Social Justice Language Education and Critical Language Education:
Integrating Perspectives for Teacher Education in Colombia

Justiça social e educação crítica em línguas: Integrando perspectivas para a formação de professores na Colômbia

Justicia social y educación crítica en lenguas: Integrando perspectivas para la formación de docentes en Colombia

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Abstract

This reflection article makes a call to the language teacher education field in Colombia to integrate social justice language education and critical language education perspectives to advance a social justice agenda in language teacher education. Its overall intention is to invite critical language teacher educators to expand the scope of their work by being knowledgeable about the theories or dimensions of social justice - redistribution, recognition and representation - and including social justice frameworks and principles in their practices. These elements are fundamental to tailoring teacher education programs and guiding pedagogical practices that prepare future teachers for social action and transformation.

Keywords

critical perspectives; language education; preservice teachers; social justice; teacher education

Resumo

Este artigo de reflexão faz um apelo ao campo de formação de professores de línguas na Colômbia para integrar a educação linguística voltada para a justiça social e as perspectivas de educação linguística crítica, a fim de avançar uma agenda de justiça social na formação de professores de línguas. Sua intenção geral é convidar os educadores de professores de línguas críticos a expandir o escopo de seu trabalho, sendo conhecedores das teorias ou dimensões da justiça social - redistribuição, reconhecimento e representação - e incluindo frameworks e princípios de justiça social em suas práticas. Esses elementos são fundamentais para adaptar os programas de formação de professores e orientar práticas pedagógicas que preparam futuros professores para a ação social e a transformação.

Palavras-chave

perspectivas críticas; educação linguística; professores em formação; justiça social; formação de professores

Resumen

Este artículo de reflexión hace un llamado al campo de la formación de docentes de lenguas en Colombia a integrar la perspectiva de educación de lenguas para la justicia social y las perspectivas críticas para la enseñanza de lenguas y así potenciar una agenda de justicia social en la formación de docentes de lenguas. El propósito general del artículo es invitar a los formadores de docentes de lenguas que trabajan desde perspectivas críticas a expandir el alcance de su trabajo siendo conocedores de las teorías o dimensiones de la justicia social –redistribución, reconocimiento y representación–, e incluyendo modelos y principios de la justicia social en sus prácticas. Estos elementos son fundamentales para diseñar programas de formación de docentes y guiar prácticas pedagógicas que preparen a los futuros docentes para la acción y la transformación social.

Palabras clave

educación en lenguas; formación de docentes, justicia social, perspectivas críticas, docentes en formación

1. Introduction

Language teacher education programs aim to transform schools into spaces that contribute to achieving social justice in society. Those programs should prepare teachers who understand the different oppressive structures that are in place in schools and society to be able to educate their students as democratic citizens. Therefore, these programs should be designed in ways that help these essential actors in education to accomplish this task. Including knowledge, skills, and dispositions related to social justice in language teacher education programs may allow preservice teachers to challenge the injustices and inequalities present in different spheres of society and move to more equal and just teaching practices (Sierra-Piedrahita, 2016).

Bell (2023), defines social justice as a goal and a process.

> The *goal* of social justice is full and equitable participation of people from all social identity groups in a society that is mutually shaped to meet their needs. The *process* for attaining the goal of social justice should also be democratic and participatory, respectful of human diversity and group differences, and inclusive and affirming of human agency and capacity for working collaboratively with others to create change for our collective well-being (p.3).

Consequently, the goal of social justice education is not only to help students to acquire the tools to critically analyze how oppression operates and how they have been socialized into oppressive systems but also to help them develop agency and commitment to action and the skills to interrupt oppression and effect change working collaboratively with others (Bell, 2023). In this sense, the preparation of teachers is fundamental because their convictions, commitments, reflections, and practices directly influence the opportunities for democratic learning of their students (Martinez-Pineda & Soler-Martín, 2015). Futhermore, their conceptions and beliefs about the role of education and educators in the construction of society will influence their pedagogical practices and actions. Thus, the job of language teacher educa-

tion programs and teacher educators within them is of paramount importance to accomplish these goals. Accordingly, I contend that an integration of social justice language teacher education (sjlte) and critical language teacher education (clte) perspectives can contribute to this endeavor, and is necessary to advance a social justice agenda in language teacher education in the country. Their intertwining and overlapping agendas and practices for promoting educational and social equity (Dover, 2009, 2013) and social transformation allow such an integration.

