

## Ciudadanía y actores sociales plurilingües en España y Japón: aspectos metodológicos e introducción al análisis exploratorio de la categoría sobre competencia plurilingüe

### Citizenship and plurilingual social actors in Spain and Japan: methodological aspects and introduction to exploratory analysis regarding the plurilingual competition category

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#### RESUMEN.

La competencia plurilingüe y pluricultural se refiere a la capacidad de usar los idiomas con fines comunicativos y de participar en una relación intercultural en la que una persona, como agente social, domina, en diferentes grados, varios idiomas y tiene experiencia en diversas culturas. Partiendo del marco teórico y de una revisión sobre la problemática, se elabora un sistema de categorías en tres bloques: tipos de ciudadanía, competencia plurilingüe y competencia pluricultural. Este sistema resulta de utilidad para la configuración del cuestionario CYASPS® "Ciudadanía y actor social plurilingüe en la educación superior" y para la sistematización de los datos y el análisis de la información, el cual se realiza con apoyo del programa de análisis estadístico SPSS. En lo que respecta al bloque de "competencia plurilingüe", al centrarse en las ventajas de la educación plurilingüe, una gran parte de las respuestas de la muestra de profesorado universitario de las universidades españolas y japonesas seleccionadas reconocen la existencia de una conexión entre competencia plurilingüe y competencia pluricultural.

#### PALABRAS CLAVE.

Ciudadanía, enseñanza de las ciencias sociales, educación plurilingüe, educación superior.

#### ABSTRACT.

Plurilingual and pluricultural competence refers to the ability to use languages for communicative purposes and to participate in an intercultural relationship in which a person, as a social agent, dominates -with different degrees- several languages and has experience of various cultures. From the theoretical framework and the review around the problem, a categories system is elaborated in three blocks: types of citizenship, plurilingual competence and pluricultural competence. This system is useful for the configuration of the questionnaire



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CYASPS® “*citizenship and plurilingual social actor in Higher Education*” and for the systematization of data analysis with the support of the statistical analysis program SPSS. Regarding the block “*plurilingual competence*”, focusing in the advantages of plurilingual education, a large part of the sample of professors’ responses from selected Spanish and Japanese universities show an acknowledgment of the existing connection between plurilingual competence and pluricultural competence.

## KEY WORDS.

Citizenship, social sciences education, plurilingual education, higher education.

### 1. Theoretical introduction.

Nowadays, “*the holistic and interactionist perspectives together help in the grounding of bilingualism (and, by extension, plurilingualism) as a specific field, but interconnected in the social sciences, which causes the articulation between individuals and social contexts*” (Gago, 2014: 119).

In this sense, plurilingual and pluricultural competence is related to the use of language for communication and intercultural participation where the person is a social actor that has certain levels of competence in several languages and experiences of various cultures. This approach between social and civic competence, and pluricultural and plurilingual competences can be based on the definition of *plurilingual social actor* (Coste and Simon, 2009), a concept that emphasizes the relationship between the measures taken within a specific context and the strategic resources of social actors in relation to linguistic and cultural plurality. In general terms, from the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages, it is indicated that:

*“Plurilingual and pluricultural competence refers to the ability to use languages for communicative purposes and to participate in an intercultural relationship in which a person, as a social agent, dominates -with different degrees- several languages and has experience of various cultures. This is not seen as the overlap or juxtaposition of differentiated competences, but as the existence of a complex and even composite competence that the user can use”* (Council of Europe, 2002: 167).

In other words, this experience of plurilinguism and pluriculturalism, as indicated by Coste and Simon (2009) can contribute to the improvement of learning in the linguistic and cultural fields, due to the fact that there is a development based on pre-existing sociolinguistic and pragmatic competences, in addition to a progressive increase in the perception capacity of the linguistic organization of different languages (metalinguistic and interlinguistic awareness) and the construction of knowledge about how to learn and the ability to establish relationships with other people and new situations.

