensions, the variance established a 79.30 of data information. We found that the first component -the Professional Identity competence- accounted for 21,6% of data. The second component -the Ethics- accounted for 19,51%, the Professional Commitment for 19.14% and the Methodological for 19.04%.

Such weights represent a high level of total variance explained. The Professional Identity stands out, though for the other competencies, the level of explained variance is similar to the latter with a 19,5%, consolidating this analysis. The model of competencies, reviewed by the participants, presents a high relation with the analysed competence (dialogue between cultures-intercultural), showing the existence of a close and complementary connection and adequate competence framework to train teachers.

3.2. Qualitative analysis

Methods: For the focus groups and interviews, we used an analysis of contents process that considered the very items as main codes. We further proceeded to categorize data using the inference. The emergence of other codes and the synthesis of the information under semantic networks was made possible after the segmentation of documents remitted with participants' answers and the gathering of meaningful clusters. We were then able to relate data and batch all participants' accounts to interpret the collected data. Findings for each dimension are presented hereafter under separate sections.

3.2.1. Professional Identity

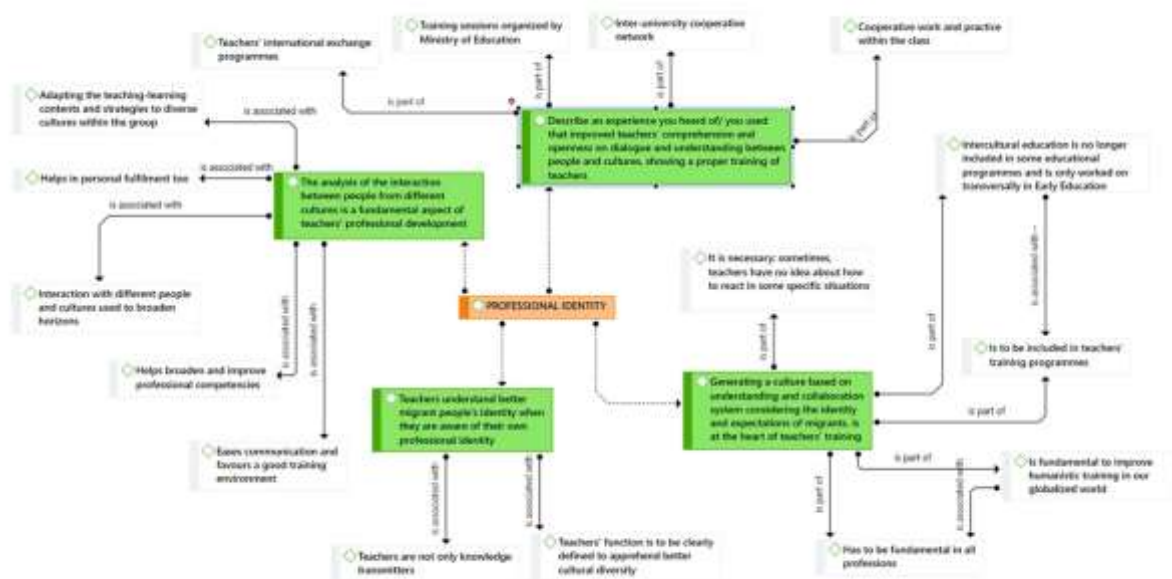


Figure 1. Semantic network of Professional identity dimension.

Participants' answers to debate group discussions and interviews consider that teachers are more likely to understand migrant people's identity when they reach a fuller understanding of their own professional identity because **personal and professional self-knowledge are fundamental aspects to comprehend other people's way of thinking** (see figure 1). They expressed that:

'The improved professional identity probably had been made possible after personal experiencing. These experiences of coexistence and treatment with people of diverse cultures, have allowed for a broader understanding of other people's identities and cultures.'

They also underline that teachers **need be conscious they are more than mere knowledge transmitters**. The vast majority agree that:

'Clearly, teachers cannot only convey their subject in an adequate and correct manner, from a theoretical point of view. Being a teacher, educating... this is much more than handling over some knowledge or being good at a particular subject. They need to consider every student's origins and the cultural implications that are derived from this.'