Before discussing this integration, and for a better understanding of a social justice perspective in language teacher education, I first explain the philosophical roots of social justice in terms of its different theories or dimensions, namely redistribution, recognition and representation. Then, I explain the meaning of these dimensions for teacher education and language teacher education. Finally, I concentrate on the aforementioned integration of perspectives using critical literacies and social justice frameworks and principles as examples. Undoubtedly, this integration can also occur with other critical perspectives used in language teacher education such as community-based pedagogies, critical interculturality and decoloniality.

2. Social Justice

The use of a social justice perspective in education and more particularly in the preparation of teachers, emanates from theories of social justice proposed by contemporary political philosophers and critical theorists such as Fraser (1997, 2003, 2009), Honneth (2003), Nussbaum (2006), Rawls (1971) and Young (1990). Scholars in the United States (see Cochran-Smith et al., 2009; Cochran-Smith, 2010; Zeichner, 2009; Sleeter, et al., 2016) and Latin-America (see Cuenca, 2012; Martinez-Pineda & Soler-Martín, 2015; Soler-Martín et al., 2018; Murillo-Torrecilla & Hernández-Castilla, 2011) for instance, have used such theories to define social justice and construct theoretical frameworks for the preparation of teachers in different areas of knowledge. Such theories are known as redistribution theories, recognition

theories and representation theories; at times scholars refer to these as conceptions. Before explaining how a social justice perspective applies to language education, it is important to understand what social justice means and what these different theories or dimensions of social justice propose. To do this, I focus particularly on the three dimensions proposed by Fraser (1997, 2009), redistribution, recognition, and representation, because she integrates them, unlike other contemporary philosophers, proposing a framework to understand the demands of our society concerning injustices that are visible, interrelated and that need to be remediated (Fraser, 1997, 2003, 2009) for people to have a better and decent life. Finally, I connect such dimensions to what has been discussed about social justice in teacher education.

Fraser (2009) defines the concept of social justice as "parity of participation" (p. 16) which "requires social arrangements that permit all members of society to interact with one another as peers" (Fraser, 2003, p. 36). That is, people having the economic means and the social status they need to participate equally with others in social interaction (Fraser, 2003). According to Fraser (2003, 2009), ending injustices means eliminating the institutional obstacles that impede some people from interacting with others as equals. She observes that people are denied equal participation through both the economic structures of society by not having access to the resources and opportunities needed to interact with others as equals (distributive injustices) and the institutionalized cultural hierarchies that deny them the status required to participate in social interaction (recognition injustices). Therefore, we find two types of political injustices: socio-economic injustice (redistribution dimension), and cultural injustices (recognition dimension).

Socio-economic injustices, which are based on the political and economic structure of society, relate to issues such as the exploitation of the workforce, economic marginalization, and deprivation of adequate material resources to live a decent life, such as access to education, health care, paid work, food, etc. (Fraser, 1997, 2003). To remediate distributive injustices, it is necessary to restructure the political and economic system (Fraser, 1997), to change the social arrangements that institutionalize economic injustices, such as those described above, and that deny some people the resources and possibilities for equal interaction (Fraser, 2003).

Cultural injustices, based on social practices of representation, interpretation and communication, have to do, for instance, with cultural domination (the domination of a culture over its own), no recognition of own culture (invisibility of practices of own culture), cultural disrespect (cultural stereotyping), and the existence of unjust relationships in society (Fraser, 1997, 2003, 2009). Different social groups, based on culture, race, gender, religion, nationality, language, sexual orientation, and ability/disability, struggle for recognition in contemporary society (Cochran-Smith, 2010; Fraser, 1997, 2003). Remedying cultural injustices could involve revaluing disrespected identities and the cultural products of disrespected groups, recognizing and valuing cultural diversity and transforming societal patterns of representation, interpretation, and communication to change people's sense of self (Fraser, 1997). This means changing institutionalized norms that repeatedly disrespect some groups of people and fail to recognize them due to their differentiating characteristics, thus denying them the social esteem they deserve (Fraser, 2003). Both socio-economic and cultural injustices are mutually related, they exist everywhere in societies, and they need to be finished by putting in place different conceptions of redistribution and recognition in order to achieve social justice (Fraser, 1997, 2009).

