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Translating Intercultural Bilingual Education into Practice:
The Rights of Indigenous Peoples in Mexico City
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Abstract

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Historically, education has been used as a tool of assimilation towards Indigenous Peoples. Representing a shift away from this, in recent years, many countries in Latin America have adopted Intercultural Bilingual Education, promoting Indigenous Peoples’ rights to education in their languages and respective to their cultures. Mexico in particular, establishes Intercultural Bilingual Education as a right of all Indigenous Peoples in various laws and the Constitution of Mexico City protects this right for its Indigenous population. This study investigates the extent to which Indigenous Peoples’ rights to education, as outlined in international human rights instruments and reinforced in Mexican law, are implemented in Mexico City, accounting for its growing urban Indigenous population. Through semi-structured interviews with government officials as well as with directors and teachers from a public primary school in Mexico City, this study illustrates the role the state and educators play in the implementation of Intercultural Bilingual Education. The findings presented in the study suggest the significance of Indigenous Peoples and educators in this process, in comparison with the Mexican government, whose improved measures can help increase urban Indigenous students’ access to their education rights.

Keywords: Indigenous Peoples’ Rights, Intercultural Bilingual Education, Urban Areas, Mexico
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Dedication

Para honrar a Juan Cervantes Quezada que está en el cielito lindo y siempre estará en nuestros corazones.

And for the rest of my loving family, especially the educator, the entrepreneur, and the engineer,

who push me to give my best back to this world.
Introduction

Colonization and years of state assimilationist education policies have threatened the future of many Indigenous languages globally. UNESCO estimates nearly half of the Indigenous languages in the world will disappear by 2050.\(^1\) Mexico, the country with the greatest linguistic diversity in Latin America, is home to 68 Indigenous languages and 364 variants that are at risk.\(^2\) Indigenous Peoples and language speakers in Mexico make up a significant percentage of the population. One out of five Mexicans identify as Indigenous and about 15\% of Mexicans identify as Indigenous language speakers.\(^4\) Today, the rights of these Indigenous Peoples to education in their language, which promotes linguistic development and strengthening for the future, are protected by international and national law.


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\(^3\) All relevant sources, including primary texts and interviews, throughout this study were translated from Spanish to English by the author.

in education and to education in their language and respective of their cultures. They also establish state responsibility to collaborate with Indigenous Peoples in order to uphold these rights. Mexico, home to the largest number of Indigenous languages in Latin America, has endorsed and ratified these instruments, of which, certain provisions are reflected in its Intercultural Bilingual Education policy (IBE). In 2003, Mexico passed the Law of Linguistic Rights of Indigenous Peoples, which prohibits language discrimination, requires the establishment of IBE programs, to include Indigenous languages and cultures in curriculum, as well as train IBE teachers across the country. In 2014, Mexico incorporated these IBE provisions in its Constitution, Law of Education and Law of the Rights of Children and Adolescents.

Mexico’s IBE policy has historically targeted monolingual rural Indigenous communities, however, urban Indigenous communities in Mexico are growing. Due to globalization and encroachment on Mexico’s fields, in recent years the living conditions of many Indigenous Peoples

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7 Ibid.


9 del Río Martínez et al., "Panorama Educativo 2015 (Education Panorama 2015)”, 32.

have been destabilized, forcing them to migrate to cities.\textsuperscript{11} In Mexico today, 40\% of all Indigenous People live in urban areas.\textsuperscript{12} Moreover, 25\% of Indigenous language-speaking school-aged children (3-17) live in urban areas.\textsuperscript{13} UNICEF however found that while the number of Indigenous children and youth grow in cities, fewer speak their languages.\textsuperscript{14} Simultaneously, there is a shortage of Indigenous language materials and Indigenous language-speaking educators in cities.\textsuperscript{15} Likely for this reason, the majority of studies on Indigenous education in Mexico are concentrated in rural areas.\textsuperscript{16} Some question the extent to which IBE efforts in Mexico include urban Indigenous communities.\textsuperscript{17}

Mexico City has the highest urban Indigenous population in the country, nearly half a million people, who speak 55/68 of the total Indigenous languages spoken in Mexico.\textsuperscript{18} In 2016, the Constitution of Mexico City established IBE as the right of Indigenous Peoples living in the

\begin{thebibliography}{9}
\bibitem{Schmelkes2016} Schmelkes, “Educación Para un México Intercultural (Education for an Intercultural Mexico),” 10.
\bibitem{Horbath2016} Horbath, “De La Marginación (From Marginalization)”, 146.
\bibitem{Ibid} Ibid, 145.
\end{thebibliography}
This study therefore investigates the extent to which IBE in Mexico City has been implemented, upholding the rights of Indigenous Peoples, including those living outside their communities and in urban areas, to education in their language and culture. The Literature Review includes an overview of the history of Intercultural Bilingual Education in Latin America and Mexico followed by highlights from studies on IBE implementation in Mexico. It highlights the lack of studies in urban areas, such as Mexico City, as well as investigation of the government’s role, a gap which this study aims to fill. The Methodologies explains this study’s research design and interview subjects as well as the sets of standards or indicators used to analyze the findings. State Measures: Including (Urban) Indigenous Peoples in Intercultural Bilingual Education examines the state measures to ensure IBE, describing the work of three main government agencies charged with IBE development, examining how their work addresses the education of Indigenous students in the surrounding schools of Mexico City in comparison with those in rural Indigenous communities. Additionally, it considers the state’s obligation to collaborate with Indigenous Peoples, looking at the role they play in these agency efforts. IBE in Practice: Case Study of a Cuauhtémoc Primary School illustrates an exemplary IBE implementation model educators are using in a public primary school, with a majority Indigenous student population, in the Cuauhtémoc borough of Mexico City. This section highlights successes and challenges of the school, demonstrating the role educators play as implementers of IBE. Finally, Challenges and Recommendations for IBE in Mexico City considers the findings from the previous sections and identifies challenges in translating IBE policy into practice to ultimately identify and offer recommendations for the improvement of urban Indigenous Peoples’ access to IBE in Mexico City.

City. Overall this study considers the elements necessary to ensure urban Indigenous students have access to their rights, as outlined in Mexican national law and international standards of Indigenous Peoples rights to education.

The following questions helped frame this study: To what extent does Mexico’s Intercultural Bilingual Education (IBE) policy uphold international standards for Indigenous Peoples' education rights? How do state measures ensure IBE accounts for Indigenous Peoples participation and perspectives? To what extent has the policy been implemented Mexico City? In what ways are Indigenous languages and cultures present in schools and incorporated in the classroom?
Section I: Intercultural Bilingual Education (IBE)

Literature Review

This literature review is divided into three sections: The first section reviews the history of Intercultural Bilingual Education (IBE) policy in Latin America and Mexico; The second section reviews literature on the application of IBE across Mexico; The third section reviews literature related to Indigenous education and IBE in Mexico’s urban areas.

History of IBE in Latin American and Mexico

Today, in Mexico, Intercultural Bilingual Education (IBE) may be used interchangeably with Indigenous bilingual education and describes a policy that exists in many Latin American countries, which seeks to provide a public education that includes Indigenous languages and cultures in curricula. Many view IBE as promoting Indigenous Peoples’ linguistic and cultural rights as well as a promising tool for improving achievement of Indigenous students. However, Lopez (2009), Lopez et al. (2008), Hamel (2008) and de la Peña (2006) argue that IBE is rooted in assimilation. De La Peña covers the history of the Indigenismo policy, a populist concept, from nineteenth century Latin America, and reveals its aim to end Indigenous oppression by incorporating Indigenous Peoples into the dominant society though “fusion with the white settlers”


to “consolidate a nation with common beliefs, ideas and purpose”. During that time in Mexico, Spanish was assumed as the national language and in various institutions, used as a tool for linguistic and cultural integration.

Mexico, next to Peru, has the longest history of Indigenous bilingual education. Lopez et al. (2008) claim that early forms of IBE began with the Summer Institute of Linguistics established in the 1930’s to translate the Bible to Indigenous languages, however with the aim of evangelization and assimilation. According to Lopez (2009), in the 1940's, linguists led Indigenous bilingual education efforts in Indigenous communities. In the next few decades, as IBE expanded to educational institutions, Hamel (2008) contends it took the form of “transitional programs” or “Castilinization”, in which the Indigenous languages were permitted until Indigenous students were proficient enough in Spanish to transition to Spanish-only studies. Lopez et al. (2008) asserts that as a result of Indigenous movements in Latin America in the 1970’s and 1980’s (i.e. Zapatistas in Mexico), which demanded new relationships with the state, there

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26 López et al., “Intercultural Bilingual Education”, 296.

27 Lopez, “Reaching the Unreached”, 8.

28 Hamel, “Bilingual Education”, 316.
was a positive shift away from *Indigenismo*, allegedly driving many transitional Indigenous bilingual education programs towards “Maintenance and Development” programs.\(^29\)

In 1978, Mexico established the General Direction of Indigenous Education and in the 1990’s it adopted the Intercultural Bilingual Education approach calling for the use of Indigenous languages, in addition to Spanish, as the “medium and object” of instruction.\(^30\) Around this time, the National Council for Education Development was created to provide Indigenous language education training and materials to rural primary schools.\(^31\) Later in 2001, the Coordination of Intercultural Bilingual Education was created to promote and evaluate IBE.\(^32\) The same year, the Mexican Constitution was amended recognizing Indigenous Peoples and the pluricultural and plurilingual state of Mexico.\(^33\) In 2003, Mexico passed the General Law of the Linguistic Rights of Indigenous Peoples establishing Indigenous Peoples’ rights to IBE and Mexico’s obligation to create IBE programs and provide trained IBE teachers.\(^34\) And most recently, in 2014, an Amendment to Mexico’s General Law of Education, General Law of the Rights of Children and Adolescents, and Constitution, were passed, incorporating IBE provisions.\(^35\)

Moreover, Mexico has endorsed and ratified multiple international human rights instruments that set standards for Indigenous Peoples' rights to education and emphasize

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\(^29\) López et al., “Intercultural Bilingual Education”, 294.

\(^30\) Hamel, “Bilingual Education”, 318.

\(^31\) Lopez, “Reaching the Unreached”, 34.


\(^33\) Constitución de Ciudad de México (Constitution of Mexico City)”, art. 8.

\(^34\) Ley Derechos Linguísticos, (Law of Linguistic Rights), art. 14.

education in Indigenous languages and cultures, which are reflected in its aforementioned laws. Furthermore, provisions of these instruments, including the Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Convention 169 and the Convention on the Rights of the Child, as well the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples establish the right of Indigenous Peoples to self-determination in such an education.\(^{36}\) Additionally, they declare the state’s responsibility to ensure that all Indigenous Peoples, even those living outside their community, have access to education in their language and culture.\(^{37}\) Employing these instruments ultimately holds Mexico accountable, beyond the discourse of its law, to uphold the rights of Indigenous Peoples through the implementation of IBE.

Magga et al. (2005), Lopez et al. (2008), Cortina (2014), and Skutnabb-Kangas (2010) discuss the relation between IBE in Latin American and the human rights of Indigenous Peoples. Magga et al. (2005) argues that provisions of the aforementioned international human rights instruments demonstrate the link between an Indigenous child’s right to linguistically and culturally relevant education and the dignity and development of Indigenous Peoples.\(^{38}\) Cortina (2014) explains IBE as a human rights tool used to further linguistic and cultural autonomy in Indigenous communities.\(^{39}\) Cortina highlights successful cases of IBE programming to provide curricula, teacher training, and materials for Indigenous cultures and

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\(^{37}\) UN General Assembly, Resolution 61/295.


language education across Latin America, but suggests that Indigenous-led efforts are more widespread and successful than those of the state.\textsuperscript{40} Lopez et al. (2008) explain that despite IBE policies deriving from the state, IBE is still considered "counter-hegemonic," but nevertheless, because it is a “top down” policy, practices are heavily scrutinized.\textsuperscript{41} Consequently, in many studies of IBE, we see investigations that critique the policy and practice.

Critiques of IBE may be related to the history of assimilationist approaches to Indigenous education, such as the \textit{Indigenismo} policy of Mexico. Magga et al. (2005) and Skutnabb-Kangas (2010) offer reasons for these critical analyses of state practices in Indigenous education today.\textsuperscript{42,43} Magga et al. (2005) argues that for Indigenous students, despite efforts to promote incorporation of Indigenous language and culture in the classroom, schooling will often still take a "subtractive" form, in which the teaching medium is a dominant language of the society rather than an Indigenous language, effectively leading to their children being "transferred to the dominant group linguistically and culturally", which leads to language and culture loss for the entire Indigenous community.\textsuperscript{44} Similarly, Skutnabb-Kangas (2010) describes the prevalence of "transitional programmes,” in which even in instances that Indigenous languages are used in the classroom, they are utilized as a tool to transition the Indigenous language students to proficiency in the dominant language.\textsuperscript{45} Skutnabb-Kangas (2010) makes an extensive case that inhibition of

\textsuperscript{40} Ibid, 16-17.

\textsuperscript{41} López et al., “Intercultural Bilingual Education”, 303.


\textsuperscript{43} Magga et al., “Indigenous Children’s Education”, 1.

\textsuperscript{44} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{45} Skutnabb-Kangas, “Linguistic Genocide”, 49.
Indigenous children’s rights to education in their language and culture, “Prohibiting the use of the language of the group in daily intercourse or in schools, or the printing and circulation of publications in the language of the group,” constitutes “cultural genocide”. Magga et al. (2005) and Skutnabb-Kangas (2010) suggest barriers Indigenous students and communities face as a result of flawed Indigenous education policy or implementation thereof.

**Implementation of IBE across Mexico**

Lopez (2009), Lopez et al. (2008), Tapia (2015), and Meyer et al. (2010), would argue that the best efforts made in Indigenous education in Mexico are happening in Indigenous communities. They provide an array of examples. Lopez (2009) highlights that in the Yucatan peninsula, where Maya is the major language, IBE exists through sixth grade. Tapia (2015) discusses the didactic materials and oral Math evaluation created by Mayan communities to avoid using Spanish and standardization of their language. He also discusses the curriculum and assessments created to include the language and cosmovision of P’urepecha communities. According to Meyer et al. (2010), Indigenous teachers from Oaxaca have developed their own methodology and professional development for Indigenous education in their schools. These teachers created a teacher-training program aimed at preparing educators to teach IBE in their

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46 Ibid, 80-82.