Participants agree that teachers need to define more clearly their functions when confronted to culturally diverse contexts and that the professional identity of teachers is linked to their vocation. We hereby reproduce some of these participants' expressions:

'Any teacher with a clear educating professional identity will understand better and will be more willing to adapt to the presence of other cultures inside the class'. (...) 'I know from my own experience that, even teachers expressing their non-implication in the educating process and their concentration on the instruction role, finally end up analysing concrete situations and are finally compelled to understand and consider the (cultural, social, family, etc...) circumstances of students they work with.'

As regards this item, the generation of culture based on identity understanding and cooperation and on the expectations of people of other origins constitutes the basis for a training model of teachers (see figure 1). Participants express that such an aspect **needs be included in training programmes for teachers**. Some say that *'some basic notions prove fundamental for teachers' training'*; others that *'I think this should be necessarily included in teachers' training'*. They assume that such a necessity comes

from *'the fact that sometimes you just don't know to react before particular situations or students' attitudes of different cultural backgrounds due to the diversity of habits and behaviours.*

Some University teachers and students participating in debate groups are quite critical when they assess that the intercultural education has disappeared in some educational programmes or are only treated transversally in Early Education classes:

'I find it is fundamental. In the ULE (University of León, Spain), we had an Intercultural Education subject, but it is no longer offered. What a pity'.

'During the Education Certification, I think I only had a few hints in one or two subjects (though no specific subject was provided on that). I presented my final Certification work and other free-topic research on intercultural education because I felt very much interested in that subject'.

All participants consider the understanding and identity cooperation with people of diverse origins to be fundamental in all professions, as **it is essential to improve humanistic training in our globalized world.**

Another very much discussed aspect among participant regarding the professional identity dimension, was that of whether the analysis of the interaction between people of diverse cultures was fundamental for teachers' professional development (see figure1). We have extracted some literal sentences that summarize the answers given. All participants considered unanimously that **interacting with people of different cultures derived into some personal enrichment and development.** They asserted that *'the presence within the group of diverse cultures was felt positively because it accounted for both teachers and students' development'.* *'Whenever a cultural exchange is provided, personal development occurs. The presence of people of diverse origins is directly linked to personal growth and to professional development too'.*

They also considered that it helps widen and improve professional competencies 'because teachers are provided with more educational tools to act' and 'since the acquisition of improved knowledge in any environment actually increments teachers' cultural and professional background'.

For students and teachers implied in the present research, the analysis of such an interaction **favours communication and provides a positive training environment.**

In this dimension, we asked them to: Describe an experience you heard of/ you used that improved teachers' comprehension and openness on dialogue and understanding between people and cultures, showing a proper training of teachers (see figure 1). Here are a few answers provided: **Cooperative work and practice within the class**

A student of Muslim origin had difficulties to express (when he started with us). He had a different culture, a different way to relate with people. We designed activities to promote relationships with his fellows and, at the end of the semester, he managed to become completely independent. He did not need help from the teacher anymore since his classmates helped spontaneously to overcome obstacles'.

University teachers participating in the present research commented that, in most cases, they develop inter-university collaborative works with other countries apart from fomenting **Teachers' International Exchange Programmes:**

'In Brazil, the Academic International Program for Scientific Mobility (PCSF): All students found interesting to adapt some activities included in the subject and provide for an improved acquisition of competences because it presented a training interest for foreign students and could be adapted to their countries of origin. This actually contributed to the cultural and training enrichment of both groups'.

'A cooperation between teachers from the Universidad de León, Spain (ULE) and the Xiangtan University, China, was set up to train Chinese students both in Spain and in their country of origin by teachers moved from the ULE to train them'.

Most participants have experienced or heard of experiences where teachers have adapted the ethic-axiological contents and strategies to diverse cultures within the group:

'We organised sequenced remote work during a whole year for a gypsy student living with seasonal working parents. We knew from the start, the lecturing periods he could attend school, and planned the rest to do remote sessions'.