Political representation, the third dimension of social justice, is necessary for people of a specific community or social group to make political demands related to redistribution and recognition. Through this dimension they organize and structure their actions to solve the struggles in the two previous dimensions as they exercise their voice for decision-making in order to confront oppressive structures (Fraser, 2009) and to seek social changes advocating for economic and socio-cultural institutional reforms (Fraser, 2003). In other words, the

representation dimension refers to the participation in the decision-making structures and procedures that affect people's lives providing people with the tools they need to have an active and equal participation in society, especially for those that have been historically excluded because of the social groups they belong to. Thus, increasing participation within the decision-making structures improves the possibility to achieve distributive and cultural justice (Murillo-Torrecilla & Hernandez-Castilla, 2011). As presented above, social justice has social, economic, cultural and political relevance (North, 2006).

2.1 Social Justice teacher education

Although the theories about the different dimensions of social justice do not directly address teaching or teacher education, they provide a useful framework to theorize teacher education for social justice (Cochran-Smith, 2010). Scholars in education, and more particularly in teacher education, have used the dimensions of social justice proposed by Fraser and other contemporary political philosophers to define this concept for the preparation of teachers (see Bell et al., 2023; Zeichner, 2011; Cochran-Smith, 2010; McDonald & Zeichner, 2009; Cuenca, 2012; Martinez-Pineda & Soler-Martín, 2015; Soler-Martín et al., 2018; Murillo-Torrecilla & Hernández-Castilla, 2011). However, they have also argued that, sometimes, the implementation of social justice has relied on educators' conceptions of what they considered to be social justice and not necessarily on what theories of social justice posit (Cochran-Smith et al., 2010; McDonald & Zeichner, 2009), which might constrain teacher educators and programs to develop missions, visions, goals, aims and strategies in relation to social justice (McDonald & Zeichner, 2009). On this note, I now move to discuss what the different dimensions of social justice mean for the preparation of preservice teachers.

The teacher education literature related to social justice shows that the dimensions of redistribution and recognition have been a significant part of teacher education. The distributive dimension is about recognizing the disparities in the distribution of educational opportunities, resources, achievement, and positive outcomes among students (Cochran-Smith, et al., 2009). Within this dimension, social justice education is about preparing teachers to be committed to challenging inequities in education by helping to redistribute the educational resources, opportunities, and outcomes for their students to provide them with high-quality education (Cochran-Smith, et al., 2009) thereby disrupting the social structures that create economic inequities for particular groups (Fraser, 1997) to which their students belong.

The recognition dimension of social justice in teacher education focuses on understanding the injustices that exist in not recognizing and respecting the different social groups (Young 1990 as cited in Cochran-Smith, 2010) because of their culture, race, gender, religion, nationality, language, sexual orientation, and ability/disability and that have historically been oppressed due to the social groups they belong to (Cochran-Smith, 2010). From this perspective, social justice education is about preparing teachers to understand how race, class, culture, gender, religion, language, sexual orientation, etc., shape students' experiences (McDonald & Zeichner, 2009), how these features intersect in students' lives reinforcing oppression (Bell, 2023), to commit to recognizing and respecting different social groups, and work to remediate the different forms of oppression that people in those groups experience (Martínez-Pineda & Soler-Martín, 2015; Zeichner & Flessner, 2009). This preparation is fundamental because being part of oppressed groups often shapes students' access to resources, opportunities, and experiences, as well as their ability to determine their actions and exercise their capacities (McDonald & Zeichner, 2009), not only within the educational system but also in society. Therefore, teachers can contribute to disrupting status hierarchies in schools that privilege some groups over others and impede equity (Fraser, 1997).

The representation dimension of social justice in teacher education has not been as explicitly and widely discussed as the redistribution and

recognition dimensions. However, an analysis of the different principles, frameworks, and definitions of social justice education proposed by various scholars, provides us with important elements to understand what this dimension implies for teacher preparation. All these point to the need for teachers to be activists and committed to advocating for their students, their families, and communities and to take actions inside and outside the classroom to effect social change (Hawkins, 2011; Zeichner, 2009, 2011). In other words, preservice teachers are expected to be involved in activism and political participation at the local and the societal level (North, 2006) and be able to take actions to transform students' realities in terms of the economic and cultural injustices they experience in schools and that affect their lives. They are also expected to be democratic teachers who give their students a voice in decision-making processes (Fraser, 2009; Lingard & Keddie, 2013) to confront oppressive structures (Fraser, 2009), and to provide students with the necessary elements for political contestation to seek social changes (Fraser, 2003); all this resulting in student's active and equal participation in society.