47 Lopez, “Reaching the Unreached”, 35.


49 Lois Meyer et al., *New Word of Indigenous Resistance* (San Francisco: City Light Bookstore, 2010), 112.
Furthermore, they established curriculum, up through secondary school, which is taught completely in their language.\textsuperscript{51} Meyer et al. (2010) notes that these efforts were motivated by the teachers’ beliefs that IBE was just “government rhetoric”.\textsuperscript{52}

Lopez (2009), Buenabad (2015), Schmelkes (2013), and Hamel (2001, 2008), all critically investigate the implementation of IBE in Mexico and focus on the role of the teacher. Lopez (2009) asserts the inherent limitations to the implementation of Mexico's EIB policy are due to educators' prejudice views of Indigenous languages.\textsuperscript{53} Buenabad (2015) asserts that while IBE projects exist in Mexico, the application of them is flawed due to a lack of proper teacher training.\textsuperscript{54} Schmelkes (2013) argues that negative perceptions of Indigenous languages are reinforced by an incomplete education policy, under which the national achievement exam (PLANEA), is completely administered in Spanish, despite promotion of Indigenous language education.\textsuperscript{55} Hamel (2008) asserts that in Mexico, Indigenous languages have historically been considered an obstacle to learning Spanish, which is viewed as necessary in order to become "civilized" or "educated".\textsuperscript{56} He and Schmelkes (2013) suggest that for this reason, IBE in Mexico only exists in

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{50} Ibid, 110.
\item \textsuperscript{51} Ibid, 112.
\item \textsuperscript{52} Ibid, 110.
\item \textsuperscript{53} Lopez, “Reaching the Unreached”, 47.
\item \textsuperscript{55} Schmelkes, “Educación Para un México Intercultural (Education for an Intercultural Mexico)”, 11.
\end{itemize}
pre-schools and primary schools, where Indigenous language is "tolerated", until the students learn sufficient Spanish to continue with Spanish-only education through secondary school.\textsuperscript{57,58} These authors ultimately provide a landscape for the role educators may play in the implementation of IBE in Mexico.

Koster (2016) Hamel (2001, 2008, 2012), and Cortina (2016) then provide a landscape for the government’s role in IBE implementation. Koster reports that in 2012 the General Direction of Indigenous Education received 0.06\% of Mexico's overall annual budget and that the Mexican government invested 38 times more in basic education than in Indigenous education, to suggest inadequate and unequal financial support.\textsuperscript{59} Hamel (2008) discusses that while the government produces 28 million free primers for public school students each year, the majority are framed for monolingual Spanish speaking students, particularly in urban settings, thus lacking culturally relevant content for Indigenous students, and cannot be used for bilingual education or teaching Spanish as a second language.\textsuperscript{60} Moreover, Hamel (2008) found that 2.5 millions of these primers are produced in a few Indigenous languages, however are rarely used because teachers either don’t speak an Indigenous language or they lack of adequate training and instruction on how to use them.\textsuperscript{61} Hamel (2012) also alludes to Mexico’s national curriculum model as including "only

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{footnotes}
\item[57] Ibid.
\item[58] Schmelkes, “Educación Para Un México Intercultural (Education for an Intercultural Mexico)'\textsuperscript{a}, 11.
\item[60] Hamel, “Bilingual Education”, 313-315.
\item[61] Ibid, 316.
\end{footnotes}
\end{footnotesize}
slight" adaptations addressing Indigenous language and culture.\textsuperscript{62} Cortina (2016) acknowledges the Mexican government’s efforts in the production of bilingual textbooks in many Indigenous languages, however suggests it is insufficient.\textsuperscript{63} She therefore highlights the “lack of institutional initiatives” to provide teachers with pedagogical models and materials for teaching not just bilingual, but Intercultural Bilingual Education, which calls for equally respecting Spanish and Indigenous languages and cultures and seeks to improve academic achievement of Indigenous children as well as cultural diversity in schools.\textsuperscript{64} Cortina argues that this “lack of economic support and under-investment in [IBE] methodologies”, ultimately inhibits IBE implementation in schools.\textsuperscript{65} These authors suggest limited funding and resources, unaddressed prejudices and lack of proper training provided to teachers and schools with Indigenous students, act as barriers to the implementation of IBE and Indigenous Peoples’ access to education in their language.

Conversely, studies on Mexico’s Intercultural Universities by Schmelkes (2008), Bastida Munoz (2011) and Bertely Busquets (2011) offer more positive findings on state IBE efforts. According to Bertely Busquets (2011), the Intercultural Universities more or less achieve IBE goals, offering entire degrees in Indigenous languages and culture and facilitating exchange of cultures and knowledge, reflecting Mexico’s pluriculturality.\textsuperscript{66} The Intercultural Universities,

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{64} Ibid.
\item \textsuperscript{65} Ibid, 22.
\end{itemize}
which were established in 2003, through law, are aimed at addressing the reality that very few Indigenous students attend university in Mexico.\(^\text{67}\) Today there are 13 universities that have been established in communities with dense Indigenous populations.\(^\text{68}\) Schmelkes explains that these universities are viewed as bilingual or multilingual institutions offering an education opportunity that strengthens the Indigenous languages and cultures of Mexico and forms professionals dedicated to the development of Indigenous communities.\(^\text{69}\) There is even an effort stemming from these universities to develop IBE materials and trainings for primary and secondary schools throughout the country.\(^\text{70}\) According to Bastida Munoz, the universities create strategies and projects on how to incorporate Indigenous knowledge and worldviews into the classroom.\(^\text{71}\) Furthermore, many of these universities offer training programs for students to become educators in Indigenous languages.\(^\text{72}\) The Intercultural University of Veracruz offers Master’s program in intercultural education and the Intercultural University Ayuuk in Oaxaca has


\(^{68}\) Ibid, 2.

\(^{69}\) Ibid, 6.

\(^{70}\) Ibid, 13.


\(^{72}\) Bertely Busquets, “Educación Superior (Higher Education)”, 64.
introduced degrees that work towards the development of oral and written languages.\textsuperscript{73,74} These universities have advanced IBE pedagogies, materials, and trainings and could be a significant player in furthering IBE throughout Mexico, where in primary and secondary schools, IBE appears not nearly as established. However, only a small percentage of Mexico’s Indigenous population attend universities. According to Tapia (2015), of the Indigenous children that attend school, roughly 90% complete primary, 36% complete secondary, while not even 1% attend university.\textsuperscript{75}

The perplexing state of Indigenous education in Mexico has drawn international attention and intervention. UNICEF has conducted multiple investigations and projects on Indigenous education in Mexico and concluded that even despite Mexico's IBE policy, Indigenous illiteracy remains five times higher than that of non-Indigenous populations.\textsuperscript{76} Additionally, UNICEF found that Indigenous students have the highest dropout rates and that the number of Indigenous children that do not attend school is double of non-Indigenous children.\textsuperscript{77} In 2004, UNICEF reported, "illiteracy [of Indigenous children] is a direct result of educational exclusion".\textsuperscript{78} Therefore, under two initiatives from 2008-2018, UNICEF has made efforts to instill urgency in Mexico to address these issues in Indigenous education. The 2008-2013 program was motivated by the alarming

\textsuperscript{73} Ibid, 70.
\textsuperscript{74} Schmelkes, “Las Universidades Interculturales” (The Intercultural Universities)”, 15.
\textsuperscript{75} Tapia, “Evaluations in Mexico”, 16.
\textsuperscript{76} Lopez, “Reaching the Unreached”, 34.
\textsuperscript{78} Magga et al., “Indigenous Children’s Education”, 8.
illiteracy rates among Indigenous students and statistics such that 60% of rural Indigenous-language speaking children five years and older, didn’t have access to quality education.\textsuperscript{79}

In turn, in 2008, UNICEF began a program to address the root causes linked to these statistics identifying the following: discrimination on the basis of ethnicity, the absence of a culturally relevant curriculum, the shortage of educational resources, and the shortage of training and support for teachers in Indigenous communities.\textsuperscript{80} UNICEF also found that Indigenous youth, even when living outside their Indigenous community, have a large sense of cultural identity and that for many, school represents a distant place, unrelated to their everyday lives and identities.\textsuperscript{81} The targets of UNICEF’s programs furthermore suggest the areas in which IBE in Mexico may be deficient.

\textbf{IBE and Indigenous Education in Mexico’s Urban Areas}

In a 2013 UNICEF report on the experiences of Indigenous youth in 13 states in Mexico, studies showed that the majority of its subjects, especially those who lived in urban areas, indicated that speaking their Indigenous language was a source of stigma, discrimination and embarrassment.\textsuperscript{82} UNICEF found that in the case of Raramuri, who in recent years have migrated in large numbers to the capital city of Chihuahua, youth are prohibited from speaking their language and outright denied education in their language.\textsuperscript{83} According to Schmelkes, (2013) often

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{79} Cortez Vazquez, “Buenas Prácticas Sobre Educación Indígena (Good Practices of Indigenous Education)”, 9 .
  \item \textsuperscript{80} Ibid, 9.
  \item \textsuperscript{81} Ibid, 14-15.
  \item \textsuperscript{82} Bertely Busquets et al., “Adolescentes Indígenas” (Indigenous Adolescents), 28.
  \item \textsuperscript{83} Ibid, 57-62.
\end{itemize}
in cities, teachers have not been trained to deal with the increasing multicultural reality, often do not even realize that they have students from different cultural origins, and that when students talk in a different language or in poor Spanish, some teachers reprimand them.\(^{84}\) According to Koster (2016), the National Council for Education Development (CONAFE), from which the majority of national IBE efforts have historically derived, does not take into account (i.e. offers services for) Indigenous children that migrate from their communities.\(^{85}\)

Czarny (2017), Rebolledo (2007), Hortbath (2013), Garcia (2016), and Villanueva (2008), conducted studies on Indigenous education in urban Mexican primary schools, looking at discrimination and exclusion. Czarny (2017) argues that only in a few instances has Indigenous education or IBE reached urban Indigenous populations, offering the Intercultural Universities, community high schools and select programs in Mexico City as examples.\(^{86}\) Czarny discusses how IBE began to reach urban communities in the late 90’s as a result of policies aimed at providing programs to “migrating Indigenous Peoples” as well as a result of Indigenous efforts to promote autonomy, such as the Assembly of Indigenous Migrants have demanded in Mexico City.\(^{87}\) Nevertheless Czarny’s study reveals one of the greatest tendencies among teachers in urban areas is the belief that teachers and administrators hold, that education is not important to Indigenous families or communities, that have “low expectations” for their children, and thus adopt the same


\(^{85}\) Köster, “Educación asequible, accesible, aceptable y adaptable (Affordable, Accessible, Acceptable and Adaptable)”, 47.


\(^{87}\) Ibid, 492.
She highlights this as a barrier to intercultural education in Mexico City along with the difficulty teachers and directors have in recognizing their Indigenous students, which she says can lead to them being perceived as having differences that are “problematic for learning” or can lead to their “invisibility” in the classroom and school.\(^89\)

As the studies of Horbath (2013), Garcia (2016), and Villanueva (2008) confirm, Czarny (2017) argues that one great issue with urban Indigenous education is that only a few Mexican cities, such as Mexico City, Merida, and Puebla City, acknowledge their Indigenous communities.\(^90\) And, to make matters worse, there is limited data on Indigenous children in urban public schools.\(^91\) Horbath (2013) conducted a study in major cities in the Mexican states of Campeche, Chiapas, Quintana Roo, Yucatan, and Tabasco, in which he looked at the educational experience of primary Indigenous students, who had migrated to the cities with their families.\(^92\) Horbath (2013) reported low academic achievement rates, discrimination and absences due to familial work obligations.\(^93\) Garcia (2016) also conducted a study in Puebla city, in which she investigated educators’ behaviors towards Indigenous migrant students, who she found faced segregation in schools due to absence of classes in their languages as well as Indigenous language-speaking educators.\(^94\) While Mexico

\(^{88}\) Ibid, 497.

\(^{89}\) Ibid, 496-497.

\(^{90}\) Ibid, 492

\(^{91}\) Ibid, 493.

\(^{92}\) Horbath, “De La Marginación (From Marginalization)”, 160-164.

\(^{93}\) Ibid.

City has the largest Indigenous population in the entire country, IBE programs have been piloted or implemented in only a small amount of schools throughout the city.\textsuperscript{95}

Rebolledo (2007) and Villanueva (2008) conducted studies on Indigenous education in primary schools in Mexico City. Villanueva (2008) focused on teacher’s perceptions of Indigenous students and the challenges they faced learning Spanish.\textsuperscript{96} Rebolledo (2007) meanwhile focused on the perceptions of Otomi parents regarding whether they felt their children, who made up three-fourths of the school, were receiving culturally relevant education.\textsuperscript{97} Villanueva’s (2008) study conclude that despite a significant Indigenous population at the school, educators were not aware of these Indigenous students and did not attend to their linguistic needs.\textsuperscript{98} While Rebolledo’s study had similar findings in this way, he discusses how his research propelled the work he did along with other academics, developing an IBE program to meet the students’ linguistic and cultural needs, that was welcomed by the school’s educators and in which the student’s parents participated.\textsuperscript{99} Rebolledo’s (2007) conclusion is that “promoting bilingual education is a democratic mandate that we all must assume, society, teachers, students and the government”, suggesting the importance

\textsuperscript{95} Czarny, "Schooling Processes and the Indigenous Peoples", 497.


\textsuperscript{97} Nicanor Rebolledo, Escolarizacion Interrumpida: Un Caso de Migracion y Bilinguismo Indigena En La Ciudad de Mexico (Schooling Interrupted: A Case of Indigenous Migration and Bilingualism in Mexico City) (Universidad Pedagogica Nacional, 2007), 11-15.

\textsuperscript{98} Villanueva, “Miradas a la Interculturalidad (Views into the Interculturality)”, 1235.

\textsuperscript{99} Rebolledo, “Escolarizacion Interrumpida (School Interrupted)”, 65.
of all three in the implementation of IBE.\textsuperscript{100}

These studies focus on the phenomenon of growing Indigenous students in cities and the discrimination as well as invisibility they face in the classroom despite IBE policy. While Villanueva and Rebolledo’s studies closely approach questions on how IBE has been applied in schools in Mexico City, were both conducted before 2014, the year Mexico passed significant education legislation mandating the implementation of Intercultural Bilingual Education programs. Furthermore, the majority of these studies focus on school environments and actors, without strong consideration for or analysis of the government’s role. Additionally, they do not investigate the role Indigenous Peoples play in IBE implementation. Moreover, a significant step in support of IBE in Mexico City was taken in February 2017, when the Political Constitution of Mexico City was enacted, in which Article 2, acknowledges the capital city as intercultural, plurilingual, puri-ethnic, and pluricultural, noting some of its neighborhoods and regions were historical settlements of Indigenous communities and Article 8 states that “In Mexico City the Indigenous population has the right to receive education in their original language and Spanish with an intercultural perspective.\textsuperscript{101}

This study therefore seeks to shed light on what IBE implementation in Mexico City looks like in more recent years, addressing questions such as: What action does the government take to ensure the implementation of IBE in Mexico City? What ability to teachers and directors have to act as positive implementers of IBE? How are Indigenous Peoples themselves included in IBE policy and implementation? Ultimately, this project aims to better understand how and who in

\textsuperscript{100} Ibid, 120.