'During the Ramadan, we need adapt, most especially because at the end of the month, students have been fasting for long, so we alleviate the work and provide for exams once the Ramadan is over'.

Finally, some Secondary Education teachers express they participated in training courses on intercultural education organised by the Spanish Ministry of Education.

3.2.2. Ethics

Teachers and students participating in the research groups and interviews, comment on the item: Teachers' training be oriented to foster empathy and emotional cooperation with people of diverse cultural origins that are represented in the group (see figure 2). The analysis of their answers summarizes in the following aspects: Teachers **need to always find some emotional connection with people participating in the educational community. Empathy improves comprehension and the resolution of complex situations.** Some commented that:

'I believe that teachers need to find some emotional connection and feel empathy is a personal tool they can use in their daily work'.

'In my opinion, teachers need get oriented towards empathy and emotional cooperation, to attend all students without bias. Personal and individual contexts sometimes require more attention than other socio-cultural ones'.

Most of them consider education to be a personal formative project where all actors need be reflected, and they express it as follows:

'Activity within the class is a social activity that implies empathy and emotional connection with people with the same or different culture, religion...; this is why teachers' training needs fundamentally to include personal resources allowing for some emotional connection between people sharing the same professional activity.'

About whether the moral sense of the educational practice has to be integrated into teachers' model of professional development to foment dialogue and integrative education, participants in the present research express they fully agree and consider that it **foments teachers' competence to be a mediator and generate inclusion contexts** (see figure 2): *'whatever the subject, teachers must assume their conciliating role to promote respect towards other cultures (including the less represented ones within the group) to attain a full integration and participation of students'.*

'As commented before, I don't believe that the improvement of intercultural relationships is to be 'pushed' as compulsory basic within teachers' curriculum. Such a training transcends the teaching profession and has to be considered as a preparation for social individuals.'

They also underline that teachers need be aware of the ethical value of such a cultural understanding considering that:

'In many cases, teachers act mistakenly with students of diverse origins, because they have no idea about how to proceed. If we had a sound training in these aspects, I believe, everything could go smoothly, and we would face less problems in the class.'

This statement coincides with answers given to questions included in other dimensions and affirms the need for an inclusion of these aspects of dialogue and intercultural understanding in the initial and permanent training of teachers.

We asked teachers and students to discuss on **the values the teachers needed to get trained on to foment dialogue and intercultural understanding** (see figure 2). All participants agreed that the main value to be fostered was the **empathy**:

'To be able to identify others as equals: an image in my mirror.' 'Putting yourself in someone else's shoes and understand how they feel and are confronted to cultural shocks is basic for integration.'

The analysis of answers showed that for participants, this value (empathy) is giving way to others that are equally important and fundamental to foment the progress and understanding between cultures: **equity, ability to listen, open-minded capacity to learn the way people of different origins feel and think, solidarity and respect**:

'We need understand different cultures, habits, thoughts, beliefs and lifestyles.'

'We need to learn and respect the values linked to other cultures though to do so we need to get to know them, this is our first task to perform.'

'To develop our emotional intelligence in all its dimensions and be conscious of the importance of our non-verbal language (apart from our verbal one).'

'The best and most important opening up is when I become aware of how I learn and improve. This is when I start to appreciate diversity.'

3.2.3. Professional commitment

Like for the previous dimension, we collected abundant comments from the teachers and students participating in the study for this dimension (see figure 3). The item on whether the culture inside the schools had to promote the inclusiveness and respect towards cultural identities, we underline the importance of those related to the needs for an improved **reflexion of the commitment level of the educational institutions to foment permanent training of teachers in this aspect**. Some students considered that *'the level of commitment inside the institutions was actually far from reaching an open dialogue and close understanding with each culture. The institutions must be conscious of their educational discourse and programs.'*

'Providing an adequate training for teachers allows for a positive conception of cultural diversity where schools provide space for dialogue between socially and culturally diverse groups favouring authentic equity and opportunities for all. Not only does the teaching-learning function transmit contents but also values and attitudes that can be culturally specific but that can be shared by other cultures too.'