These theories of the different dimensions of social justice should guide teacher education programs if we expect preservice teachers to be able to redress educational inequalities and embrace equity and justice to provide students with better life chances. Thus, as McDonald & Zeichner (2009) note, such theories are significant to specify programs' missions, visions, aims, goals and strategies and to support the decisions and actions of those involved in those programs, as in the case of teacher educators.

2.2 Social Justice language teacher education

Social Justice language teacher education (SJLTE) maintains the core principles of social justice teacher education (SJTE) as presented in its different dimensions above. In addition, as Hawkins (2011) states, it moves beyond language issues (grammar, language skills, function, structure and usage) and

sociocultural and critical approaches to language teaching, to concentrate on teachers' agency and responsibility to effect local and larger social change because they understand how institutional and societal structures of power, privilege, and status affect educational and life chances for students, families and communities. In other words, it implies changing understandings of language learning, teaching, and usage; accepting the existence of inequities in education; imagining just social futures for people, and emphasizing the responsibility of teachers in being agents of social change (Hawkins, 2011). This emphasis on teachers as change agents is essential because in social justice education we educate towards action (Adams et al., 2023) and thus knowledge of language alone is not sufficient.

The incorporation of a social justice perspective in language teacher education programs can provide preservice teachers with the opportunity to reflect on the influence of institutional arrangements and social structures on students' possibilities and opportunities and to advocate for institutional and structural changes (McDonald & Zeichner, 2009). This is possible because they develop the awareness, knowledge, skills and commitments to work with other people in effective ways through organized action (Bell, 2023). Therefore, programs should prepare teachers who: a) possess a combination of "knowledge; interpretive frameworks; teaching strategies, methods, and skills; and advocacy with and for students, parents, colleagues, and communities" (Cochran-Smith et al., 2009, p. 350); b) have the capacity to work and build relationships with colleagues, parents and the communities and social groups their students belong to; c) are able to critique the larger structures, arrangements, and policies of schooling and consider the role they might play to challenge the system that promotes inequities and that limit individuals and groups' life chances (Cochran-Smith et al., 2009); and d) are able to work as activists and agents of social change to reduce oppression, whether this work is done individually or collectively (McDonald & Zeichner, 2009; Zeichner & Flessner, 2009).

In the remainder of this article, I propose an integration of SJLTE and CLTE perspectives in Colombia, given their shared agendas and practices. In addition, I argue for an understanding and application of social justice theories, frameworks, and principles in language teacher education because these elements can contribute to advancing a social justice agenda in the language teacher education field.

3. Integrating SJLTE and CLTE perspectives

In education and teacher education across various fields of knowledge, social justice theories, frameworks, and principles have been applied by scholars in different parts of the world for about four or five decades. The field of language education in different parts of the world has also shifted towards incorporating a social justice perspective. For instance, in the early 2000s scholars started to make a call to incorporate social justice principles and practices into world/foreign language education (see Osborn, 2006; Reagan & Osborn, 2002). Moreover, in the last 30 years in TESOL, there has been an increase concerning social justice efforts in research, theory, and practice that show the growing diversity of social justice issues and theoretical frameworks that engage in this perspective (Chang, 2018). Through social-justice-oriented frameworks such as critical, feminist, and sociocultural, the TESOL field has committed to work towards social justice considering the growing importance of English as the dominant language for the market, power (Chang, 2018), and colonial practices (Kumaravadivelu, 2014). The different publications in language journals in the last decade such as TESOL, TESOL quarterly, the ELT Journal, and the Modern Language Journal show the number of articles that are connected to social justice through issues such as identity, multilingualism, critical pedagogy, translanguaging, and multicultural education. One special issue in TESOL Journal published in 2020, edited by Ortactepec Hart and Martel, was dedicated to English language teaching for social justice with contributions related to three main themes: social

justice advocacy, teachers and teacher learning, and social justice pedagogies. In addition, one special issue in the Teachers and Teaching Theory and Practice Journal, edited by Banegas and Sanchez and published in 2023, showcases research and practice concerning social justice in English language teacher education in Latin America, concentrating on issues of inclusion, meaningful educational experiences for marginalized groups, and teacher agency.