\textsuperscript{101} Constitución de Ciudad de México (Constitution of Mexico City)”, art. 2-8.
Mexico upholds its national policy and international standards for Indigenous education, uncovering challenges facing Indigenous Peoples’ rights to education in Mexico City, to explore avenues for improvement.

**Framework**

This study is informed by theoretical frameworks of language rights and education in relation to Indigenous Peoples. Central to this analysis is the view of Kymlicka and Patten (2003) in *Language Rights and Political Theory*, which they suggest linguistic rights must be recognized and promoted through a combination of national and international efforts. Kymlicka and Patten believe that codifying “linguistic human rights” in national language policy will promote language use as well as set governments on a path towards recognition and future protection of language rights, particularly for non-dominant languages (“language minorities”). Nevertheless, Kymlicka and Patten (2003) posit that international declarations regarding linguistic human rights, are less clear on the extent these codified rights include rights to funding such as for language schools or radios. Here they argue that in order for protection and implementation of even codified language rights, they must be conceived as “promotion rights”, which they define as rights that demand “government backing”, meaning promoting the use of one’s languages through multi-

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104 Ibid, 34-36.
faceted support, especially financial in nature.\textsuperscript{105} Such “government backing” is critical for the implementation of IBE.

Fundamental to state Intercultural Bilingual Education policies, in which Indigenous languages, cultures and ways of knowing are valued and incorporated in mainstream education are Paolo Friere’s theory of “critical pedagogy” and Walter Mignolo’s “decolonial thinking” and “subaltern knowledge”. Friere’s concept of “critical pedagogy” distinguishes the power of education to either act as an instrument “used to facilitate integration” and “conformity” into the present system or as a “practice of freedom” used to critically engage with one’s reality.\textsuperscript{106} The aim of Intercultural Bilingual Education as a policy is to promote Indigenous language, culture, and ways of knowing in the Spanish-dominant national education system, rather than seeking to assimilate or integrate Indigenous Peoples into the dominant culture. The implementation of Intercultural Bilingual Education therefore should promote Indigenous students as well non-Indigenous students to critically engage with their intercultural reality. Mignolo advocates for notions of knowledge and education that contribute to the elimination of coloniality, employing “decolonial thinking”, or realizing there is not only one epistemology and therefore acknowledging, addressing and incorporating “colonized subaltern knowledges” to advance the dignity of society.\textsuperscript{107} Friere’s concept of “critical pedagogy” is closely related to decolonization in education, promoted by Mignolo’s “decolonial” project, and both speak to the colonial powers and legacies at odds with Indigenous education and Intercultural Bilingual Education. Together these

\textsuperscript{105} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{106} Paolo Friere, Pedagogy of the Oppressed (New York: Continuum, 2000), 14.

\textsuperscript{107} Walter Mignolo, Local Histories/Global Designs: Coloniality, Subaltern Knowledges, and Border Thinking (Princeton University Press, 2000), xvii-x.
theories support the incorporation of Indigenous languages and cultures in education as progressive and just.108

**Methodologies**

This study employs qualitative research methods, drawing from primarily personal interviews as well as personal observation and primary source analysis. In Mexico City during January 2018, a total of fourteen semi-structured interviews were conducted in Spanish and translated to English by the author. One set of interviews included officials from federal government agencies charged with Intercultural Bilingual Education (IBE) development and the second set of interviews included educators from a public primary school with a large Indigenous student population.109 Together, the of sources allowed for an examination of IBE implementation in Mexico City at the government level and ground, or school, level, providing insight into how policy translates in practice.

Officials from the following government agencies were identified and interviewed:

- General Coordination of Intercultural Bilingual Education (CGEIB)
- General Direction of Indigenous Education (DGEI)
- National Institute of Indigenous Languages (INALI)
- National Commission for the Development of Indigenous Peoples (CDI)

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108 Ibid.
Interviews with these agencies were sought in order to gain an understanding of state measures taken to implement IBE in Mexico, particularly in Mexico City, and detailed descriptions of the agencies’ efforts were garnered and collectively analyzed. Additionally, as the result of referrals, interviews were also conducted with members of National Council to Prevent Discrimination, the National Autonomous University of Mexico, and the Center for Research and Higher Education in Social Anthropology in order to consider additional IBE expert perspectives from other state institutions. While the government agencies to which the interview subjects pertain are referenced, the majority of the officials are referred to as such, “official”, throughout the study in order to protect their confidentiality. In addition to the findings from these interviews, an analysis of the following primary source documents from the following agencies were utilized:

- Secretariat of Public Education:  
  - New National Education Model for year 2018-2019

- General Direction of Indigenous Education:
  - Teaching materials for Intercultural Bilingual Education

- National Institute of Indigenous Languages:
  - Teaching materials for Indigenous language education

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110 Interviewees from government agencies are referred and cited as “Official”, which is a translation of “funcionarios” (“funcionarios del gobierno”, meaning government officials), the term generally used to describe them in in Spanish.

111 The Secretariat of Public Education, which houses the General Coordination of Intercultural Bilingual Education, the General Direction of Indigenous Education, publishes the National Education Model online, which sets the national curriculum plan and requirements. The next or “New Education Model” will begin with 2018-2019 academic school year.
These materials were both accessed online and in person, when provided to me by government officials. Review of these sources allowed me to analyze the presence of Indigenous language and cultural content in the materials produced and disseminated by IBE government agencies.

At the public primary school in the central Cuauhtémoc borough of Mexico City, two teachers and the school director were interviewed. In addition to interviews, I was invited by the director to observe the environment of the school, classrooms, and on one occasion, greet parents as they dropped off their children. Through investigation of public records, later confirmed in person, this school was identified for its significant Indigenous student population and the interviewed teachers were referred to me by the director. The name of the school is not referenced and interview subjects are referenced and cited as “Director” or “Teacher” to ensure confidentiality. My recorded experience and observations from these occasions in addition to the interviews with the teachers and school director provided a small case-study on an IBE implementation model used by one primary school in Mexico City.

In order to understand the extent to which Mexico’s IBE policy upholds the education rights of Indigenous Peoples, including those in Mexico City, findings from the aforementioned source sets were analyzed considering the standards of a successful Indigenous education policy, as offered by the Expert Mechanism on the Rights Indigenous Peoples as well as the “Maintenance and Development” IBE implementation model, defined by Lopez (2009) as a model aimed at ensuring urban Indigenous students access to IBE. In the “Study on Lessons Learned and Challenges to Achieve the Implementation of the Right of Indigenous Peoples to Education”, the


113 Lopez, “Reaching the Unreached”, 11.
Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples asserts that successful Indigenous education policy will:  

- Incorporate Indigenous Peoples in the design of state measures
- Incorporate Indigenous Peoples’ perspectives and languages into mainstream education

Lopez’ “Maintenance and Development” IBE model outlines a policy that:  

- Includes urban Indigenous students
- Views Indigenous languages and cultures as a “legacy to be preserved”
- Seeks cultural pluralism by the recognition of Indigenous communities.

Furthermore, the “Maintenance and Development” IBE model outlines an implementation approach that:  

- Seeks to incorporate Indigenous cultural content in the classroom
- Includes Indigenous languages as subjects and medium of instruction
- Promotes cultural awareness
- Implement a Bilingual curriculum

At the policy level, Mexico meets the standards, set by the Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. This is best seen in Article 11 of Mexico’s Linguistic Rights Law of Indigenous Peoples, which outlines the responsibility of federal and state education authorities to “guarantee that the Indigenous population has access to obligatory education, bilingual and intercultural, and adopt the necessary measures in the education system to ensure the respect of

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115 See Appendix 1 for full table.
116 Ibid.
dignity and identity of people, in the practice and use of Indigenous languages”.117 Also at the policy level, Mexico aligns with standards of Lopez’ “Maintenance and Development” IBE model, to preserve Indigenous language and cultures and promote cultural pluralism, best illustrated in Article 3 of the Linguistic Rights Law, which states, “Indigenous languages are an integral part of cultural and linguistic national patrimony. The diversity of Indigenous languages is one of the principal expressions of the pluricultural composition of the Mexican Nation”.118

Thus, the remaining criteria, set by the Expert Mechanism, to ensure Indigenous languages are included in mainstream education (in the schools of Mexico City), as well as to include Indigenous Peoples and their perspectives in the process, shaped the analysis of government agency interviews in this study. Additionally, the “Maintenance and Development” model implementation indicators were applied to the analysis of the Cuauhtémoc primary school’s IBE implementation efforts. Ultimately, this analysis helped to better understand how Mexico’s IBE policy translates to practice. It revealed the extent to which IBE accounts for Indigenous students in Mexico City, as well as pointed to factors to facilitate improved IBE access for these students.

Nevertheless, several limitations to my research should be considered. The primary school case-study includes only a couple educator interviews. It was difficult to obtain interviews with a large number of teachers from the Cuauhtémoc primary school because of the few teachers that worked at the school in addition to the busy school schedule when I was there in early January (immediately after holiday break). In the end, the Cuauhtémoc school’s Director decided which teachers I would interview, however selected those that held leadership roles in the schools’ IBE

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117 “Ley Derechos Lingüísticos (Law of Linguistic Rights)”, art. 11.

118 Ibid.
initiative. Additionally, my original study design sought a case-study of two primary schools in Mexico City, the school in the central Cuauhtémoc borough and another in the Iztapalapa borough, on the city’s outskirts. However, my study does not include a case-study on Iztapalapa school. Although I was able to obtain an interview with the Iztapalapa school’s Director, from which I learned no IBE initiative existed in the school, I was not granted permission to interview teachers at the school. Therefore, I was unable to compare case-studies of two schools, and instead discuss a single case of the Cuauhtémoc school. Additionally, it should be considered because Intercultural Bilingual Education in Mexico and Mexico City is less-frequently documented, albeit a motivating factor to this study, having organized the research from the United States and having slightly less than a month in Mexico, made it difficult to confirm schools with IBE initiatives and interviews ahead of time.

Finally, as this study analyzes Indigenous Peoples’ education rights and participation in IBE efforts in Mexico City, while some of the interview subjects did identify as belonging to a particular Indigenous community, this study did not intentionally seek Indigenous Peoples’ as interview subjects nor does it intend to emphasize Indigenous Peoples’ perspectives. However, I believe this is extremely important and this approach should be considered for future investigation on this topic.
Section II: State Measures: Including (Urban) Indigenous Peoples in IBE

The U.N. Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples recognizes Indigenous Peoples as autonomous and possessing distinct linguistic and cultural rights.\(^{119}\) States nonetheless play a central role in the Indigenous Peoples’ enjoyment of these rights. Article 14 of the Declaration outlines Indigenous Peoples’ rights to establish and control education in their own languages with appropriate cultural methods as well as the state’s responsibility to take “effective measures \(\textit{in conjunction with} \) [emphasis added]” [Indigenous Peoples].\(^{120}\) Therefore, state measures to ensure Indigenous Peoples have access to education in Indigenous languages and cultures, including those living outside their communities, requires collaboration with Indigenous Peoples.\(^{121}\) Article 11 of Mexico’s Linguistic Rights Law of Indigenous Peoples reflects these standards and establishes the state’s responsibility to provide Intercultural Bilingual Education (IBE) to Indigenous students. It outlines the responsibility of federal and state education authorities to “guarantee that the Indigenous population has access to obligatory education, bilingual and intercultural, and to adopt the necessary measures in the education system to ensure the respect of dignity and identity of people, in the practice and use of Indigenous languages”.\(^{122}\) These state measures taken to ensure Indigenous Peoples’ access to IBE in Mexico are carried out by various agencies located in Mexico City.

\(^{119}\) UN General Assembly, Resolution 61/295.

\(^{120}\) Ibid, art. 14.


\(^{122}\) “Ley de Derechos Linguisticos (Law of Linguistic Rights)”, art, 11.
No single agency in Mexico is alone leading the implementation of Indigenous Peoples’ rights to Intercultural Bilingual Education (IBE). That is, various agencies including the General Direction of Indigenous Education (DGEI), the General Coordination of Intercultural Bilingual Education (CGEIB), the National Institute of Indigenous Languages (INALI), as well as the Commission for the Development of Indigenous Peoples (CDI), are collectively charged with promoting and developing intercultural education. Interviews conducted with government officials from the aforementioned agencies reveal fragmented but collaborative state IBE efforts. Additionally, they reveal that DGEI, CGEIB, and INALI are involved in furthering Indigenous Peoples’ access to education in their language and respective of their culture in the national education system, particularly in relation to Mexico City, much more so than CDI. The General Direction of Indigenous Education (DGEI), the General Coordination of Intercultural Bilingual Education (CGEIB), and the National Institute of Indigenous Languages (INALI), in fact, collaborate to varying degrees to bring IBE to Indigenous students. Although in Mexican law IBE is recognized as a right of Indigenous Peoples, within the National Secretariat of Public Education, Indigenous education matters are institutionally segregated from Intercultural Bilingual Education matters, the former belonging to the General Direction of Indigenous Education and the latter belonging to the General Coordination of Intercultural Bilingual Education. This institutional disconnect seems inconsistent with Mexico’s various laws that directly link IBE to Indigenous Peoples’ rights to education. Nevertheless, across officials from all agencies, there is a shared view that IBE is a

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123 Secretariat of Public Education, “¿Sabes En Qué…? (Do You Know What…?)”

124 The author interviewed a member of the Commission for the Development of Indigenous Peoples (CDI) and found little evidence that the agency headquarters is working on IBE implementation, especially not in the public schools of Mexico City.
specific right of Indigenous Peoples.\textsuperscript{125,126} The greatest initiative to ensure IBE access across these afore-mentioned agencies, which relies on the participation of Indigenous Peoples, is the production of teaching materials, albeit with a limited scope of distribution. Despite, being located in Mexico City, these agencies direct a very small portion of their work towards the surrounding urban Indigenous students. Nevertheless, it appears these agencies may be at a pivotal moment in education policy, which is generating increased coordination among themselves and shifting greater attention to the Indigenous students of Mexico City.