About the actions and practices performed by teachers to answer their own professional training needs using dialogue between diverse cultures (see figure 3), participants consider as essential the expertise in other languages, lifestyles and cultural habits, the development of projects where the whole educational community is implied, the use of IT, the shared experiences between teachers and, most of all, the inclusion of ERASMUS students in universities:

'We used a flipped classroom methodology where three Erasmus students from Argelia, presented orally the cattle-raising industry of their region and explained its cultural importance. They explained the essential role played by the halal rules (animal throat cut in a single swipe to drain blood out of the carcass before it is allowed for food) as the sole lawful practice before human consumption.'

'The "Viva la diferencia" Project was carried out with teachers and students of Secondary Education and Primary Education centres. Performed with the help of the ACCEM Association (NGO). The objectives of the project versed on interculturality, global diversity - stereotypes, languages, habits, prejudice...'

Some university students expressed they had never had any experience of such practices and had not heard of one either: 'I don't know any program attending specific training in these fields at university. I heard of some developed by teachers in lower grades (primary and secondary education) like conferences or chats on the gipsies.'

3.2.4. Methodological

The answers given by participants on whether teachers had to build up an integrated methodological system to answer the diversity of cultural expectations of students show they fully agree to the **cultures presenting some specificities that are to be considered when preparing the methodological approach of subjects** (see figure 4):

'The introduction of contents related to diverse cultures means avoiding subjects that can be quite upsetting or designing activities where students of different origins play a role. These are some examples of simple methodological modifications that allow for an improved comfort inside the class.'

Such an expression is directly linked to the fact that **teachers must consider all students' expectations inside the group**, according to the participants of our research:

'Teachers understand that, from a methodological point of view, all students are different so, why not considering the existing cultural diversities in the same class? All concepts might not be represented fully perhaps but some consensus can be found or some improved methodological planning accounting for cultural aspects represented in the group.'

In this way, they consider that a **quality-based education must be adapted to students' needs** and: 'that a methodological system considering the cultural diversity in the group is an added value for all. Because, the final aim is to raise society and individuals, personally and professionally.'

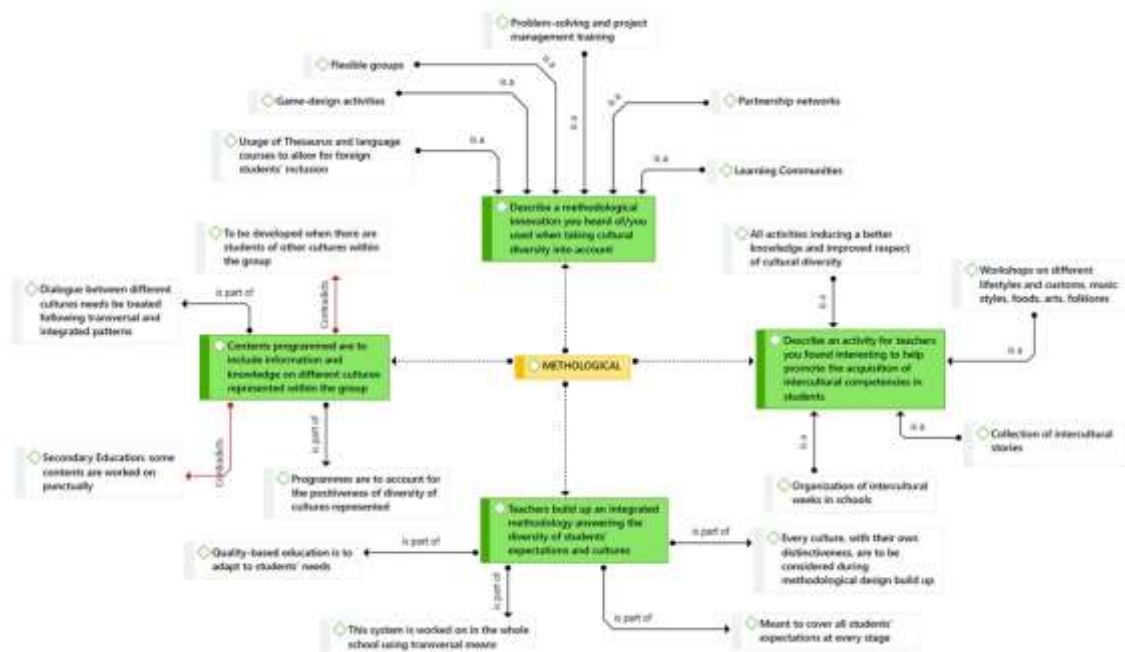


Figure 4. Semantic network of methodological dimension.