That is, as indicated by Delgado-Algarra and Bernal-Bravo (2018), depending on the trajectory followed by the social actor, competition evolves, is enriched with new components and others are transformed due to labor changes, geographical movements, family experiences or the change of personal interests, among other issues.



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## 2. Methodology

From the theoretical framework and the review around the problem, a system of categories is elaborated in three blocks: types of citizenship, plurilingual competence and pluricultural competence. This system is useful for the configuration of the questionnaire and for the systematization of data and information analysis.

### 2.1. Phases of research.

Although in this article we focus on the category of plurilingual competence, in general lines and understood from a systemic point, the research process goes through seven phases (Delgado-Algarra and Bernal-Bravo, 2019):

- **Phase 1:** What do we investigate and what do we know about the problem? identification of the research problem, review of the literature, design of a categories system and establishment of hypotheses and objectives.
- **Phase 2:** Who is the sample of study? definition of population and sample: 216 professors of education and social sciences from 8 Spanish and Japanese universities.
- **Phase 3:** How to collect data and information? instrument design and information collection with the CYASPS<sup>®1</sup> questionnaire "Citizenship and Plurilingual Social Actor in Higher Education" which, among other sources, is based on some of the ones that served as the basis for the design of the CIDIMEN<sup>®2</sup> questionnaire (Citizenship and Dimensions of the memory).
- **Phase 4:** How to investigate? quantitative research methodology (likert scale) and qualitative research methodology (open response)
- **Phase 5:** How to analyze the information? exploratory and factorial analysis with the support of "SPSS", analysis of qualitative information grouped according to indicators of the category system.
- **Phase 6:** With whom and how to share our results? Teachers and researchers linked with faculties of educational sciences and teaching of social sciences through publications, conferences and other academic activities.
- **Phase 7:** How to confirm our findings? the quantitative part has its own mechanisms to guarantee the suitability of the results. For example, the KMO index (Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin), Pearson correlation coefficient, etc. The qualitative part allows us to deepen our understanding of the results. Discussion between the results of the investigation and those of other analogous investigations.

<sup>1</sup> CYASPS<sup>®</sup>: trademark M3683892 and owner Emilio José Delgado Algarra. Classification of Nice number 41 (Education, Training and Cultural Activities).

<sup>2</sup> CIDIMEN<sup>®</sup>: trademark M3695791 and owner Emilio José Delgado Algarra. Other owners: Eloy López Meneses, Jesús Estepa Giménez and Esteban Vázquez Cano. Classification of Nice number 41 (Education, Training and Cultural Activities).



## 2.2. Sample selection.

The process of selecting the sample in phase 2 (1/8) responds to the representation criteria and this is done after delimiting the population in phase 1 (1/1). The selection of the sample is carried out respecting the proportionality with respect to the population volume. From the 216 professors:

- 133 (61.6%) were from Spanish universities.
- 83 (38.4%) were from Japanese universities.

Being a Spanish-Japanese study and sampling from the education and social science faculty of 8 Spanish and Japanese universities, it was expected that the nationalities of the informants were mostly Spanish, with 60.2% of the total of the sample, and Japanese, with 35.2% of the sample.

## 2.3. Problems and objectives.

The main objectives and the main problems of the full research are presented below. The main objectives of the research are:

- M.O.1. Design and validate the CYASPS<sup>®</sup> instrument.
- M.O.2. Know the conceptions of the professors on citizenship and on plurilingual and pluricultural education in the Spanish-Japanese educational context.
- M.O.3. Understand the link between citizenship, plurilingualism and Pluriculturalism in the Spanish-Japanese educational context.

The main problems are:

- M.P.1. How is the CYASPS<sup>®</sup> instrument designed and validated based on the characteristics of the citizenship and the plurilingual social actor?
- M.P.2. What are the teaching conceptions about citizenship and about plurilingual and pluricultural education in the Spanish-Japanese context of Higher Education?
- M.P.3. How is the existing link between citizenship, plurilingualism and pluriculturalism in the Spanish-Japanese context of Higher Education? In this article we present the methodology focused on the category "plurilingual competence".