**Government Agencies in Mexico City**

The General Direction of Indigenous Education (DGEI) is the oldest of the government agencies, founded in 1978, to address Indigenous education, including Indigenous language literacy, school access and attendance among Indigenous students, as well as training teachers in Indigenous communities.\textsuperscript{127} According to one DGEI official, the creation of the DGEI marked a shift away from Mexico’s previous approach to Indigenous education, namely the model of “castellanización”, or castilinization, in which the aim was to transition Indigenous students from initial schooling in their language to proficiency and full-schooling in Spanish.\textsuperscript{128,129} However, it was not until the 1990’s that “Intercultural Bilingual Education” officially became the focus of the

\textsuperscript{125} Government Official 8 (General Direction of Indigenous Education), interview by Marial Quezada, January 10, 2018, Mexico City, Mexico.

\textsuperscript{126} Government Official 1 (General Coordination of Intercultural Bilingual Education), interview by Marial Quezada, January 9, 2018, Mexico City, Mexico.

\textsuperscript{127} Government Official 8, interview.

\textsuperscript{128} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{129} Hamel, “Bilingual Education”, 316.
agency, calling for an education equally inclusive of Indigenous and Spanish cultures and languages.\(^{130}\) While DGEI operates under an IBE approach to education today, according to a DGEI official, it primarily focuses on education of Indigenous students from schools in “historical Indigenous settlements”, or rural Indigenous communities.\(^{131}\) Another limitation of DGEI is that it is housed within the department of Basic Education, meaning the pre-school and primary school level. Therefore, despite the state shift away from a formal “castellanización” approach to Indigenous education, the lack of attention to ensure Indigenous students have access to teachers, materials, and overall education in their language after their primary school years, may produce a similar effect, transitioning them to Spanish-language secondary education because no alternatives exist.

The General Coordination of Intercultural Bilingual Education (CGEIB) was founded in 2001, to carry out multiple mandates for Intercultural Bilingual Education and to widen the reach of IBE “beyond rural Indigenous communities and at all levels of schools”, according to one CGEIB official.\(^{132}\) The goals of CGEIB are to develop IBE policy and promote “increased knowledge and valuing of the diversity within Mexico… to learn other cultural views and ways to understand reality”, as much for Indigenous as for non-Indigenous students.\(^{133}\) Unlike DGEI, CGEIB is not limited to only pre-school and primary schools nor only rural schools, nevertheless the majority of their work is focused in primary schools outside of Mexico City.\(^{134}\)

\(^{130}\) Government Official 8, interview.

\(^{131}\) Ibid.

\(^{132}\) Government Official 2 (General Coordination of Intercultural Bilingual Education), interview by Marial Quezada, January 9, 2018, Mexico City, Mexico.

\(^{133}\) Ibid.

\(^{134}\) Government Official 1, interview.
coordinates IBE programs in various schools, produces pedagogical and educational materials, facilitates teacher trainings, and continuously advocates for a national IBE curriculum, which does not exist.\textsuperscript{135,136} Being called the “Coordination” of IBE, rather than “Direction”, reminds one CGEIB official, that their work is dictated by the laws, decisions, reforms, and funding determined by the National Secretariat of Public Education.\textsuperscript{137} Due to limited financial resources, CGEIB must coordinate with DGEI, the National Institute of Indigenous Languages (INALI), the National Commission for the Development Indigenous Peoples (CDI), and increasingly with leading research institute, such as the Center for Research and Higher Learning in Social Anthropology (CIESAS), the National Council for the Prevention of Discrimination (CONAPRED) as well as UNICEF, who particularly plays an increasingly important role, to produce and print materials for schools.\textsuperscript{138,139}

Another significant actor in IBE implementation, the National Institute of Indigenous Languages (INALI), was founded the same year as the CGEIB, as per provision of the Linguistic Rights Law of Indigenous Peoples, to “promote the strengthening, preservation and development of Indigenous languages spoken across the national territory”.\textsuperscript{140} INALI officials reference this general directive as the nature of their work and see their work much more broadly than the area

\begin{thebibliography}{99}
\bibitem{135} Ibid.
\bibitem{136} Government Official 3 (General Coordination of Intercultural Bilingual Education), interview by Marial Quezada, January 16, 2018, Mexico City, Mexico.
\bibitem{137} Government Official 2, interview.
\bibitem{138} Ibid,
\bibitem{139} Government Official 1, interview.
\bibitem{140} “Ley de los Derechos Linguisticos (Law of Linguistic Rights), art. 5.
\end{thebibliography}
While both DGEI and CGEIB officials value their collaboration with INALI as well as its production of works “critical to the advancement of Intercultural Bilingual Education”, INALI officials see themselves less directly involved with IBE implementation. This could be influenced by a change that occurred in 2015, when Mexico’s Secretariat of Culture was created and INALI was transferred from being housed within the National Secretariat of Public Education to the Secretariat of Culture. Nevertheless, INALI leads linguistic standardization efforts that are crucial to the development of Indigenous language education and works to improve policy promoting Indigenous languages in Mexico, proposes and creates Indigenous language educational materials and hosts language workshops for educators. The authorization of these three agencies to administer IBE seemingly suggests the Mexican government is highly dedicated to the implementation of the policy. Yet at the same time, such a de-centralized administrative structure also creates a less-clear trajectory for IBE development.

**Teaching Material Production and Indigenous Peoples’ Participation**

Considering the shared directives and overlapping goals of the three IBE agencies highlights trends of collaboration between them as well as the impact similar actors have on the agencies’ priorities. DGEI has been producing and distributing free books in Indigenous languages

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141 Government Official 4 (National Institute of Indigenous Languages), interview by Marial Quezada, January 16, 2018, Mexico City, Mexico.

142 Government Official 5 (National Institute of Indigenous Languages), interview by Marial Quezada, January 16, 2018, Mexico City, Mexico.

143 Government Official 8, interview.

144 Government Official 1, interview.

145 Government Official 4, interview.
since the 1990’s, however according to a DGEI official, since a 2008 reform that limited funding, they “…have had to fight to continue to produce and distribute them”.\textsuperscript{146} In fact, the official explained that they have only just began revisiting and revising books produced in the 90’s as well as producing books in more Indigenous languages. The majority of these books only covered up to 4\textsuperscript{th} grade, so 5\textsuperscript{th} and 6\textsuperscript{th} grade did not have them, which they are now working to change.\textsuperscript{147} In addition to producing more books, the official discussed their recent work of content contextualization of the books to make them more culturally appropriate: “We have visited many Indigenous communities to see if the themes, images, drawings, and overall content have meaning to the children. In some cases, narratives and images of how the children dress for example, are no longer relevant.”\textsuperscript{148} This effort directly addresses one of the concerns academic researchers have had with the Indigenous language books produced by the Mexican government over the years, that the books often reflect dominant culture, are set in an urban context and therefore lack culturally relevant content for Indigenous students.\textsuperscript{149} This recent initiative by DGEI demonstrates a response to the needs and realities of Indigenous communities and perhaps to one to the critiques and suggestions of academics in the field as well. A DGEI official discussed their “Programs of Study” projects, as increasingly important work to bring Indigenous languages into classrooms.\textsuperscript{150} These are guides for teaching Indigenous languages produced by DGEI in conjunction with Indigenous teachers and speakers. The official acknowledged that these materials rely much on the work of

\textsuperscript{146} Government Official 8, interview.

\textsuperscript{147} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{148} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{149} Hamel, “Bilingual Education”, 313-315.

\textsuperscript{150} Government Official 8, interview.
Indigenous communities, a significant force behind the organizations’ work.\textsuperscript{151} Currently these programs have been created for Raramuri, Mazahua and Tlapaneco of Guerrero, Indigenous Peoples and DGEI is in the process of creating them 19 more languages.\textsuperscript{152} For these “Programs of Study”, Indigenous communities dictate what it is they want to include and how they envision it. For example, some choose to do the introduction in their language and the rest of the book in Spanish, or in the case of the Raramuri book, the community decided to do the entire book in their language, excluding Spanish.\textsuperscript{153} According to a DGEI official, the community makes the “ultimate decision on the rules of standardization they want to employ or not”.\textsuperscript{154} These instances were offered as examples of how DGEI includes Indigenous communities in their work. This year, DGEI also began a project funded by UNICEF in which they are working with a group of Indigenous teachers to create a file of language materials for teachers and students, focusing on a few languages every year until they create resources for every Indigenous language.\textsuperscript{155} The DGEI official emphasized how all of DGEI’s materials are created with collectives of Indigenous teachers and speakers of Indigenous languages and how this is not just the case for DGEI. “Indigenous teachers are called on to make books, radio programs, to help INALI in the standardization of the language, and to work with CGEIB on their projects”.\textsuperscript{156} She added, the majority of them are from Indigenous communities, however, unfortunately the extent of their

\footnotesize
\begin{itemize}
  \item 151 Ibid.
  \item 152 Ibid.
  \item 153 Ibid.
  \item 154 Ibid.
  \item 155 Ibid.
  \item 156 Ibid.
\end{itemize}
contributions is less known to the public. “The teachers of Indigenous education have collaborated in every instance but they are less mentioned, less seen, and less valued”. While the participation of Indigenous Peoples, especially educators, in the work of the government agencies is less visible, it appears nonetheless to play a critical role in the production and distribution of IBE teaching materials.

One of the greatest successes of CGEIB has the course it designed for middle school students on “Indigenous Languages and Cultures”. Nevertheless, it is only available to one grade level and as of academic year 2018-2019, it will no longer be included in the national curriculum, a backwards step for IBE development. This suggests that while CGEIB is committed to IBE’s inclusion in a national curriculum, the Secretariat of Public Education may be less committed. CGEIB works mostly with ad-hoc IBE programs to facilitate trainings and provide materials requested by educators who “take the initiative” to introduce IBE programs to their schools. One CGEIB official explains that while some teachers ask them to run IBE trainings and provide them with teaching materials, for others IBE incorporation takes the form of a “hidden innovation” because they fear their initiative to bring in IBE programming will receive resistance from school supervisors, despite the comprehensive legislative mandate for it. In 2002, soon after CGEIB was founded, it began a national program to train IBE teachers across the country to include Indigenous languages and cultures in their classrooms and schools, however the program was

157 Ibid.
158 Government Official 1, interview.
159 Ibid.
160 Ibid.
short-lived because of a funding scarcity.\textsuperscript{161} At one point the National Council for Education Development (CONAFE) trained Indigenous language teachers in Mexico City, but shortly after it began, that program also ended.\textsuperscript{162} Now, CGEIB officials, along with officials from DGEI and INALI refer to degree programs offered by universities in Mexico City, such as the National Pedagogical University or the Iberian American University, as the main sources of IBE trainings for teachers.\textsuperscript{163,164,165} This is problematic for two reasons, one issue is that often teachers that graduate these IBE programs, go on to teach in communities outside of the city.\textsuperscript{166} Secondly, these programs are selected and must be applied for by the choice of the educator, they are not mandatory for them. Still, today CGEIB are occasionally asked to provide trainings to teachers and are frequently asked to attend monthly “Technical School Council” meetings at different schools to help staff understand the fundamentals of IBE and introduce them to pedagogical material.\textsuperscript{167,168} Much like the DGEI, CGEIB also reaches schools through its material production, for which it contracts Indigenous language speakers, whether teachers, academics, or researchers.\textsuperscript{169} One CGEIB official who regularly attends “Technical School Council” meetings, shared that many IBE

\textsuperscript{161} Government Official 2, interview.

\textsuperscript{162} Government Official 1, interview.

\textsuperscript{163} Government Official 8, interview.

\textsuperscript{164} Government Official 4, interview.

\textsuperscript{165} Government Official 2, interview.

\textsuperscript{166} Dr. Maria Regina Martinez Casas (Center for Research and Higher Learning in Social Anthropology), Interview by Marial Quezada, Mexico City, Mexico, January 9, 2018.

\textsuperscript{167} Government Official 1, interview.

\textsuperscript{168} Government Official 2, interview.

\textsuperscript{169} Ibid.
conversations in these meetings include a discussion on what Indigenous families want for their children’s’ education.\textsuperscript{170} This official explained how important he viewed this awareness and how in a similar way CGEIB aims to include the Indigenous communities in its work when it can.\textsuperscript{171} The materials CGEIB produces include a legal guide on IBE policy, pedagogical guides on language and cultural diversity, and a few books and videos to utilize with students, in which a CGEIB official expressed that Indigenous communities’ voices and perspectives are central. For example, in a series called “Window to My Community” Indigenous students and teachers present what they find relevant to explaining their community to outsiders, through videos, material ideally to be utilized by teachers at any school.\textsuperscript{172} And in order to increase accessibility, as well as because of limited printing funds, CGEIB publishes all their materials on their public webpage.\textsuperscript{173} One official asserted that while it’s important to create pedagogical materials for teachers, the work of INALI and DGEI, who produce the majority of the Indigenous language books for primary schools, is increasingly important as it gives students an opportunity to learn in their mother tongue, because “Without books in your language, how can you become literate?”\textsuperscript{174} Indigenous language speakers, whether educators, students, or community members, therefore play a critical role in the state’s ability to produce Indigenous language materials.

Finally, INALI’s most recognized work is its Catalogue of National Indigenous Languages, which it publishes every five years. This includes the most recent statistics on Indigenous language

\textsuperscript{170} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{171} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{172} Ibid

\textsuperscript{173} Ibid

\textsuperscript{174} Government Official 1, interview.
speakers, populations, and maps showing the density and location of Mexico’s 367 language variants. Although it is not utilized directly in schools, it plays a vital role in advocating for IBE improvement.\textsuperscript{175} It marks regions with the largest and growing concentrations of Indigenous language speakers as well as highlights regions where languages are in danger.\textsuperscript{176,177} INALI proposes and produces educational materials which are used for Indigenous language and culture education, including in dictionaries, calendars, videos, storybooks, Apps, CD’s, software, and games.\textsuperscript{178} INALI openly welcomes requests for language materials, consultation and trainings by Indigenous communities and teachers, and as a result often produces guides on writing standards as well as “Grammar Pedagogies”.\textsuperscript{179} Teachers often request workshops and in some instances ask for support in the creation of Indigenous language libraries at their schools.\textsuperscript{180} Currently INALI is collaborating with CGEIB on an IBE curricular map, which would be the first of its kind.\textsuperscript{181}

Similarly to DGEI and CGEIB, officials at INALI believe Indigenous collaboration is fundamental in what they do. “Central to our work is the cosmovision and histories of Indigenous Peoples; we promote this intercultural dialogue, which can enrich a proposal for education policy ‘donde caben muchos mundos’(where many worlds(cultures /worldviews) fit)”.\textsuperscript{182} In every facet INALI works directly with Indigenous Peoples, professors, investigators, advocates and activists,

\textsuperscript{175} Government Official 4, interview.

\textsuperscript{176} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{177} Government Official 5, interview.

\textsuperscript{178} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{179} Government Official 4, interview.

\textsuperscript{180} Government Official 5, interview.