The answers provided by the interviews and the focus groups all consider **that the system needs be worked upon transversally by the whole school:**

‘The understanding and dialogue between all cultures is a resource that needs be worked on. Because there are more unifying aspects than differentiating ones. People of diverse cultural origins can live together and, this is where a methodological system plays its part while integrating diversity in the whole educational practice.’

‘It is fundamental. We need to work transversally in all areas and use diverse methodologies.’

In the same way, they also underline that **educational planning need include contents referring to the diversity of cultures**, and that ‘*there are actually some contents on these subjects, but they are only worked on punctually and only linked to some particular areas*’. They point out that knowledge on **cultural diversity is only examined when such a diversity is present in the group**, though:

‘Whether there are or not students of different cultures, the inclusion of such contents in the planning is essential. These basic knowledge about diverse cultures need be included (or, at least, about those most represented in the country) to widen teachers’ educational perspectives.’

The following items are analysed jointly due to the similarity of answers given by participants: describe an educational activity you consider/you know of that can be of help to promote the acquisition of intercultural competencies in students and describe an innovative concept you know or have put into practice to improve cultural diversity understanding inside the group (see figure 4):

Use of a Thesaurus and of a linguistic adaptation to ease students’ inclusion. However, one participant considered such adaptations as ‘*non adequate in primary education and early education and restrain students’ attention. The attention of these students could be partially taken care of inside the school by specialised teams*’.

They also value positively the use of active methodologies like problem-solving or project-based techniques, role-playing, flexible focus groups, networks and learning communities. Other important activities for them are the workshops, intercultural weeks with the whole community participating: families, students, teachers and, in general, all persons fomenting the knowledge and respect of diverse cultures.

3.3. Complementarity of Quantitative and Qualitative Data

After performing a qualitative and quantitative analysis of data, we conducted a complementarity of data, obtained for each dimension (see tables 4, 5, 6 and 7).

Table 4. Complementarity of methods: Professional Identity Dimension.

P R O F E S S I O N A L	Qualitative Analysis (results, interviews, focus groups)	Quantitative Analysis (questionnaire results)
	When professional identity is consolidated, the personal and professional self-concept are improved too. Teachers cannot be solely a transmitter of knowledge. 'The educational practice includes many factors and demands the integral and cultural understanding of every student'.	The needs for teachers' competence in migrant identity is confirmed. The average obtained is 5.15.
	Teachers' function is to be clearly defined to confront cultural diversity contexts and apprehend his/her vocation positively. Every teacher must understand and consider the (cultural, social, and family) circumstances of students.	The analysis of interaction between people of diverse cultures is fundamental for teachers to develop professionally (.70) factor weight. The average obtained is 5.09
	The basis for educational innovative models is to be the empowerment of teachers to understand and consider other cultures. 'Since we have no idea sometimes about how to proceed when attending students of other cultural origins.'	Cultural diversity presents vast challenges and teachers need to get the necessary knowledge and analytic competences on this (.77) The average obtained is 5.27
	Teachers must get specific training on dialogue with other cultures. 'Some Universities do not include anymore this dimension in their educational planning (intercultural dialogue, professional identity)'. They underline the necessity for some humanistic competence to improve Identity since the interaction with other cultures is the basis for personal development. 'With cultural exchange, people are enriched'. Collaborative work inside the group is improving professional identity and eases understanding with other cultures. 'The promotion of relationships between students of diverse cultural origins enhances students' independence'. University Exchanges (ERASMUS program) have helped foment dialogue and professional/personal identities within universities. 'The Exchange of experiences at university has improved the identity and increased the reciprocity'. 'Teachers adapt contents and teaching-learning strategies to cultural diversity. 'During the Ramadan, we adapt the works and exams. 'Sometimes, teachers escort mistakenly students of other cultures due to their lack of knowledge'.	The dialogical principle needs be worked on by every teacher, due to its impact on the improvement of relationships with other cultures (.79) The direct average obtained is of 5.39 The understanding between people of diverse cultural origins needs be worked on by teachers and be considered as a priority objective (0.83) factor weight and average of 5.09. Teachers' training in the social relationships comprehension with diverse cultures is essential. Weight for factor is .80. Average obtained 5.39.