In that sense, regarding the specific problem "*what are the conceptions of plurilingual education in the Spanish-Japanese context of higher education?*". This specific problem, in addition to being directly related to the research category "plurilingual competence", is related to the specific objective "*know the conceptions of plurilingual education in the Spanish-Japanese educational context*".

## 2.4. Category System.

The category system of phase 5 is elaborated taking as references the work of Delgado-Algarra and Estepa-Giménez (2016, 2018) and some works in the R+D EPITEC Project (2016 - 2020) as, for example, Martín-Cáceres and Cuenca-López (2015), in addition to other references previously seen.

Descriptors of plurilingual competence, which have not been included for reasons of space (table 1), are presented at 3 levels from lowest to highest importance of the item depending on the qualifications:



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- Level 1: Values between 1 and 2.
- Level 2: Values around 3.
- Level 3: Values between 4 and 5.

This system, in addition to facilitating the design of a functional research instrument, serves as a basis for the organization and analysis of information from a systemic perspective.

Tabla 1. Subcategories and indicators of plurilingual competition category.

| Categories                    | Subcategories  | Indicators                 |
|-------------------------------|----------------|----------------------------|
| Plurilingual competence (CPL) | Elements (EM1) | Grammar (gra)              |
|                               |                | Fluency (flu)              |
|                               |                | Culture (cul)              |
|                               | Grammar (MCO)  | Estructure (est)           |
|                               |                | Individual competence(cin) |

Partial competence (of plurilingual competence and pluricultural competence) has a significant presence in four sets of objectives from the Common European Framework of Reference for Teaching and Language Learning (Coste, Moore and Zarate, 2009).

As shown in Table 2, these are directly linked to the indicators of the system of categories linked to the plurilingual social actor.

Table 2. Connection between the objectives framework of the Common European Framework of Reference for Teaching and Language Learning and the category system.

| Outline of objectives of the Reference Framework   | Indicators of the system of categories linked to the plurilingual social actor | Categories linked to the plurilingual social actor |
|--|--|--|
| Development of individual general competences of students (knowledge in general, skills, attitudes and values, and ability to learn).          | Grammar (gra)  | Plurilingual competence                            |
|  | Fluency (flu)  |  |
|  | Culture (cul)  |  |
|  | Estructure (est)   |  |
|  | Lecture (lec)  |  |
| Creation of a competence to communicate in terms of language, involving a linguistic, sociolinguistic and pragmatic, and discursive component. | Individual competence (cin)  | Pluricultural competence                           |
|  | Cultural referencia (rcu)  |  |
|  | Academic-professional reference (rap)  |  |
| The realization of certain types of language activities: reception, production, interaction and mediation.                                     | Interpersonal interaction (ipe)  |  |
|  | Mobility (mov)   |  |
| Ability to function in specific social contexts (professional, educational, public)  | Interaction with situations (isi)  |  |
|  | Interaction with problems (ipr)  |  |



## 2.5. Information collection tool: CYASPS®.

In total consistency with the category system, the questionnaire CYASPS® (Annex) “*citizenship and plurilingual social actor in Higher Education*”, designed and validated for this research, responds to a mixed approach; opting for a fulfillment through Google Forms due to the facilities to contact faculty of the different universities and for the collection of information (Fowler, 2014).

After the design, review<sup>3</sup> and validation of the CYASPS® questionnaire, it is carried out an extensive distribution to professors from Spanish universities:

- University of Huelva.
- Autonomous University of Madrid.
- University of Salamanca.
- University of Barcelona.

And Japanese universities:

- Sophia University.
- Waseda University.
- Hiroshima University.
- Hokkaido University.