\textsuperscript{181} Government Official 4, interview.

\textsuperscript{182} Ibid.
connecting directly with them and their communities and has Indigenous language speakers serve as advisors on all their projects. 183 One official expressed his view: “We want that they [Indigenous communities] direct and facilitate our projects”. 184 Last year they organized a series of consultations with Indigenous Peoples, inviting parents of students, to ask them directly what they wanted for their children’s education to inform the curricular map they are producing with CGEIB. 185 INALI’s inclusive approach to working with Indigenous Peoples is reflected in its staff, in which, according to one official, you must be an Indigenous language speaker to work at INALI. 186 Across the agencies therefore, within their broad mandates, we see a pattern of prolific teaching material production, often requested by educators and communities. Furthermore, we see a tendency to include Indigenous Peoples in the work and strives to meet their demands, which demonstrates a bottom-up rather than top-down trend in IBE implementation.

Including Indigenous Students in Mexico City

While there is overlap and collaboration between the work of these three agencies, there are initiatives within each impacting certain areas of IBE and certain regions of Mexico more than others. Although all three agencies rely largely on the participation of Indigenous Peoples in their work, most are from rural communities, rather than those that surround the agency headquarters in Mexico City where currently, 57 out of the 68 Indigenous languages of Mexico are spoken.

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183 Government Official 5, interview.
184 Government Official 4, interview.
185 Ibid.
186 Ibid.
within Mexico City alone.\textsuperscript{187} Officials from all three agencies shared views on the significant impact the Linguistic Rights of Indigenous Peoples Law (2003) has on their work. Officials from INALI however expressed that the Constitution of Mexico City, which recognizes Indigenous Peoples’ rights to intercultural education in their language as well as in Spanish, has created a new impetus and spurred action to improve IBE for Indigenous students in Mexico City.\textsuperscript{188,189,190} Furthermore, INALI’s next Language Catalogue, which will be published later this year, will include, for the first time, an Indigenous language map of speakers in Mexico City.\textsuperscript{191} One INALI official remarked, “The number of Indigenous language speakers here in the city is impressive. We have locations, mappings and some statistics to show, but we still have a lot of work to address them”.\textsuperscript{192} INALI officials hope this map will push IBE policy and efforts to increase Indigenous language education in the metropolitan area.\textsuperscript{193} As a result of their own work, this year they have a series of sessions planned to solicit input and demands from Indigenous Peoples in Mexico City around ways in which the organization can work with them to develop their language and language materials.\textsuperscript{194}

According to DGEI officials, their greatest contribution to IBE in Mexico City has been educational games. In the past few years DGEI produced a series of educational IBE games for

\textsuperscript{187} Government Official 2, interview.
\textsuperscript{188} Government Official 8, interview.
\textsuperscript{189} Government Official, interview.
\textsuperscript{190} Government Official 4, interview.
\textsuperscript{191} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{192} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{193} Government Official 5, interview.
\textsuperscript{194} Government Official 4, interview.
primary schools, which have been made available, mostly online, to educators in Indigenous communities as well as to educators in Mexico City.\textsuperscript{195} To design nine educational games, DGEI held round tables with Indigenous parents and children in the rural communities over the course of a few years. There the children and parents were asked to share ideas they had and topics that interested them, contributing to the content and design of the games.\textsuperscript{196} After having reviewed these games in person and others in published summaries, it seems these games are for Indigenous language education as well as intercultural exchange, especially if used in a classroom with Indigenous and non-Indigenous students. Of the series, those that seem to best promote IBE that is inclusive of Indigenous perspectives, are “Walk to Mictlan” is a game where students use math to move along the board and learn about the importance and respect for death across Indigenous communities; “We Play Learning the Sun, Moon and Universe” is a game which calls on myths, legends and philosophy of Indigenous communities engaging with different cosmovisions and the way some communities relate to the earth; And “Travel with Me” has students “travel” all over the map of Mexico visiting Indigenous communities in each state where they encounter the flora, fauna, territory, people and traditions of those regions.\textsuperscript{197} Additionally, the series includes “Fan of my Rights”, which is geared towards educators and administrators and includes a deck of cards containing different human rights, including Indigenous Peoples rights to education, and real statistics in Mexico with questions on perspectives of these facts.\textsuperscript{198}

\textsuperscript{195} Government Official 8, interview.

\textsuperscript{196} Ibid.


\textsuperscript{198} Ibid.
DGEI also created and published a series called “Sciences, Technologies, and Narratives of Indigenous Cultures and Migrants”. Like the educational games, this series, comprised of teacher guides and materials, has also been utilized in Mexico City schools. In fact, a DGEI official said that many educators in the city are still demanding them and while they could not print so many due to limited sources, they were all shared online so that educators across the country could access them.199 The science series includes 30 written texts about the knowledge of their community by Indigenous language speakers.200 It also includes materials such as interactive lessons on Indigenous technologies, games like “Eloteria Mexicana” which is about the diversity of corn production in Mexico and the traditional use of corn among different Indigenous communities, as well as an infographic map of the “Knowledge of Indigenous Peoples” juxtaposed with “Knowledge According to Science”, showing the variance in ways to conceptualize, measure, and related to colors, light, living things, and astronomy.201 Another DGEI official said that despite their agency’s emphasis on rural communities, teachers in Mexico City have a high demand for these guides and materials, suggesting the initiative some teachers are taking to bring IBE to their classrooms.202 DGEI nevertheless works most directly with rural Indigenous communities, especially in the creation and dissemination of Indigenous language books, yet if DGEI were to

199 Government Official 8, interview.


201 Ibid.

202 Government Official 6 (General Direction of Indigenous Education), interview by Marial Quezada, January 18, 2018, Mexico City, Mexico.
direct these materials to urban areas, it could contribute to improved IBE access for Indigenous students in Mexico City.

When asked about the work CGEIB is doing in Mexico City, one official referred to its 2009 publication on “Lines of Research in IBE”, in which one of the main themes is to increase pedagogical proposals for IBE in urban schools, addressing the rights of Indigenous migrants.203 When first asked about urban IBE initiatives, two CGEIB officials referenced the success of programs in Baja California and Monterrey, with no mention of Mexico City.204,205 Through efforts directed by academics and funded by UNICEF however, CGEIB is increasing its work directed towards IBE in Mexico City. This year for the first time CGEIB participated in a meeting organized by the Center for Research and Higher Learning in Social Anthropology (CIESAS) in Mexico City, which invited Indigenous parents and speakers of Indigenous languages to discuss their desires and experiences with their children’s education in the city.206 One official said this dialogue is critical and will undoubtedly inform their work going forward.207 This year as well, some of the same participants along with other government officials, researchers, professors and students organized an IBE research team in Mexico City so that across agencies they may more strategically collaborate to more effectively bring IBE to urban schools.208 Another official said this was particularly inspired by the data published in 2016 by UNICEF and the National Institute for the

203 Government Official 3, interview.
204 Ibid.
205 Government Official 2, interview.
206 Government Official 1, interview.
207 Ibid.
208 Government Official 2, interview.
Evaluation of Education of Mexico on the rather negative experience of urban Indigenous students across the country. Finally, this past year CGEIB began an extensive project working with UNICEF to better equip teachers for IBE implementation in Mexico City. With UNICEF funds and technical support, they are creating the first educator-training template, which will be provided to teachers in urban schools with significant Indigenous populations as a way to incorporate IBE into their classrooms. This template will be piloted in 20 Mexico City primary schools with large Indigenous populations beginning the 2018-2019 academic year. While the official who is leading the project believes the 95 pages on how to implement IBE pedagogy are “condensed and basic”, she also believes they are “important introductions nonetheless”. “Our hope is that they will be the first step to schools and teachers implementing Indigenous language and culture programs in these schools”, which to date has been unsystematic and ad-hoc, said the CGEIB official. Furthermore, this effort will be the first of its nature to be fully initiated by a government agency, as opposed to by educators from a school.

INALI works to “disseminate information about Indigenous Peoples and languages” across Mexico City, both in and outside of schools. They do this through the display of language diversity maps and signs in the subway and on the metro buses. Additionally, they run a radio

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209 Ibid.
210 Government Official 1, interview.
211 Government Official 3, interview.
212 Ibid.
213 Government Official 1, interview.
214 Ibid.
215 Government Official 5, interview.
216 Ibid.
station “Guardavoces” in which they invite Indigenous poets, writers, and speakers to talk about their work as public education.\textsuperscript{217} INALI also recently launched an online channel called 68 Voices (“68 Voces”), in light of the 68 Indigenous languages of Mexico, in which stories are recorded in Indigenous languages and animated, mostly by children.\textsuperscript{218} Their aim is to educate the general public but they expressed hope that given the online platform, teachers, such as those in Mexico City, may also utilize the videos in their classrooms.\textsuperscript{219} One official mentions that he works with some teachers in Mexico City along with the National Pedagogical University, particularly as advisors, creating and piloting materials in their schools. Furthermore, in many schools you can find INALI linguistic diversity maps, which have been freely distributed, and although they provide “…Very basic and general information in comparison with the aims of IBE”, they at least create consciousness and cultural awareness necessary for the advancement of IBE in Mexico City schools.\textsuperscript{220}

Aside from work of these government agencies to bring IBE to Indigenous students, the “Education Model”, negotiated and published by the National Secretariat of Public Education, guides a thematic academic plan that sets strategies and the curriculum for basic education (in primary and middle schools). Previously there has not been a formal space in the national curriculum for IBE, aside from the subject on Indigenous language and culture for middle schoolers, however DGEI and CGEIB officials feel that the New Education Model, published in

\textsuperscript{217} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{218} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{219} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{220} Government Official 4, interview.
2017, to take effect in the 2018-2019 academic year, creates this opportunity for the first time.\textsuperscript{221,222} When CGEIB proposed the middle school Indigenous language and culture course in 2005, it also proposed a national IBE curriculum, after having completed a series of meetings with Indigenous communities for their feedback, however, unlike the middle school course, the curriculum was not approved.\textsuperscript{223} Although CGEIB officials did not directly state why this was the case, Schmelkes (2013), the former Director of CGEIB, offers insight into why the curriculum may not have advanced.\textsuperscript{224} She explains the shortage of resources and authorities needed to develop an intercultural curriculum for the national education system as well as the apparent priority of the government to first develop a curriculum for the eleven intercultural universities.\textsuperscript{225} And while the New Education Model removes the middle school course, DGEI and CGEIB officials believe it a potential opportunity for IBE implementation, including in urban areas, and an increased participation of Indigenous Peoples in this.\textsuperscript{226,227} This is because of the addition of new segment of the Education Model, “Curricular Autonomy”, where schools now have the opportunity to propose “their own content to address the context and specific needs of its students”.\textsuperscript{228} All of the agencies’ officials mentioned this component as a promising opportunity for the insertion of IBE.

\textsuperscript{221} Government Official 8, interview.

\textsuperscript{222} Government Official 2, interview.

\textsuperscript{223} Government Official 3, interview.

\textsuperscript{224} Schmelkes, “Educación Para Un México Intercultural (Education for an Intercultural Mexico).”, 11.

\textsuperscript{225} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{226} Government Official 8, interview.

\textsuperscript{227} Government Official 2, interview.

This will allow schools to determine 30% of their curricula in which they could feasibly include knowledge, culture and languages of the communities from which its students come. One CGEIB official believes this autonomy will “place the school at the center and allow for the community to become more involved in the recuperation of its knowledge”. A DGEI official said this is an opportune moment for agencies to come together and create a guide on how schools can best to do this. One CGEIB official expressed how in the past they’ve injected IBE in the national curriculum in “every space we can” and that they plan to do exactly the same given the new “Curricular Autonomy”, however with greater ease. Additionally, the New Education Model recognizes Spanish as a second language for the first time, requiring Indigenous students to first develop fluency in their mother tongue, then in Spanish. The DGEI official feels “we are in the moment that I believe is really possible for all the schools to be bilingual or plurilingual, especially considering migration”. DGEI officials are working on the first Linguistic Plan for 2018-2019 to accompany the New Education Model so it may serve as a guide for Indigenous language development and Spanish as a second-language for primary schools across Mexico.

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229 Government Official 4, interview.  
230 Government Official 8, interview.  
231 Government Official 2, interview.  
232 Ibid.  
233 Government Official 2, interview.  
234 Government Official 8, interview.  
235 Government Official 3, interview.  
236 Government Official 2, interview.  
237 Government Official 8, interview.  
238 Ibid.
We see from the above how collaboration between these agencies as well as increased awareness of the Indigenous population in Mexico City is inciting action and increased attention to urban Indigenous students. Initiatives to address this growing population are few, yet growing, and seem influenced by non-government agency collaborators, such as research institutes, universities, and UNICEF. Across all agencies there is an effort to include Indigenous educators and communities in their work. There is also a pattern in which researchers or academics from universities are instigating various initiatives to shift the focus of IBE to include urban areas. Additionally, however there has been pattern of state funding shortages alongside the constant financial support by UNICEF for IBE projects. Kymlicka and Allen (2003) would argue that merely having laws promoting Indigenous language use and education is not enough, but rather “state backing” in the form of state-led initiatives, and funding is necessary for the realization of these rights. It appears funding and state-led initiatives have been limited in the last decade when it comes to IBE implementation in Mexico, especially in Mexico City. While the 2018-2019 Education Model is creating a hopeful opportunity for increased Indigenous language and culture content in schools in the city and across the country, will this promotion of school-led “Curricular Autonomy” undermine the need for state-led IBE initiatives in urban classrooms? And although the efforts we’ve seen across agencies aim to include Indigenous perspectives and introduce IBE into the mainstream education, without a nationally mandated IBE curriculum, can Indigenous students’ access to IBE truly be ensured?

239 Ibid.

240 Ibid.

241 Government Official 4, interview.

Public primary schools in Mexico City could have an Indigenous population ranging from zero to 100 percent and in a single classroom, that population could speak up to seven Indigenous languages.²⁴³ Few educators and government officials are aware of these numbers however because of lack of data collected on urban Indigenous students.²⁴⁴ In fact, for Mexico City, the Secretariat of Public Education did not begin to collect this information until 2017.²⁴⁵ The Constitution of Mexico City (Article 57) specifies that Indigenous communities, neighborhoods, and residents that live in the city have the right to Intercultural Bilingual Education (IBE), meaning education in their language that applies appropriate cultural methods.²⁴⁶ Indigenous populations across Mexico City’s sixteen boroughs vary, but generally, the farther away from the city center, the larger the Indigenous population.²⁴⁷ This however does not necessarily mean that schools closer to the city center have fewer Indigenous students. Parents may choose which public school they want to send their children to in the city, as long as there are openings.²⁴⁸ For this reason, schools like one primary school in the very central Cuauhtémoc borough, attract Indigenous students whose parents travel from outer boroughs into the center for work and thus find it more

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²⁴³ Government Official 8, interview.