Table 5. Complementarity of Methods: Ethical Dimension.

E T H	Teachers need to develop an emotional connection with all people participating in the educational community and institutions.	Teachers must be trained to understand the sense of dialogue between cultures during the teaching-learning process. Value obtained for this is factor is .78, and average is of 4.91.
	'I believe that teachers need to find some emotional connection and be empathetic. This is essential to develop the learning-teaching process'.	

I C A L	Education is embodied in a personal training project where all participants must play their part.	Teachers' training in dialogue between diverse cultures at school.
	'We need to make sure they learn how to use personal resources to connect emotionally with others'.	Result obtained with factor analysis is .74. The average obtained is 5.03.
	Teachers must learn how to mediate and generate contexts allowing for inclusion. 'They need to assume a conciliating role, respect all cultures, and integrate this in their subjects'.	Knowledge on migrants' issues is to be at the very base of models and actions for improved professional developments. Value obtained is of .78, for the corresponding factor.
	The most valued aspect to foment dialogue and intercultural understanding is that of empathy. 'It is basic for the integration of people to be able to put oneself in the others' shoes and try to understand how they feel'.	Values and lifestyles of migrant people need be represented and considered during school activities. The result obtained is of .74. The average obtained is 4.48.
	Equity, ability to listen, openness, cultural solidarity and respect are essential values to foment dialogue and intercultural understanding. 'True openness and, most important, being conscious of our non-verbal language, together with our verbal language, to enhance personal enrichment and the full knowledge of diversity.'	Generating a culture that is based on understanding, identity cooperation and migrants' expectations. Weight obtained for the factor is .77. The average obtained is 4.48

Table 6. Complementarity of Methods: Professional Commitment Dimension.

	Qualitative analysis	Quantitative Analysis
P R O F E S S I O N A L	Participants express the level of commitment of Institutions is adequate to improve teachers' training, though some feel differently: 'Right now, openness and dialogue or intercultural understanding are not on the agenda.' 'Some cultural groups restrain others'. Joint work must be performed between directors, administrations, families, teachers, and students. 'Collaborative work and joint accounts of experiences between teachers needs be fomented.' The integral education of people is to be enhanced from a cultural diversity point of view to attend the specificity of every culture. 'We must endeavour to understand and integrate culturally different people. This means we, as teachers, have to develop professionally and personally.' The initial training of teachers must integrate subjects versing on dialogue and intercultural understanding. 'No doubt that working with people of diverse origins enhances our professional culture.'	The culture of institutions must promote the inclusion and respect of migrant identities. Weight for this factor is lower than .64, though its average is one of the highest registered (5.33). Teachers consider interculturality as an integral educational function for families and students. Weight for the factor is of .76. Average of 4.82.
	The teaching-learning process must adapt to the dialogue between students and teachers. 'Dialogue is essential and generates closeness and trust. This is necessary to develop adequate and formative teaching-learning process'. 'We need teaching-learning formative process to foment places where socially and culturally different groups converse.'	The teaching-learning process must adapt dialogue between teachers and students. Weight obtained for this factor is .64 and average obtained is 5.31 (one of the highest for this competence).