A closer examination of the articles in these and other journals shows that the way how social justice work has been approached in language education frequently addresses issues of oppression in those different social groups that are normally marginalized and excluded and concerning issues related to language, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender, social class, etc. This work is guided by theoretical frameworks such as critical race theory, gender pedagogies, gender, identity, queer theories, critical pedagogy, decolonial pedagogies, teacher agency, to name just a few. Nevertheless, a small number of these articles include theories or dimensions of social justice that, in my view, are important to make connections between so-called social-justice oriented theoretical frameworks and the different theories or dimensions of social justice, namely, redistribution, recognition and representation. This examination also indicates that some of this social justice work is framed within social justice education principles, although authors, except for very few of them, do not clearly or openly state that they are working to pursue any specific social justice education principle(s).

Similarly, in Colombia, connections among different social justice-oriented frameworks and social justice theories or dimensions and principles are scarce in language education and the language teacher education field; however, some scholars have already begun this journey (see Carvajal-Medina, 2020; Ortega, 2020, 2021; Sierra Piedrahita, 2016). Therefore, I contend that an integration of SJLTE and CLTE perspectives is important to advance a social justice agenda in language teacher education in the country and advance efforts to prepare teachers who

can work for equity, diversity and social transformation. This integration is also important because it is common to hear many critical language teacher educators using the term social justice to describe the goals they want to achieve in implementing teaching approaches and practices, however, they rarely specify what they really mean by social justice or which dimension(s) of it they are focusing on. Accordingly, this integration will require, first, to make use of the theories of social justice offered by contemporary philosophers and critical theorists in terms of redistribution, recognition and representation; and second, include social justice frameworks and principles in the preparation of language teachers. Language teacher education scholars such as Hawkins (2011) and Osborn (2006) in their books, have contributed to this discussion and invited the field to apply these frameworks and principles in language teacher education.

The available literature in the field attests that SJLTE and CLTE agendas can be regarded as compatible and normally their purposes, goals, and pedagogical practices intertwine and overlap. This is probably the case because approaches to teaching for social justice have drawn from conceptual and pedagogical philosophies or traditions such as democratic education, culturally responsive education, social justice education (Dover, 2009, 2013), critical pedagogy, multicultural education (Adams, 2007; Dover, 2009, 2013), adult literacy education, community organizing, critical race theory, experiential education (Adams, 2007). Moreover, teaching for social justice integrates aspects of these conceptual and pedagogical philosophies or traditions in attempting to achieve educational and societal transformation (Dover, 2013). Although these traditions have particular roots and main emphases, and their curricular, pedagogical and sociopolitical foci might be different, they all seek to promote educational and social equity (Dover, 2009, 2013).

In Colombia, as in other parts of the world, many language teacher educators and language teachers, have promoted social justice from theoretical and pedagogical traditions and approaches such as critical literacies (see Aguirre & Ramos, 2011; Dominguez, 2019; Echeverri-Sucerquia, 2020; Echeverri & Pérez, 2014; Echeverri et al, 2014; Gómez & Gutiérrez, 2019; Gutiérrez, 2015; Hernández Varona & Gutiérrez Álvarez, 2020; Mora, 2014, 2021; Samacá 2012, 2019); community-based pedagogies (see Clavijo-Olarte, 2015, 2021; Lastra et al, 2018; Nieto, 2018; Sharkey et al., 2016), critical interculturality (see Gutiérrez et al., 2021; Granados-Beltrán, 2016; Ortíz et al., 2020), and decolonial practices (see Bonilla-Medina & Finardi, 2022; Carvajal-Medina et al. 2022; Castañeda-Peña & Méndez-Rivera, 2022). However, these conceptual and pedagogical traditions are not the same as social justice education, although there are language teacher educators who classify themselves as critical and carry out the work that the social justice perspective implies (Hawkins, 2011).

Some scholars in language education, such as Gounari (2020), have noted when discussing critical pedagogy, for instance, that critical pedagogy and social justice are not the same. However "social justice should always be part of a critical pedagogy project" (p.13). In an anniversary article in the ELT Journal, Crookes (2021) connects the Critical Language Pedagogy (CLP) perspective with social justice, stating that CLP is grounded in social justice values and that CLP uses the term social justice to explicitly indicate its intentions and overall goal. Moreover, Pandya and Avila (2014) discuss the connections between critical literacy and social justice education and argue that these are interlinked movements and that critical literacy practices move social justice forward. In fact, it is common to see in the international language education literature that many scholars working with critical approaches in language teacher education and language teaching claim to be working to achieve equity, social justice and social transformation (see Comber, 2015; Clark & Morgan, 2011; Janks, 2014a, 2014b; Luke, 2012) and many scholars have produced books in which they connect their critical literacy work with social justice (See Boyd, 2017; Osborn, 2006; Reagan & Osborn, 2021).