²⁴⁵ Director (Cuauhtémoc Primary School), interview by Marial Quezada, January 19, 2018, Mexico City, Mexico.

²⁴⁶ “Constitución de Ciudad de México (Constitution of Mexico City)”, art. 57.

²⁴⁷ National Institute of Statistics and Geography, “Panorama Sociodemográfico (Social Demographic Panorama)”.

²⁴⁸ Director, interview.
convenient to bring their kids to a school in the area of their work.\textsuperscript{249} At this particular primary school in the Cuauhtémoc borough, the Director recognizes the majority of her students as Indigenous, Hñähñu (Otomi) to be exact.\textsuperscript{250} This recognition instigated an IBE implementation process at her school two years ago, working towards an education environment that is inclusive of her students’ language and culture. Beyond the laws mandating Indigenous students’ access to IBE and the multiple government agencies charged with developing IBE, investigating this case of the Cuauhtémoc school shows the critical role teachers and directors play in IBE implementation and provides a recent example of IBE implementation in a Mexico City school.

Considering different degrees and models of IBE implementation, such as those defined by IBE expert Lopez (2009) in his report for UNESCO, helps assess the degree, success and challenges of the Cuauhtémoc school’s IBE implementation process.\textsuperscript{251} Lopez (2009) categorizes IBE models across Latin America, one of which, is the “Maintenance and Development” model, to which Mexico most closely aligns.\textsuperscript{252} This model reflects a policy in which Indigenous languages and cultures are viewed as a legacy to be preserved and legally recognizes of Indigenous Peoples and some of their cultural rights.\textsuperscript{253} Furthermore, this model is distinct from others as its target population includes Indigenous Peoples in rural areas as well as in urban areas, implicit in the efforts of the Cuauhtémoc School.\textsuperscript{254} This model also consists of a linguistic and cultural aim

\textsuperscript{249} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{250} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{251} Lopez, “Reaching the Unreached: Indigenous Intercultural Bilingual Education in Latin America,” 11.

\textsuperscript{252} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{253} The Constitution of the Republic of Mexico recognizes the “pluricultural” and “plurilingual” nature of the country as well as its Indigenous Peoples; The Linguistic Rights of Indigenous Peoples Law recognizes the language rights of Indigenous Peoples in Mexico; See Literature Review, Sec. I for overview of these laws.

\textsuperscript{254} Lopez, 11.
that seeks to include Indigenous languages as the medium of instruction or as a subject, include Indigenous cultural content, promote cultural awareness and implement a bilingual curriculum in schools.\textsuperscript{255} Considering the way in which the Cuauhtémoc school employs these elements, illustrates how educators are implementing a “Maintenance and Development” IBE model to include urban Indigenous students in its efforts in addition to how they are including the Indigenous community in the process, albeit as an independent initiative with little government support.

A large portion of the Cuauhtémoc school’s student population is made up of speakers of Hñähñu (Otomi), who are driving the educators to incorporate their language, culture and community in the school every chance that they get.\textsuperscript{256} The school is not a full-time school, so there are two school sessions, one in the morning and one in the afternoon, and while the morning session has a significant number Indigenous students, the majority of the afternoon school is comprised of Hñähñu speaking students.\textsuperscript{257} According to the Director, the afternoon school “Vespertino” “belongs to the [Hñähñu] community”.\textsuperscript{258} She explains that for years the afternoon school has been filled with predominantly Hñähñu students and today in fact, parents tell others from the community to send their children there.\textsuperscript{259} For the Director this informs her efforts to improve the school’s inclusiveness of the Indigenous students’ cultures, traditions, languages, and

\begin{flushleft}
\textsuperscript{255}Ibid.
\textsuperscript{256} Director, interview.
\textsuperscript{257} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{258} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{259} Ibid.
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According to the Director, many parents come into the city center for work such as selling handmade art. Many often go home to their communities to visit family and for traditional celebrations, which students attend as well, and because of this, at times miss school. Many parents speak little or no Spanish and for some of their children, it may be the same when they first arrive to the school. Also like their parents, some students spend the weekends selling art and candy at the plazas throughout the city, which can contribute to school absence or exhaustion. To the Director, all of this requires consideration by the educators and demands, “modification of our practices...we must consider the culture of our students”. While the Director is responsive to the community’s history and culture, when she began about two years ago, she said the school wasn’t attentive to this reality. The school has had degrees of IBE and gone through “transformations and different eras”, but the current Director made clear that the current trajectory of the school is to be the best it can, guided by her IBE implementation plan she created with her teachers this past year, their “Route to Improvement”.

In 2017, the school began their plan called the “Route to Improvement”, which requires teachers to increasingly include Hñähñu language and culture in their classrooms and in schoolwide projects. At the schoolwide meeting every month, teachers make recommendations

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260 Ibid.
261 Ibid.
262 Ibid.
263 Ibid.
264 Ibid.
265 Ibid.
266 Ibid.
267 Ibid.
to each other for not only activities to include for the coming month but also for trainings or workshops they should attend to improve their skills.268 As a result, the language is innovatively incorporated into the school in various ways through classes and events. Teachers incorporate Hñähñu in science or physical education class, to learn words for the body, for animals as well as when playing games; In reading class, the students read and translate stories, legends, poems, or songs from Spanish to Hñähñu or vice versa.269 Teachers also use a couple Indigenous language teaching games they have and will soon utilize the school’s new Indigenous language library that opened this past January after the Director collected Indigenous language books as donations to create it for the students’ and teachers’ daily use.270 Although it has limited books, according to the Director, the school has a an extensive list of ones they want to acquire.271 The library was the Director’s idea and she said she hopes it will demonstrate the school’s commitment to its Indigenous students.272 Another recent school addition incorporating the Hñähñu language, is a large mural that was painted in the courtyard. Currently displaying a large, white, mostly blank wall with one quote in Hñähñu at the top, it will soon adorn more quotes in Hñähñu, painted and selected by the students, from books they will read this year. Additionally, for this coming year, the Director is making plans to have the teachers and students learn the national anthem in Hñähñu.273 Despite lacking a bilingual curriculum, the teachers incorporate language materials and

268 Teacher 2 (Cuauhtémoc Primary School), interview by Marial Quezada, January 16, 2018, Mexico City, Mexico.

269 Ibid.

270 Ibid.

271 Ibid.

272 Ibid.

273 Ibid.
lessons whenever they can, even having their students practice writing, reading and translating in their language.

The school has also created new cultural programming. It now celebrates both Day of the Dead and Flag Day with ceremonies conducted in Spanish and Hñähñu, to which the families of the students are invited to attend and participate. For the Day of the Dead celebration, the Indigenous origins of the tradition “are central” according to one Teacher. All of the classes engage with different topics related to the celebration and together students from both school sessions contribute to the school’s communal altar. For Flag Day, students organize poetry presentations, which the students write and present in Spanish and Hñähñu. The Director also talked about the plan to include more programming aimed at validating the traditions and skills of the students, particularly related to art. Last year, they developed an art unit called “My Little Shell” in which students from both the morning and afternoon schools created handcrafts weaving, painting or sewing and once their projects were completed, they sold them at a small market organized by the school. According to the Director, many of the Indigenous students selected work they had experience with and some made traditional crafts and utilized traditional patterns. The event itself brought together the Indigenous and non-Indigenous students and their families. The Director shared how much she appreciated seeing so many of the Indigenous students come

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274 Teacher 1 (Cuauhtémoc Primary School), interview by Marial Quezada, January 19, 2017, Mexico City, Mexico.
275 Ibid.
276 Ibid.
277 Ibid.
278 Director, interview.
279 Ibid.
280 Ibid.
to the market dressed in their traditional outfits as they proudly sold their products, validating some of the knowledge and experience they have. Instances like these show how components of the Indigenous students’ communities and cultures can be creatively intertwined both in and outside the classroom as additional programming or as curricular supplements.

Through the inclusion of language and cultures of the students at the Cuauhtémoc school, the educators promote cultural awareness among all of its students and in the community. The school is very intentional about including the community in these efforts; “We understand that we have to create an identity for our school and that they feel that the school identifies with their cultures, origins and languages”, said the Director. The schoolwide “Route to Improvement” plan includes goals that address the students’ families. The plan requires teachers to learn basic words, greetings etc., in order to speak with the students, which also affords them the ability to communicate with some of their parents in their language, conveying that they care about the Hñähñu language. The Director explains that across classes, one homework assignment the teachers utilize is assigning their students to go home and ask their mothers, in Hñähñu, what they know or think about a topic they are learning in class and to report back to the class. The Director shared her strong support for this assignment believing it demonstrates their encouragement of Hñähñu use and practice to the students and their families. Families are also always invited to

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281 Ibid.
282 Ibid.
283 Ibid.
284 Ibid.
285 Ibid.
school’s bilingual events and encouraged to participate when they can. Additionally, the Director has invited some of the student’s mothers to come teach or talk about their art skills with the students and although it has not yet happened, she is committed to making it happen so long as the mothers are willing. She said, we want that “the family feels that we are interested in their languages and customs”. These examples show the different ways the Cuauhtémoc school engages with the Indigenous community it serves as well as how it collaborates with community to have them contribute to their IBE initiative.

However, despite all the achievements the Cuauhtémoc school displays in incorporating IBE in its school, much of it has been accomplished independently, with little government backing. The school has received minimal resources, training or guides and otherwise encouragement from the Secretariat of Public Education to carry out its IBE work. The Director and one teacher acknowledged the few books, games, videos and posters they have received and utilize in the classroom, mostly from the General Direction of Indigenous Education (DGEI) or General Coordination for Intercultural Bilingual Education (CGEIB). However, both feel that the materials they have are insufficient and often delivered only because they repeatedly

286 Ibid.
287 Ibid.
288 Ibid.
289 Ibid.
290 Teacher 1, interview.
291 Teacher 2, interview.
292 Director, interview.
293 Teacher 1, interview.
There isn’t government support for IBE, when I arrived here a year and a half ago, there were no materials and now I can say that some materials have arrived, books and some bibliographies”. 296 As for pedagogical materials for teachers, they have just a few of a 2016 publication, “Orientation for Teachers of Primary School with a Focus on Interculturality …sent unaccompanied by any training or supplementary materials”. 297 Another teacher acknowledged how CGEIB publishes their materials online, however said that while he utilizes them, he has to take the “initiative to search and interpret” them to use in the classroom. 298 He suggested that the for many teachers with no IBE experience he can imagine this is discouraging. 299 There are also far and few IBE trainings for the Cuauhtémoc teachers. When asked about trainings, one teacher discussed a Congress he was sent to on Indigenous education last year and a “couple of workshops” he attended in previous years. 300 Both he and the Director agreed they still would like more opportunities as well as required IBE trainings for all their teachers. 301,302 The Director would like teachers to attend mandatory government trainings to learn IBE and intercultural pedagogy, rather than just simply pursue, what of the few opportunities there are, interests them. 303

294 Ibid.
295 Director, interview.
296 Ibid.
297 Ibid.
298 Teacher 2, interview.
299 Ibid.
300 Teacher 1, interview.
301 Ibid.
302 Director, interview.
303 Ibid.
Multiple educators perceived that they received limited government support because IBE is more often associated with rural communities. The Director felt, “The focus is more in the provinces, not in Mexico City, because they don’t perceive it as a necessity.” 304 The Director said that even considering the Law of Linguistic Rights of Indigenous Peoples and growing Indigenous migrants in the city, “the government thinks Indigenous languages are not useful here”. 305 The Director suggests a disparity in Mexico City between law, which says that all Indigenous Peoples have the right to IBE, and perceptions of the government (such as the Secretariat of Public Education), which views IBE as more relevant and practical in Indigenous communities. The teacher that speaks Nahuatl and Otomi, who previously worked in rural Indigenous schools shared a similar view that the Mexican government directs IBE resources “Towards Indigenous communities, I think the government does more, supports them more”. 306 He highlighted the fact that there is no local General Direction of Indigenous Education office for the state of Mexico, while every other state has one, that trains and provide teachers of Nahuatl, Otomi, Mixteco etc. as well as books to the local schools. 307 These educators’ perspectives ultimately support the view that the Mexican government “uses rhetoric of Bilingual Intercultural Education” which “has never been concretized in teaching practice” because IBE curricula, trainings and materials do not exist. 308 We see how the lack of trainings and programs to provide Indigenous speaking educators to schools with significant Indigenous student populations in the city, like the Cuauhtémoc

304 Ibid.
305 Ibid.
306 Teacher 2, interview.
307 Ibid.
primary school, hinders their progress in IBE Implementation. “There are few teachers that speak an Indigenous language fluently here”, the Nahuatl and Otomi-speaking teacher said.\(^{309}\) This restricts the degree to which the Cuauhtémoc school is able to use Hñähñu and other Indigenous languages in the classroom. While the Cuauhtémoc primary school has had successes incorporating IBE, the government seems to play a less significant role in encouraging it, as well as causing some limitations to their progress.

The case of the Cuauhtémoc school suggests that although IBE is established in various laws, there are few structures in place to fully facilitate IBE implementation in the school. Nevertheless, the Cuauhtémoc Director and supporting teachers have taken their own initiative to do so and provide examples for how other schools may do the same. The currently nationally mandated curriculum, that the Cuauhtémoc school is subject to, does not include a bilingual or IBE segment, so all of their work is essentially “additional”, or supplementary curricular material, even though IBE is legally mandated.\(^{310}\) The Director of the school however expressed hope in the future IBE development at her school given the New Education Model for 2018-2019. The New Education Model’s “Curricular Autonomy” component allows schools to select and design 30% of the curriculum, choosing a category based on what they feel is relevant to their school’s needs.\(^{311}\) One of these categories is “Local community and culture”, ideal for schools in the city with large Indigenous populations.\(^{312}\) This is the category the Director intends to select, allowing them to

\(^{309}\) Ibid.

\(^{310}\) Director, interview.

\(^{311}\) Government Official 2, interview.

\(^{312}\) Ibid.
officially incorporate IBE as 30% of their curriculum. While this would still require educators equipped with the skills and resources to implement it, it offers an opportunity for the Cuauhtémoc school to legitimize their work. Furthermore, it may encourage schools to implement an IBE model similar to that of the Cuauhtémoc school in which they collaborate with the Indigenous communities as a way to incorporate Indigenous languages and cultural content in the school, promote cultural awareness, and work towards the implementation of a bilingual curriculum.