Selected faculties teach classes, mainly, in Faculties of Education and Social Sciences. After collecting the data and information, a quantitative analysis (descriptive and factorial) is carried out with the support of qualitative elements, both blocks separately and interblock giving response to the issues indicated in the approach to the problem and, therefore, reached the objectives presented in this article.

Since this article collects some results related to the category "plurilingual competence", reference is made to the relationship between the subcategories of the system and the items of the questionnaire linked to that block. In relation to the subcategory "**elements**" (EM1):

- The indicator "grammar" (gra) is linked to item q2.3- Grammatical perfection is more important than communicative fluency and cultural values.
- The indicator "fluency" (flu) is related to item q2.4- Communicative fluency is more important than grammatical perfection and cultural values.
- The indicator "culture" (cul) is linked to item q2.5- Cultural values are more important than grammatical perfection and communicative fluency.

<sup>3</sup> The review was carried out by a team of 8 bilingual university professors and specialists. Being a trilingual questionnaire: Spanish, Japanese and English, and with the aim of reducing the possibility of different interpretations of the same item due to language issues, the review team was made up of professors from Spanish and Japanese universities with a profile manifestly bilingual: Spanish - Japanese, Japanese - English or English - Spanish.





Within the subcategory "**metacognition**" (MCO):

- The indicator "structure" (est) is related to the item q2.6- The perception of individual competence in different languages is important to improve plurilingual competence.
- The indicator "individual competence" (cin) is linked to the item q2.7- The perception of the linguistic organization of different languages is important to improve plurilingual competence.

The aforementioned items are of Likert scale. The open response item q2.8- What are the advantages and disadvantages of learning in a plurilingual environment? it is related to all the indicators in the block.

## 2.6. Analysis.

The methodological approach of this research, as indicated in the article, is mainly quantitative, using the CYASPS® questionnaire as an information collection tool. After the biographical characteristics of the sample, the analysis phase begins to respond to each of the specific problems. The response to these specific problems allows us to respond to the main problems.

For the analysis, with the support of the statistical program "SPSS", in addition to selecting the variables, the existing relationships among them have been estimated. On the other hand, descriptive methods have been applied (descriptive analysis) and correlational (factorial analysis) that has allowed us to know the latent relationships between variables, from an analogous approach to the one used by Jiménez Pérez, Cuenca and Ferreras (2010).

In this sense, by means of the descriptive method, an approach is sought to the general state of the question in relation to the selected sample and in terms of measures of central tendency; and through the correlational method, we seek to know and interpret the links that occur between variables without establishing, in any case, causal relationships between them.

Based on the measures of central tendency, we focus on the highest and lowest average values; understanding through qualitative information at the end of each block, where the question of quantitative answers is asked.

Likewise, the statistical validity of the instrument with respect to the sample is checked by complying with the validity criterion that establishes the need for 5 sample subjects for each item, the participating sample was found to be 216 university professors, above 202 necessities for the sample to be considered significant. To this criterion it is added that the KMO index is above 750, while, simultaneously, the Bartlett sphericity test indicates a high statistical significance ( $p < 0.005$ ).

So that, in relation to the factorial analysis, the factors they are correlated so that the factorial model used is adequate to explain the data. However, in this article, we focus on some general descriptive statistics results of the plurilingual competence block.





### 3. Introduction to exploratory analysis regarding the plurilingual competition category.

Within the descriptive analysis and in relation to the measures of central tendency, the items with the highest average values are linked with the highest mode values of the plurilingual competence category (CPL) (4, agreement). On the other hand, in the case of the lowest average value, we find the lowest mode value (2, disagreement).

As shown in table 3, the three highest median values are found in:

- q.2.7 "*the perception of the linguistic organization of different languages is important to improve plurilingual competence*" with a value of 3.74 and a standard deviation ( $\sigma$ ) of, 926,
- q.2.4 "*communicative fluency is more important than grammatical perfection and cultural values*" with a value of 3.70,  $\sigma$  of 1.024
- q.2.6 "*the perception of individual competence in different languages it is important to improve plurilingual competence*" with a value of 3.66,  $\sigma$  of ,898.