Given this differentiation of perspectives, integrating SJLTE and CLTE sounds relevant in

attempting to provide future language teachers with the necessary knowledge, skills, dispositions and commitments they require to do the job they are called to do to contribute to educating critical citizens and change agents. To illustrate the relevance and benefit of such integration, let us use as example critical pedagogy and critical text analysis, the two major areas of inquiry in critical literacy (Luke, 2011) and that are frequently used by critical language teacher educators and language teachers in Colombia. Nonetheless, it is important to point out that the use of other critical perspectives used in language education by no means should be disregarded in connection with a SJLTE perspective. For instance, it is imperative to understand the connection of social justice with critical interculturality as language teacher educators work to promote respect and equal treatment for all languages and cultures, respect for and openness to cultural diversity, dialogue among cultures and languages to disrupt hierarchical relations, among other fundamental issues concerning this perspective.

With the understanding that language practices should be problematized to understand how power is exercised by dominant groups and social institutions through texts and discourses and that power relationships should be challenged and changed through questioning language in text and discourses (Okan, 2020), critical teacher educators work with critical text analysis, using printed or digital texts for power and ideology work (Felipe-Fajardo, 2015). They attempt to prepare students to be highly aware of how authors impose ideologies, create and maintain social hierarchies, or marginalize certain groups through the use of semiotic elements in texts (Lankshear, 1994). They help students examine the politics behind the production of texts; challenge, question and deconstruct text; and explore various perspectives in texts (Felipe-Fajardo, 2015). In addition, critical teacher educators use critical language pedagogy to help students to critically analyze institutional policies and community practices (Felipe-Fajardo, 2015), prepare them to expose and resist oppressive forms of power in schools and communities, and examine the socio-political and

economic conditions that privilege one discourse over others (Kincheloe, 2004). Moreover, they challenge the political neutrality of curriculum, pedagogy, and education systems and seek to develop sociopolitical consciousness in students (Dover, 2013) to effect social transformation. This is by no means an exhaustive description of the work of critical language teacher educators, but it serves to provide a general idea of the work they do with their students. And I contend that their work in these two areas of critical literacy could benefit from social justice theories, frameworks and principles in order to prepare preservice language teachers who can work for social transformation.

As stated by Hawkins (2011), although critical literacy attention to ideology and power issues in language is important, it is not sufficient for SJLTE work. Working under this perspective means going beyond ideology and power issues, which is something social justice language teacher educators also do, to create more equitable classrooms and to focus directly on teachers' agency and responsibility to effect local and broad-scale social change as they work with students, teachers, administrators, families, community members, and community organizations (Hawkins, 2011) to overcome oppression. Accordingly, the teacher education literature for some decades now has offered principles to work for social justice (see Adams, 2016; Adams et al., 2023; Ayers et al., 2009) as well as frameworks or models to prepare teachers to work for social justice (see Cochran-Smith et al., 2009; Chubbuck, 2010; Gorski, 2018; Sleeter et al., 2016) and to work for social justice in schools (see Dover, 2009, 2013; Carlisle et at., 2006; Gorski, 2018; Ritchie, 2014).

Such frameworks and principles focus on the promotion of inclusion and equity by addressing all forms of oppression in different identity groups, a commitment to create and sustain a socially just environment for the different community groups (Adams, 2016; Carlisle et al., 2006), the promotion of reciprocal community relationships in which both the school and the community benefit (Carlisle et al., 2006; Cochran-Smith et al., 2009), the provision of learning environments charged with high