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313 Director, interview.
Section IV: Challenges and Recommendations for IBE in Mexico City

On paper, Intercultural Bilingual Education (IBE) in Mexico and Mexico City is clearly a right of Indigenous Peoples, explicitly spelled out in the constitution of the country and the city as well as in the Linguistic Rights Law. Implementing IBE however and accessing IBE as an Indigenous student, especially in urban areas, is much less straightforward than the law. “When you analyze the legislative framework in Mexico, people think, wow how advanced, but that legislative framework doesn’t translate into policies in schools here”, said Dr. Maria Regina Martinez Casas an IBE expert from the Center for Research and Higher Learning in Social Anthropology (CIESAS). Educators and government officials in Mexico City acknowledge multiple challenges they face in implementing IBE for Indigenous students. Government officials from the General Coordination of Intercultural Bilingual Education and the General Direction of Indigenous Education expressed how a few years ago they thought IBE was more prevalent in Mexico City schools, but after investigating, they learned it was not the case and that IBE programming exists only in a pocket of the city’s schools. There are various challenges and contradictions in state IBE implementation measures in Mexico and analyzing them helps identify recommendations to facilitate improvement of Indigenous students’ access to education in their language and respective of their culture in Mexico City.

314 See section I. of Literature Review, History of IBE in Latin America and Mexico, for an analysis of Mexico’s IBE policy.

315 Martinez Casas, interview.

316 Government Official 8, interview.

317 Government Official 3, interview.
IBE in Mexico has a limited institutional reach and does not permeate the entire education system. It mostly exists in primary schools, and moreover, is prioritized for schools in rural Indigenous communities, undermining the rights of many urban Indigenous residents and migrants. Although the General Coordination of Intercultural Bilingual Education (CGEIB) is housed within the Secretariat of Public Education, and in theory is intended to coordinate all levels of education, they have only impacted a small portion of the system, mostly primary schools.\textsuperscript{318,319} One official from CGEIB said, “we are working with primary schools mostly but we would like to work with secondary schools as well”.\textsuperscript{320} CGEIB officials acknowledge the effect this can have in forcing students to transition to Spanish-only education. “For children arriving to secondary school, there is no more education in your language, even if you had it at your primary school”.\textsuperscript{321} In a similar way, the agency in charge of managing Indigenous education, the General Direction of Indigenous Education (DGEI) is a dependent of the Direction of Basic Education, limiting its work to primary schools as well.\textsuperscript{322} One DGEI official explained that there are Indigenous groups they don’t work with but recognize the need for expansion of their work.\textsuperscript{323} Not only is DGEI’s reach limited to mainly primary schools but also mostly to schools in Indigenous communities. Like CGEIB, DGEI works on Indigenous education in primary schools, but after that there is no

\textsuperscript{318} Government Official 2, interview.
\textsuperscript{319} Government Official 3, interview.
\textsuperscript{320} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{321} Government Official 2, interview.
\textsuperscript{322} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{323} Government Official 8, interview.
continuity, therefore for Indigenous students, school “reverts back to a transitional” education, in which the student has no choice but to transition to Spanish language education.  

In addition to this primary school focus, state IBE measures are heavily concentrated in Indigenous communities. Government attention to the education of Indigenous populations in Mexico City is insufficient, and overshadowed by the attention given to rural Indigenous communities, visible in the structures and work of the IBE government agencies. Although the National Commission for the Development of Indigenous Peoples (CDI) it is not one of the three main actors in the development and implementation of IBE, it is still telling how the largest government agency dealing with Indigenous affairs, focuses the majority of its work in rural Indigenous communities. CDI’s longstanding and far-reaching radio station, known for the promotion and production of Indigenous language communication and cultural content, coordinated by Indigenous community members themselves, plays music, news, and even airs language courses in Indigenous languages, exclusively in Indigenous communities and is not accessible to inhabitants of Mexico City.  

There is a lack of attention given to the linguistic rights and needs of the Indigenous Peoples that have historically resided within the now metropolitan area as well as to the city’s Indigenous migrants. While in the past the Basic Education Program for Migrant Boys and Girls (PRONIM) existed Mexico City, it no longer exists, thus no agency currently attends to the education needs of Indigenous migrants. DGEI attends to Indigenous students that are in their original communities but, as a DGEI official recognizes, “Nearly half of Mexico’s Indigenous population has already migrated to cities. This is

324 Government Official 5, interview.


326 Government Official 3, interview.
our big challenge. The classroom should be pluricultural…Slowly we’re are proposing ways to address this, at least so Indigenous students don’t lose their language…”

Like CDI, the DGEI headquarters in Mexico City is not intended to work with the surrounding Indigenous population. Rather, DGEI is intended to produce IBE materials for Indigenous communities as well as coordinate with the local DGEI offices located in the other 30 Mexican states to ensure IBE is brought to schools in their Indigenous communities. The state of Mexico is the only state without a local DGEI office. Moreover, DGEI’s Indigenous language books and other materials such as education games are created with and predominantly sent to teachers and schools in Indigenous communities. A DGEI official expressed that, “While IBE is in the constitution, we believe we need to renovate the concepts”. These concepts need to be modified to improve the measures aimed at Indigenous students in urban schools.

In the Mexico City government and schools in there is limited awareness and lack of recognition of Indigenous students, which inhibits the reach of IBE. One government official identified that part of this problem has been limited awareness of Mexico City’s Indigenous population due to lack of data; “They only know which [boroughs] and how many languages, but they don’t know exactly where they are living, which street, nor which schools they attend”. This lack of information makes it difficult for DGEI, CGEIB and even CDI to direct their work and resources at schools when urban Indigenous school children and the schools they attend have

327 Government Official 8, interview.

328 Teacher 2, interview.

329 Government Official 8, interview.

330 Ibid.

331 Government Official 7, interview.
gone relatively undocumented.\

Ñuu Savi language Professor from the Autonomous University of Mexico talked about the two tendencies he has observed in recognizing Indigenous Peoples in Mexico City. One tendency is the reduction of the Indigenous population in the city to the oldest settlements in the metropolitan area, these being in the boroughs such as Milpa Alta and Xochimilco. This belief however doesn’t take into consideration migration of Indigenous Peoples, many of whom also populate more central boroughs and neighborhoods. Another tendency is to only think of and recognize the Nahuatl community in the city, which is the largest community and one of the oldest to occupy the territory that is now Mexico City, however this overlooks the Mazahua, Otomi and other communities as well. This very tendency was illustrated by one government official, who when asked why his agency focuses on working with mostly rural Indigenous communities, said, “In Mexico City there is only an Indigenous population in the southern zone, Milpa Alta, there is a Nahuatl community there that continues to speak”. This trend also manifests as inaccurately lumping Indigenous Peoples together as “Lo Indigena” (or one single community, culture, or language), not accounting for their distinctiveness as peoples, their languages, etc. and particularly relevant to IBE, their diversity in distribution throughout Mexico City. These tendencies demonstrate an inaccurate perception of the Indigenous

332 Government Official 4, interview.
333 Director, interview.
334 Fabian Bonilla Lopez (Professor at the Autonomous University of Mexico), interview by Marial Quezada, January 17, 2018, Mexico City, Mexico.
335 Ibid.
336 Ibid.
337 Government Official 7, interview.
338 Bonilla Lopez, interview.
communities in Mexico City, which could contribute to inadequate attention given to IBE implementation in the city’ schools, especially in boroughs that that have not been historically perceived as having significant Indigenous populations.

Additionally, in schools, teachers and directors have a difficulty recognizing Indigenous students, because of similar ignorance. Educators’ failure to recognize the Indigenous students in their schools because of limited knowledge or inadequate training, contributes to the “invisibility” of Indigenous students resulting in an absence of efforts to incorporate Indigenous language and cultures into classrooms when needed. Degrees of “invisibility” can also vary. CGEIB Official illustrates this with an experience she had when they visited a school in the city center and the Director informed them they had 12 Triqui students. After conducting interviews with the students, the CGEIB team discovered there were 5 different Indigenous languages spoken among the students, 37 of which identified as Indigenous. Lack of awareness and ignorance among educators lead to a misrepresentation and reduction of the true the size and diversity Indigenous students. The reality is that in Mexico City nearly 57 out of the 68 Indigenous languages of Mexico are spoken however this is not necessarily reflected in perceptions nor in government IBE efforts and school programming.

Another challenge related to the recognition of urban Indigenous students and thus need for IBE in Mexico City schools, which can also contribute to the “invisibility” of Indigenous students, results from discrimination and prejudice. Ñuu Savi professor from UNAM discussed, “The phenomenon of racism, that informs that the need for intercultural education has always

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339 Villanueva, “Miradas a La Interculturalidad (A View into Interculturality)”, 1235.

340 Ibid.

341 Government Official 3, interview.
existed … for your skin color, the way you dress or the way you talk, you are labeled as not being from the city”. 342 Racism and discrimination, especially from educators towards Indigenous Peoples, contributes to less effective IBE implementation in Mexico City. A CGEIB official noted that “Teachers often bring with them many prejudices that inhibit them from promoting cultural and linguistic recognition of their students. In order for Indigenous students to have access to IBE, educators need to recognize them, their language and that their classroom is truly an intercultural space.” 343 Dr. Maria Regina Martinez Casas from the Center for Research and Higher Learning in Social Anthropology shared her research findings that “Teachers continue to think that they are doing a favor for children, obligating them to speak Spanish, some punish them for speaking their language in class or they send them home, because they cannot use an Indigenous language in the classroom”. 344 Teachers may even be proud when they recognize their students begin to identify as “Mexican” and no longer “Indigenous”. 345 This shows how discrimination towards Indigenous students impede the use of Indigenous languages, despite the existence of IBE law, which is intended to promote the exact opposite. 346 The National Council for the Prevention of Discrimination (CONAPRED), established to diminish discrimination, identified prejudice of educators as a barrier to intercultural education in Mexico City, and thus offers workshops, conferences and “Pedagogical Fridays” for teachers in hopes of mitigating discrimination and

342 Bonilla Lopez, interview.

343 Government Official 3, interview

344 Martinez Casas, interview.

345 Ibid.

346 Ibid.
promoting cultural empathy. Adelina Gomez from CONAPRED expressed her belief that in order to advance interculturality in education, diminishing discrimination among educators is “key”. The prejudice against Indigenous languages has a great impact and even fuels the institutionalization of discrimination which limits the incorporation of IBE in schools. Many Indigenous Peoples learn to speak Spanish because of discrimination they face for speaking their language, especially in Mexico City. One CGEIB official shared that when they have consulted with Indigenous parents in the city before, some parents have disagreed with the idea that their children should study in their mother tongue. He said that because of discrimination, these parents believe that in the city Spanish is more useful, as there are not jobs for their children to use their language. The perspective of both teachers and parents in Mexico City creates obstacles for IBE implementation and reinforces the very need for such an education that values and promotes languages and cultures other than that which is dominant in Mexican society.

A lack of understanding of the diversity of Indigenous Peoples in Mexico City highlights a conceptual challenge for IBE. At a primary school in Cuauhtémoc, where there are primarily Hñähñu speakers, one teacher, who speaks Hñähñu himself, explains it is still hard to incorporate his students’ language in the classroom because many of them are from different Otomi communities and speak different variants. The Director of the school said that while teachers

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347 Adelina Gomez (National Council for the Prevention of Discrimination), interview by Marial Quezada, January 9, 2018, Mexico City, Mexico.

348 Ibid.

349 Government Official 3, interview.

350 Government Official 2, interview.

351 Bonilla Lopez, interview.

352 Teacher 2, interview.
can do their best to learn the language of their students, it would still be impossible for them to learn and then find materials to teach in all the variants.\textsuperscript{353} INALI similarly faces this challenge when creating language materials with Indigenous communities, one official explained how Mixteco for example has 81 variants and variants of other languages are still being catalogued, such as Hñähñu.\textsuperscript{354} Similarly, this challenge arises in other schools in Mexico City where there are Triquis, Mixtecos, and Zapotecs in the same school.\textsuperscript{355} One DGEI official said they worked with a school that had Nahuatl, Huichol and Mixteco students and they have even encountered schools representing 7 different Indigenous languages.\textsuperscript{356} For this reason, conceptually, it may not make sense to seek the implementation of Intercultural \textit{Bilingual} Education. “It would be more appropriate to seek Intercultural Plurilingual Education, emphasizing that no matter what the child’s maternal language it is important to reinforce bilingualism”.\textsuperscript{357} This however also creates a practical challenge. Much like it would be impossible for teachers to learn every variant of a language, it would be difficult, for teachers to learn multiple Indigenous languages. Given the increasing pluricultural and plurilingual reality of schools in Mexico City, IBE policy and implementation strategies must be revisited and revised in order for Indigenous students to have access to their education rights.

Teachers’ lack of training in the city ultimately hinders their ability to implement IBE, contributing to the denial of their Indigenous students’ rights. This is largely because no agency

\begin{footnotes}
\item[353] Director, interview.
\item[354] Government Official 4, interview.
\item[355] Director, interview.
\item[356] Government Official 8, interview.
\item[357] Government Official 2, interview.
\end{footnotes}
exists in Mexico specifically for urban teacher trainings nor are there mandatory teachers trainings.\textsuperscript{358} The Director and teachers at a Cuauhtémoc primary school highlight both a shortage of teacher training opportunities as well as a shortage of Indigenous language speaking teachers.\textsuperscript{359} Although at one point the National Council for Education Development (CONAFE) trained teachers in Mexico City on interculturality as well as in Indigenous language education, they decided to end the work, agreeing that the General Direction of Indigenous Education (DGEI) would handle teacher trainings of that nature. DGEI however operates in Indigenous communities and only offers trainings to teachers in the city who approach them for support.\textsuperscript{361} One DGEI official said “The future of IBE requires more trained teachers, although we have thousands of trained teachers, they are in rural communities, we need them in urban places to bring the IBE focus”.\textsuperscript{362} The General Coordination of Intercultural Bilingual Education similarly expressed the need and their desire to train more teachers in the city, however such a proposal would be a large undertaking and require both approval and budget from the Secretariat of Public Education.\textsuperscript{363}

Many working in government agencies identify insufficient budget as one of the greatest challenges facing IBE. “There is not a budget to support IBE programs. It depends on the will of the individuals to make it a public policy”, said Dr. Martinez Casas of CIESAS.\textsuperscript{364} One DGEI official listed budget of one of the two main problems with IBE, the other being shortage of

\begin{flushleft}
\textsuperscript{358} Director, interview.  \\
\textsuperscript{359} Ibid.  \\
\textsuperscript{360} Teacher 2, interview.  \\
\textsuperscript{361} Government Official 3, interview.  \\
\textsuperscript{362} Government Official 8, interview.  \\
\textsuperscript{363} Government Official 3, interview.  \\
\textsuperscript{364} Martinez Casas, interview.  
\end{flushleft}
teaching materials, which could ultimately improve with more funding.\textsuperscript{365} One DGEI official said that because of budget shortages, 5\textsuperscript{th} and 6\textsuperscript{th} grades never received the Indigenous language books the agency began producing in the 1990’s, and only now is DGEI able to begin producing them for those primary school grades.\textsuperscript{366} Moreover, she commented that because of a limited publishing budget, that in all the other primary school grades, students are still utilizing the same book published in 1994, which they hope to soon update.\textsuperscript{367} Furthermore, the official said DGEI also believes they should expand their distribution of free IBE books to “all Indigenous students”, to include those in Mexico City, however this is again limited due to lack of funding.\textsuperscript{368} Another agency that produces many Indigenous language teacher materials, the National Institute of Indigenous Languages, acknowledges their low budget limits their ability to meet all the requests they receive for materials, particularly for translations, which have high costs.\textsuperscript{369}

Thus, with all these challenges in mind, I arrive at recommendations to address these challenges and to improve IBE implementation in Mexico City. To address the limited institutional reach of IBE government agencies and in order to ensure improved attention to IBE development and implementation in Mexico City, the government should establish an office of the General Direction of Indigenous Education (DGEI) in Mexico City.\textsuperscript{370} This office, like in other states, should be charged with ensuring that Indigenous students in the city and throughout the state have

\begin{footnotes}
\item[365] Government Official 6, interview.
\item[366] Government Official 8, interview.
\item[367] Ibid.
\item[368] Ibid.
\item[369] Government Official 5, interview.
\item[370] Teacher 2, interview.
\end{footnotes}
access to education in their languages and cultures; Including providing trainings, Indigenous language teachers, and books to schools with Indigenous students. This initiative should eventually be expanded to secondary school as well, creating and providing at the least, Indigenous language books and teaching materials to secondary schools where there are significant Indigenous populations.