E N T	<p>The training actions performed by teachers need to promote their professional developments and dialogue with diverse cultures. Knowledge of other languages is fundamental.</p> <p>'Use of a flipped classroom methodology. Students from Argelia speak about how to improve the cattle-raising activities in their country. They evaluate concrete actions like the actual slaughter rules of animals.'</p> <p>Some university teachers declare they have not experienced or heard of any dialogue between cultures-based practices used to improve their professional development.</p> <p>'I haven't heard of any specific training fomenting dialogue between cultures at university though I had experiences at previous educational stages.'</p>	<p>Teachers widen their professional culture when fomenting the integral education of people and their cultural diversity. Factor weight obtained is of .91. The average obtained is 5.21</p> <p>Teachers related their professional development with that of migrants represented in the school groups.</p> <p>Factor weight is .70, The average obtained is 4.2.</p>
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Table 7. Complementarity of Methods: Methodological Dimension.

	Qualitative Analysis	Quantitative Analysis
M E T H O D O L O G I C A L	<p>Cultures show some specificities that need be attended from a methodological design point of view. 'We can select contents related to the diversity of cultures and design activities that respect and are adapted to students, while considering their cultural specificity'.</p>	<p>The ethical and cultural dimension must be included in the transversal way planning and educational agendas are established by schools (question 38). The value obtained after factorial analysis performed is of .78 The average obtained is 5.09.</p>
	<p>To attend all students' expectations inside the group. 'Why not considering all cultural diversities represented inside the group?'</p>	<p>The attention to the cultural diversity of students' needs be represented at all fundamental stages of the teaching-learning process. Value obtained after factorial analysis is .80 The average obtained is 5.24.</p>
	<p>Quality education must be adapted to students' needs. 'We need to develop a methodological system that considers the cultural diversity inside the class as an added value.'</p>	<p>Teachers need to favour the experiences and active exploration using works performed by focus groups. Value obtained with factorial analysis is .63, one of the lowest weights for this factor. The average obtained with the descriptive analysis is 5.48.</p>
	<p>The development of a methodological system, that is performed transversally and is assumed by the whole educational community. 'A methodological system that considers diversity has to be part of the educational practice'.</p>	<p>Teachers must build an integrated methodological system that answers the students' diversity of expectations and cultural issues. Factor weight obtained is of .87, one of the highest for this component. The average obtained is 5.30.</p>
	<p>Planning need to integrate contents on cultural diversity knowledge. 'The inclusion of contents based on cultural diversity knowledge is productive because it provides teachers with other tools.'</p>	<p>When facing multicultural contexts, teachers need to set up an educational design that considers students' significant cultural contexts. Factorial analysis evidences a value of .91, the highest value observed for variables of this factor. The average obtained in the descriptive analysis is 5.38.</p>
	<p>Use of a THESAURUS and linguistic adapted classes to foment students' inclusion. 'Some participants disagree on the linguistic</p>	

<p>introduction classes for early and primary education groups’.</p> <p>Active methodologies and support provided during workshops and cultural weeks. ‘The implication of families and teachers in the respect and intercultural understanding-based activities is essential.’</p>	<p>Fomenting the intercultural dialogue implies that teachers must consider the social contexts of groups: values, beliefs, habits, and expectations.</p> <p>Value obtained with the factorial analysis is of .86</p> <p>The average obtained in the descriptive analysis is 5.41</p>
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The information gathered confirmed the high rating obtained by the presented competencies in the answers given by many educational and intercultural environments experts.

Findings on the Professional Identity competence assessment evidence that it comes top of the list with most values reaching 5 points on a maximum scale of 6; some reaching 5,39 like those corresponding to the ‘dialogical principle’. This competence is considered of high impact to promote adequate relationships between people and cultures; the competence reaches 21,6% in terms of total variance explained.

The other competencies get similar percentages with 19,5 and 19,04%. The answers gathered and the explicit analysis of focus groups and interviews underline that the educational practice demands a wide knowledge of people, communities, culture, and group plurality when teaching. Participants express that teachers are often confronted to contexts where the cultural diversity is present. They are supposed to make decisions that are coherent with the improvement of professional identity, the use of raised ethical competencies and a high knowledge of practical methods to foment dialogue, accounts, case studies, problem-solving learning and the generation of methodological systems that are integrated into and adapted to cultural plurality, while being empathic with the demands issued by different communities and intercultural environments.