expectations for all students (Carlisle et al., 2006; Cochran-Smith et al., 2009; Sleeter et al., 2016), advocacy for social justice and the individual and collective action against social oppression (Adams, 2016; Carlisle et al., 2006; McDonald & Zeichner, 2009). They also focus on the promotion of teaching that builds on students' culture, language, experience, and identity; the creation of an inclusive curriculum that integrates marginalized perspectives and explicitly addresses issues of equity, power (Sleeter et al., 2016) oppression (Adams, 2007, 2016; Cochran Smith et al., 2009) and intersectionality (Adams, 2007, 2016; Bell, 2023). In addition, they point to the need to help preservice teachers develop social justice dispositions that promote equity in the classroom. Examples of these are giving access to knowledge to all students, being fair, believing in students' capacity to learn, reflecting on individual and structural realities that cause students' academic difficulties and affect their learning (Chubbuck, 2010), creating learning opportunities for all students, being willing to accommodate and differentiate instruction so that that all students learn, promoting critical thinking, and recognizing inequities and challenging stereotypes (Cochran Smith et al., 2009). Last but not least, these frameworks and principles focus on teachers' advocacy for students and their families, activism to challenge school and societal structures of inequities in order to transform them, and capacity to act as agents of change (Adams, 2016; Cochran-Smith et al., 2009; Chubbuck, 2010; Hawkins, 2011; McDonald & Zeichner, 2009). Therefore, social justice frameworks and principles require a social justice pedagogy to teach about oppression making sure that both the content students learn and how they learn it are coherent with social justice goals (Adams, 2016).

Summing up, critical language educators whose work is framed within critical literacy traditions and pedagogies, with their different aims and foci, may contribute to fostering the social justice agenda in language teacher education given their emphasis on the analysis of ideology and power issues through language. At the same time, the different aspects that are essential to teaching for social justice, offered by different conceptual frameworks and principles, and shared by many contemporary social justice educators (Dover, 2013), can contribute to expanding the scope of critical literacy work and other critical traditions and approaches used in language teacher education.

In addition, to do the work that a sjlte perspective implies, critical language teacher educators should be acquainted with the theories or dimensions of social justice (redistribution, recognition and representation), whether from Fraser's perspective, as presented above, or any other contemporary political philosopher's perspective, to understand what these mean and determine, at the curriculum and the pedagogical level, the dimension(s) that at a given point they are focusing on and trying not to leave any of these dimensions unattended. Moreover, they should know about the pedagogical strategies and practices that are more coherent to work on a specific dimension. Needless to say, coherent teacher education programs and teacher educators should strive to promote the three dimensions for not subordinating either of them or denying their importance and interrelation (North, 2006). The different dimensions of social justice have implications to organize teacher education programs and pedagogies and what is expected from teacher educators to know and be able to do (Zeichner, 2009). Bringing to the discussion Crookes' (2021) observation about the popularity, overuse or lack of transparency of the term social justice, I argue that the fact that not many language teacher educators connect this term with the different theories or dimensions of social justice limits their understanding of it, what teaching for social justice implies in language education, and what they are expected to do in their classrooms in connection to these dimensions

Finally, finding connections between social justice education principles and principles of different critical perspectives such as critical interculturality, critical pedagogies, queer pedagogies, critical race theory, decolonial pedagogies; or determining how these perspectives' principles can merge with social

justice principles and complement each other, is coherent and relevant to advance a social justice agenda in language education. Besides, it provides social justice language teacher educators and critical language teacher educators with more tools to work effectively in interrupting oppression as manifested through language, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, etc., in language education.

Conclusion

Language teacher education programs and teacher educators in Colombia aiming to prepare teachers who are social justice advocates, committed to constructing better futures for their students and willing to transform society, might benefit and accomplish better results by integrating critical perspectives, pedagogies, and practices with commitments to anti-oppressive, inclusive and equitable pedagogies and practices in language education, as social justice frameworks and pedagogical principles propose.

Besides, critical language teacher educators in Colombia would benefit from connecting theories of social justice with critical language education perspectives and avoid the risk of using the term social justice as a catchphrase or empty slogan to express the overall goal of their work. Thus, being knowledgeable about the different social justice theories or dimensions, frameworks and principles would provide critical language teacher educators with more tools to prepare preservice teachers to be agents of change. Such theories, frameworks and principles are also fundamental to tailor language teacher education programs and guide pedagogical practices that prepare future teachers for social action and transformation.

The relationship between SJLTE and CLTE perspectives should not be overlooked or dismissed because not seeing this relationship blunts efforts to work towards social justice in our field. Evidently, more work and research in this direction will support the advancement of the field in terms of equity, diversity and justice in language education. This integration of perspectives I propose here may sound challenging; however, it is worth the effort in order to contribute to reducing the inequities and injustices existing in schools and society today by preparing the language teachers that our country requires given the always complex social, political and cultural contexts that we have experienced. Hopefully, many language teacher educators in Colombia are up for the challenge and willing to begin this journey.

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