In order to improve IBE implementation generally, increased awareness and data collection on Indigenous students and their languages present in schools in Mexico City must occur. Two actions have been taken this past year that will allow for improved recognition and ideally facilitate an improvement of the governments’ and educators’ abilities to identify Indigenous students and their IBE rights and needs. The Secretariat of Public Education in Mexico City for the first time collected data on the number of Indigenous students present in primary schools and the National Institute of Indigenous Languages collected and will publish this year as part of their Indigenous language catalog, for the first-time, an entire section including data on the Indigenous language population in Mexico City.\(^{371,372}\) These efforts to collect data on Indigenous students in Mexico City must be repeated and used to improve IBE policy.

To address challenges regarding educator preparedness, recognition and “invisibility” of Indigenous students, as well as discrimination towards Indigenous Peoples in the city, teacher trainings should be created and improved, replicating efforts of those like CONAPRED, to train educators on the importance of interculturality and anti-discrimination. Additionally, mandatory teacher trainings based in IBE methodology and pedagogy are necessary for IBE implementation in Mexico City. Furthermore, in addition to designating an agency to lead a teacher training

\(^{371}\) Government Official 4, interview.

\(^{372}\) Director, interview.
program, a program should be established that addresses these capacities and recruits and prepares teachers to teach Indigenous languages and then feed these teachers to schools in the city with significant Indigenous language speaking students. This training program would also be beneficial if directed towards Indigenous language speaking students in Mexico City’s public schools, recruiting some to train to become teachers of Indigenous languages in the city’s schools. This could begin to create more Indigenous language jobs in the city, targeting the belief and reality that there are few urban jobs that utilize Indigenous languages.

All of these initiatives would require funding, therefore the Mexican government and the Secretariat of Public Education must allocate greater funds to IBE in Mexico City. Additionally, government agencies should partner more with international Ngo’s and agencies to provide financial and technical support to these initiatives. CGEIB and DGEI have provided good examples of this, as both initiated projects with UNICEF this past year to fund IBE teacher manuals and Indigenous language teaching materials. In addition to increased budget allocations, more funding and partnerships should be sought from these international organizations.

Finally, to address conceptual and practical issues of the pluricultural and plurilingual reality of Mexico City’s Indigenous population, Mexico should consider this characteristic and modify its IBE approach. First looking at other cities where Indigenous migrant communities are growing and diverse, such as in Monterrey and Baja California, where the state Ministries of Education have recently implemented citywide IBE initiatives, may provide the policy makers and educators of Mexico City with some guidance, albeit on a smaller scale. Mexico should consider

373 Government Official 1, interview.
374 Government Official 8, interview.
375 Government Official 3, interview.
a reconceptualization of IBE as Intercultural Plurilingual Education, acknowledging the circumstances of many of its cities which represent multiple Indigenous language populations, and then provide trainings and materials to teachers that account for the plurilingual character of their classrooms. The government should also consider designating certain schools to specific Indigenous languages so that teachers and materials of that specific language are provided to schools with student speakers of a specific language. Furthermore, while the New Education Model’s “Curricular Autonomy” section, which allows schools to select and create curriculum content of their choice, such as reflecting the local cultures and languages, may lead to more IBE implementation across the country. However, at the same time it may make no difference in Mexico City, where teachers already act as implementers or inhibitors of IBE, some who see the value in IBE and incorporate it in their curriculum when they can, while others who don’t see the value in IBE, will likely continue to exclude Indigenous language and culture from their classroom. Thus, Mexico should consider establishing a national Intercultural Plurilingual Curriculum “for all”, particularly for Mexico City, to ensure that regardless of prejudice and discrimination or whether the educators believe there to be Indigenous students in their school, an intercultural and plurilingual curriculum will be mandated and implemented.

In conclusion, while IBE in Mexico City faces various obstacles to its implementation, the legislative framework, backing Indigenous language and cultural education as the right of Indigenous students, remains vast and stable. These challenges point to recommendations the federal and city government as well as the Secretariat of Public Education of Mexico should consider to ensure that Indigenous students living in Mexico City have access to their rights. Structural and institutional changes, to direct IBE training and resources towards Mexico City educators and schools may facilitate necessary change. Additionally, re-conceptualizing
Intercultural *Bilingual* Education to reflect and respond to the *plurilingual* reality of the city may foster improved awareness and measures in the city. Finally, considering the establishment of a national Intercultural Plurilingual Education curriculum “for all”, mandated in all schools, may better ensure that Indigenous students in cities receive education in their language and respective of their culture. In all of these recommendations, the inclusion of Indigenous Peoples in the development process and decision-making in the future of IBE is critical. Especially if Mexico establishes Intercultural Plurilingual Education *for all*, Indigenous Peoples first and foremost have a distinct right to education in their languages and respective of their cultures, as well as to determine the education they want for their children, and that must be upheld.\(^\text{376}\)

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\(^{376}\) UN General Assembly, Resolution 61/295.
Conclusion

This study began by laying the foundation for why Indigenous Peoples’ rights to education in their languages and cultures are so important. Across the globe, the future of Indigenous languages is threatened, especially in countries like Mexico, where there is immense Indigenous language diversity. Various international human rights instruments protect Indigenous Peoples’ language education rights, affirming Indigenous autonomy in education as well as state responsibility to ensure these rights. Mexican law reflects these international standards and has established Intercultural Bilingual Education (IBE) as a right of Indigenous Peoples. Nevertheless, in Mexico, there is a historical trend of state IBE measures targeting only rural Indigenous communities. Yet as a result of globalization and increased migration, urban Indigenous populations are growing while fewer urban Indigenous youth are speaking their language. Therefore, urban Indigenous Peoples’ rights to IBE is of increasing importance, especially in Mexico City, which has the largest and most diverse Indigenous population in all of the country. In 2017, Mexico City’s Constitution incorporated a provision protecting IBE as the right of the city’s growing Indigenous population.

For these reasons, this study looked at how Mexico’s IBE Policy translates into practice, beginning with an examination of what state IBE measures consist of, focusing on Mexico City. This examination revealed collaboration among government agencies in the production of teaching

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377 “Indigenous Languages for Empowerment”.
378 Horbath, “De La Marginación Rural" (From Rural Marginalization)", 140.
materials, in which Indigenous Peoples play a critical role. These materials along with trainings offered by agencies, are still today largely directed to rural Indigenous communities, highlighting the paradox, that although the federal IBE agencies are located in Mexico City, they are far less aware of and responsive to the Indigenous students in the schools surrounding them, than those in rural communities across the country. Overall there is a lack of government awareness of and attention given to Indigenous Peoples in Mexico City, however the National Institute of Indigenous Languages’ forthcoming language catalogue, which includes a chapter on the city’s Indigenous population, will ideally raise awareness of this population and improve attention given to IBE implementation in the city.

Subsequently, this study examined the role of educators as implementers through a case study of a public primary school, with a large Indigenous student population, in the Cuauhtémoc borough of the city. Applying a “Maintenance and Development” IBE implementation model defined by Lopez (2009), we saw how the Cuauhtémoc school seeks to include Indigenous languages as the medium of instruction or as subjects, incorporate Indigenous cultural content, and promote cultural awareness in the classroom as well as in school programming.\(^{380}\) This exposed how the school’s educators are personally motivated to implement IBE as well as their efforts to include the larger Indigenous community it serves, inviting the families of their students to bring their language and culture into the school and contribute to the IBE initiative. Nevertheless, educators’ testimonies revealed they are limited in their progress by lack of supplies, trainings, Indigenous language speaking teachers as well as due to a lack of a mandated bilingual curriculum. Ultimately, the educators receive little “government backing” to implement IBE, which many perceive as an experience distinct from schools in rural Indigenous communities. Nonetheless, this

\(^{380}\) Lopez, “Reaching the Unreached”, 11.
case study serves as a model for how to incorporate IBE despite these circumstances. And in turn, the “Curricular Autonomy” of the New Education Model for the fall 2018 has potential to encourage other schools, such as those in Mexico City with large Indigenous student populations, to officially create and incorporate IBE components in 30% of their curriculum.  

Finally, these analyses helped identify challenges facing IBE implementation in Mexico City yielding recommendations for improvement. Various challenges were identified, including a government tendency to work predominantly with rural Indigenous communities, concentrating teaching trainings and programs to provide Indigenous language teachers to them, despite a shortage of this in Mexico City. Additionally, a lack of recognition of Indigenous students in Mexico City schools by educators and the government as a result of insufficient training or prejudices, furthered by a lack of data collection on the city’s Indigenous student population, contributes to the “invisibility” of Indigenous students and absence of IBE initiatives or programming in many schools. And finally, the reality of Mexico City’s diversity and the possibility of anywhere from 1-7 Indigenous languages being spoken in the same classroom, makes tackling these initiatives even more difficult.  

Still however, considering these challenges, I’ve presented the following recommendations to facilitate improved IBE in Mexico City. The National Secretariat of Public Education should regularly collect data on the Indigenous student populations, identifying which schools have the greatest populations and of which language, to them utilize to inform IBE policy improvement in the city. Also, generally, the Mexican government and Secretariat of Education should direct more

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381 Secretariat of Public Education, “Innovaciones (Innovations)”.


383 Government Official 8, interview.
IBE trainings and teaching materials to educators in Mexico City. The Commission for the Development of Education (CONAFE) and the General Direction of Indigenous Education (DGEI) both offer trainings and provide Indigenous language teachers to Indigenous communities and this should be replicated in the city. The trainings of Council on the Prevention of Discrimination (CONAPRED) should also be replicated and mandatory for Mexico City educators, to diminish prejudice and promote interculturality. The government should also establish a local DGEI office in the city, to ensure attention is given to the needs and rights of the city’s Indigenous students, namely providing pedagogical and educational materials to schools with Indigenous student bodies. Furthermore, to accomplish all of this, the budget for IBE must be increased, to provide greater “government [financial] backing” in conjunction with the seeking of more partnerships with international organizations such as UNICEF to provide funding support for IBE projects.

In conclusion, while “Curricular Autonomy” of the New Education Model provides hope that schools in Mexico City will elect to include Indigenous language and cultural content, it may also create no difference if some educators are less invested in or view IBE as less critical than others, and choose to use their 30% in other ways. To ensure IBE access to Indigenous students, Mexico should consider adjusting its approach to Intercultural Plurilingual Education and ultimately create a national curriculum and an implementation plan. Perhaps a nationally mandated curriculum “for all” as opposed to “for Indigenous Peoples” will increase its application across Mexico, especially in cities like Mexico City. Nevertheless, while this approach should be considered, Indigenous Peoples’ participation and self-determination in education policy is necessary to ensure the state does not co-opt Indigenous education to serve its own purposes.

384 Teacher 2, interview.

Bibliography


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Appendix 1. Bilingual Education Models Implemented in Latin America

bilingual education.

Table 2: Bilingual education models under implementation in Latin America

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Denomination</th>
<th>Basic argument</th>
<th>Political aim</th>
<th>Target population</th>
<th>Linguistic and cultural aim</th>
<th>Role of the mother tongue (MT)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Submersion</td>
<td>Indigenous languages and cultures are a threat to national unity.</td>
<td>Forced indigenous assimilation into the mainstream.</td>
<td>Indigenous communities and individuals.</td>
<td>Spanishization or Portugueseization. A monolingual and monocultural society.</td>
<td>None or at the most as an auxiliary language to facilitate learners' understanding of basic classroom instructions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transitional</td>
<td>Indigenous languages and cultures are a threat to national unity.</td>
<td>Indigenous assimilation into the mainstream. Consolidation of the classical homogeneous nation-State and of &quot;a&quot; national culture.</td>
<td>Indigenous communities and individuals in rural areas.</td>
<td>Spanishization or Portugueseization. Subtractive bilingualism. Gradual extinction of indigenous languages. Indigenous languages used to translate and transmit mainstream curriculum content. A monolingual and monocultural society.</td>
<td>Spanish curriculum implementation except for the area of language. Mother-tongue is a bridge to European hegemonic languages. It makes hegemonic language learning more efficient.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enrichment</td>
<td>Indigenous languages and cultures are political resources to achieve unity within diversity.</td>
<td>Intracultural reafirmation. Intercultural citizenship. Redefinition of the nation-State, granting territorial rights and levels of autonomic rule to indigenous peoples. A multi-nation State in-the-making.</td>
<td>Indigenous communities and individuals in urban and rural areas. Society at large, including mestizo individuals and communities.</td>
<td>Additive bilingualism. General societal bi or multilingualism. Preservation and revitalization of indigenous languages. Indigenous cultures and languages as rights challenge the ontology of school knowledge. Spanish or Portuguese as languages of interethnic and intercultural communication. An intercultural society.</td>
<td>Bilingual or multilingual curriculum implementation. Indigenous languages as subjects and media of instruction vis-à-vis Spanish / Portuguese. Proficiency in two or more languages. Cultural sensitivity and critical language awareness.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>