The value of the lowest average is found in:

- q.2.1 "*grammatical perfection is more important than communicative fluency and cultural values*" with an average of 2.10,  $\sigma$  of, 909.

The sample of 216 professors from the eight Spanish and Japanese universities has given an outstanding importance to some of the aspects related to fluency, the metacognitive capacity of perception of the linguistic organization in different languages and the recognition of individual competence; all above the grammar, which receives the lowest value, and culture, where there is not a clear positioning.

Therefore, in relation to metacognition (MCO), the importance of the perception of individual competence in different languages [cin2] stands out, where the average in relation to item 2.7, does not reach the value 4, being at an intermediate level (level 2) with respect to the progression raised from the category system. This situation is similar in the cases of q.2.4 and q.2.6.

Table 3. Descriptive statistics of block 2 (b2).

|            | q2.3 | q2.4  | q2.5 | q2.6 | q2.7 |
|------------|------|-------|------|------|------|
| Valid      | 216  | 216   | 216  | 215  | 215  |
| Lost       | 0    | 0     | 0    | 1    | 1    |
| Average    | 2,10 | 3,70  | 3,27 | 3,66 | 3,74 |
| Median     | 2,00 | 4,00  | 3,00 | 4,00 | 4,00 |
| Modi       | 2    | 4     | 3    | 4    | 4    |
| Typ. desv. | ,909 | 1,024 | ,941 | ,898 | ,926 |
| Variance   | ,827 | 1,049 | ,886 | ,806 | ,857 |
| Min.       | 1    | 1     | 1    | 1    | 1    |
| Max.       | 5    | 5     | 5    | 5    | 5    |
| Sum        | 454  | 799   | 706  | 786  | 804  |







In this intermediate level, we find the rest of the aforementioned aspects except for grammar, whose average value is closer to a first level where the importance given to grammatical perfection as a determining factor for communication with respect to fluency and the culture is low. In other words, this information is extracted through the response of three related items where giving high values in all of them would have invalidated the answers of questioning, implying a greater understanding of the positioning:

- q2.3, the grammatical perfection is more important than communicative fluency and cultural values.
- q2.4, communicative fluency is more important than grammatical perfection and cultural values.
- q2.5, cultural values are more important than grammatical perfection and communicative fluency.

#### 4. Conclusions.

Following the approaches of Gago (2014), there is an awareness of the articulation between the individual and the social sciences in contexts of plurilingual education. Likewise, in relation to the construction of plurilingual competence, the university professors of Spain and Japan of the sample recognize the importance of linguistic fluency, followed by culture and, in a minority, grammar. Likewise, there is a moderately high degree of agreement regarding the importance of the metacognitive aspects and in relation to the perception of individual competence in a language and the understanding of its internal organization.

Regarding the advantages of plurilingual education (qualitative item), a large part of the professors' responses shows an acknowledgment of the existing connection between plurilingual competence and pluricultural competence, a recognition that responds in a manner consistent with the characteristics of the plurilingual social actor posed by Coste and Simon (2009). On the other hand, the university teaching staff of the sample poses a series of disadvantages of plurilingual education contexts such as content cuts or slower learning, an aspect recognized in previous studies. However, there are other disadvantages that seem to respond to questions related to teacher training and praxis in this field, such as lack of immersion or linguistic and cultural supremacism. However, in coherence with the Ruiz (2019) proposals, most of the responses in the sample recognize the opportunities and advantages of communication between conversational partners who do not share the same language or cultural background for social and linguistic enrichment.