4. Discussion and conclusions

The theoretical substantiation presented in the present article and, most of all, the contributions by [57], have underlined the relevance of qualitative research centred on the appropriateness and suitability of data gathered from the investigation events. These have helped deepen the analysis of the training activities, their significance and search for values in diverse cultures.

Research centred on the intercultural education development [58, 33, 1, 6], confirm that teachers’ training in intercultural competencies is fundamental for modern educational frameworks. Such contributions also underline the relevance of competencies like the professional identity, ethics, integral commitment, and methodology, which is in concordance with findings by other previous research carried on the subject.

In the line of previous research, [9, 54, 14, 18, 68], 31], our widely reviewed findings -derived from the descriptive-explanatory analysis and the factorial analysis- on the professional identity competence, confirm the importance of this particular competence in culturally diverse educational contexts.

The item (35) also raises the basis for an adequate development of reflexive teaching, with two particular lines of interest for our research: the Identity of teachers towards education and students’ implication during the innovative educational process. The need to research on and foment the emergence of new findings from teachers’ experiences and training on intercultural dialogue and understanding [38, 23].

The professional identity competence was highly rated and valued by teachers participating in our questionnaire and focus groups. They considered such a competence as a basis and complement to foment interculturality, coinciding with results of other previous research (40),(42),(41). Previous findings by [6: 14] were confirmed: ‘The selection of most formative experiences by every teacher is to be part of the reflection and professional development process’. This was evidenced in focus groups and interviews too. Finally, we wish to point out a coincidence of results with [37], where the socialization process provided by teachers’ trainers and its impact on future educational

professionals is highly rated, and considered as a basis to build up their professional identity competence.

The ethic-axiological competence included in the present study focusses markedly on the need for teachers to assume new challenges to recover values like: equity, justice, non-discrimination and stereotype overcome, as cited in previous works [69, 48 32]. We need to point out that such a challenge implies an intense ethical commitment with cultural diversity, that is to be supported by new values enhancing dialogue and renewing the dialogical principle in coherence with suggestions made by [9]. The integral commitment competence has enhanced an open vision and complicity towards the eco-training and sustainable ecology, with high ratings obtained by the corresponding factor. Apart from one question, the group has obtained a high value in coherence with previous works and visions [44, 56, 62, 63]. These altogether underline the essential significance of respect and understanding towards cultural diversity and environmental-ecological issues generated by diverse cultures, for ecological values themselves.

The complementarity between the investigated competencies an intercultural education is enhanced due to the impact of the methodological competence and its potential assets on significance, dialogue, and cultural understanding. As showed in research [70, 34, 59, 57, 54, 58], where participants coincide in the needs to use holistic and integrated methods to consolidate and provide new horizons for the development of the intercultural competence.

Our conclusions meet those marked by the essential objectives of the ComProfesu and the Universidad Católica de Santiago de Guayaquil-UCSG (Ecuador) projects. These have issued teachers' training models that are based on dialogue, cultural understanding, and didactic harmony between teachers in High Schools and Universities.

The objectives marked by our study, were reached with the generation of professional development models based on competencies and the evidence of the added value of the dialogue and intercultural understanding competence. We hereby underline the high values obtained in most questions – with a total of five and six points, in a 1 to 6 points scale-. Showing a wide acceptance of the professional development model offered from competencies, most particularly those concerning the identity and professional commitment.

The explained variance (79,3), obtained for the four selected competencies and their contribution to the progress and consolidation of 'intercultural dialogue and understanding', confirms the needs for models to be designed to enhance teachers' professional development and integral qualification in competences. The intercultural competence is considered as a priority in our modern and complex world.

We have set up a group of methods, tasks, didactic interactions events and integral development network (RIAICES, 2020), that account for the necessary work and evaluation on the dialogic principle and intercultural understanding of participants. These are reflected in didactic interaction perspectives newly developed by groups, communities and settings open to complexity [71, 64, 65]. These tools represent intelligent contexts and new environments where the eco-training, cultural dialogue and sustainable ecology are concretely developed with total emotional harmony and deep empathy (24)Medina Domínguez, 2015).

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