In relation to the link between the objectives framework of the Common European Framework of Reference for Teaching and Language Learning and the category system, it should be noted that both the sociolinguistic competence and the pragmatic competence are components that, according to various authors, they are part of communicative competence (Hymes, 1972; Vázquez-Calvo, Martínez-Ortega and Cossny, 2018; Hilinger and Pérez, 2019).



This aspect may seem contradictory with what is presented in the system of categories; however, given that, in our specific case of research, we pay attention to the contexts of plurilingual communication, it is decided to include both competences as descriptors within the pluricultural competence subcategory. On the other hand, our research results are analogous to those of the Campillo-Ferrer (2018) research focused on the region of Murcia (Spain) and in the pre-university educational context, and where the existence of a demand on the part of the teachers with more resources and better organization to improve the quality of educational programs in a foreign language and improve their application.

Some of the limitations of this research are related to those of the use of research questionnaires or the collection of data by digital means (Fowler, 2014); however, the use of e-mail and Google Forms has facilitated international shipping quite efficiently. On the other hand, although the results of this research cannot be generalized nationally to the universities of Spain and Japan, enough criteria have been met so that the sample is representative of the teaching and science teaching faculty of the 8 participating Spanish-Japanese universities.

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**Annex. CYASPS® questionnaire, block 2 (2.3- 2.7)**

**BLOQUE 2: / ブロック2: / BLOCK 2:**

**Competencia plurilingüe / 多言語スキル。 / Plurilingual skills**

En tu opinión, ¿Qué importancia tiene cada ítem para la mejora de la competencia plurilingüe? / マルチリンガルの能力を向上させるために、以下の項目がどのくらい重要だと考えますか。 / In your opinion, what is the importance of each item for the advantages and disadvantages of learning in a plurilingual environment?

| Item   | Mark 1 option for each row with "X" |   |   |   |   |
|--|-------------------------------------|---|---|---|---|
|  | 1                                   | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| q2.3- La perfección gramatical es más importante que la fluidez comunicativa y a los valores culturales. /<br>q2.3-正しい文法を使えることが、コミュニケーションの流暢さや文化的理解よりも大切だ。 /<br>q2.3- Grammatical perfection is more important than communicative fluency and cultural values. |                                     |   |   |   |   |
| q2.4- La fluidez comunicativa es más importante que la perfección gramatical y a los valores culturales. /<br>q2.4-コミュニケーションの流暢さが、文法的な正確さや文化理解よりも大切だ。 /<br>q2.4- Communicative fluency is more important than grammatical perfection and cultural values.      |                                     |   |   |   |   |
| q2.5- Los valores culturales son más importantes que la perfección gramatical y a la fluidez comunicativa. /<br>q2.5-文化的理解は、文法の正確さやコミュニケーションの流暢さよりも大切だ。 /<br>q2.5- Cultural values are more important than grammatical perfection and communicative fluency.   |                                     |   |   |   |   |
| q2.6- La percepción de la competencia individual en diferentes lenguas es importante para mejorar la competencia plurilingüe. /<br>q2.6-外国語学習能力の自己分析をするスキルがあるということが、マルチリンガルとしての総合言語能力を上げるのに重要だ。 /  |                                     |   |   |   |   |





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| <p>q2.6- The perception of individual competence in different languages is important for improving plurilingual competence.</p>  |  |  |  |  |  |
| <p>q2.7- La percepción de la organización lingüística de diferentes lenguas es importante para mejorar la competencia plurilingüe. /<br/> q2.7- マルチリンガルとしての総合言語能力を上げるには、それぞれの言語の構造の違いを認識することが大切だ。<br/> 。 /<br/> q2.7- The perception of the linguistic organization of different languages is important for improving plurilingual competence.</p> |  |  |  |  |  |

q2.8- ¿Cuáles son las ventajas e inconvenientes de aprender en un ambiente plurilingüe? (respuesta libre) / 多言語環境で学習するメリットとデメリットは何か、自由に書いてください。 / What are the advantages and disadvantages of learning in a plurilingual environment? (free answer).

