

Potentiate Critical And Intercultural Education/Communication Skills In The Funza Community Cooperative School From The Myska Knowledge Of The Tunjo Community, Bogotá

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Summary

This article arises from the capacity of indigenous peoples to resist and maintain their lifestyles as an alternative to capitalism, loaded with a high educational and communicative component for learning and teaching processes other than the institutional school. Under this perspective, the objective was to design a pedagogical proposal with the participation of two experts from the Myska community – Youth Experimental Center, from the town of Tunjuelito, Bogotá and their knowledge so that through dialogue with the eleventh grade students of the Funza Community Cooperative School, its communicative dimensions would be enhanced, generating a critical intercultural encounter. Developed under a paradigm of sociocritical research with a qualitative approach, with I.A.P (Participatory Action Research) methodology and applying four techniques: discussion groups, participant observation, problem tree, photolanguage and community activities, concluding that when learning is offered from critical intercultural dialogue with different social actors, students deconstruct their panorama of reality and enhance their skills communicative to take them to action, moving from passive subjects to actors with the capacity for social agency, traversed by the ancestral knowledge and wisdom of the communities, and internalized through recognition, dialogue, and reciprocal teaching and learning.

Keywords: *Communication, Education, Culture, Traditional Knowledge.*

Introduction

This article presents a libertarian pedagogical proposal, woven within the framework of the educational modality of alternation, that is, an educational service that transitioned from face-to-face teaching to virtuality as a measure to reduce infections in the framework of COVID-19. In this way, the educational institution streamlined classes with some students from the classroom and others in virtual mode from their homes.

The proposal was intended to enhance the communication skills of the eleventh grade students of the Funza Community Cooperative School and two connoisseurs from the Myska community – El Tunjo¹ Youth Experimental Center, in the city of Bogotá, Tunjuelito; community located 50 meters from the wetlands complex the Tunjo, called by themselves, as "La Libélula Wetland", self-recognized as myskas and who have inhabited this territory for 25 years in order to recover the space, since before it was a garbage dump, but through time and with popular processes they greened it, being now a wetland composed of 7 water mirrors, trails with native trees and plants and educational spaces. There, the community's own practices are developed, such as weaving, planting, speaking, taking their own medicine, educational

and communicative processes around their cosmoexperiences. All this leads to the fact that they are currently facing intentions of expropriation and enclosure of the territory by government entities.

Precisely because of the above, we sought to enhance the critical communication skills in the students, so that, as well as the community, the students could decode, reinterpret and analyze their reality in order to take ownership and transformative action of it. It is a proposal that deconstructs the structures of verticalized and hierarchical education, to open the way to an academic space that breaks down walls and makes room for ancestral knowledge to spin dialogues with the institutional, enriching experiences and feelings.

To this end, it is imperative to understand communication from the point of view of Kaplún (1985) who indicates "We are looking for 'another' communication: liberating, participatory, awareness-raising, problematizing. For that, too, we need to be effective. But with other principles, with other bases, even with other techniques" (p. 13) given that a few decades ago, popular educommunicators such as Célestin Freinet and even Paulo Freire himself, recognized the urgency of other forms of education and communication with the community, because they knew perfectly well the systemic intentions that emanated and that, of course, today they continue to emerge, which ones? structural dynamics that seek to continue dominating the historically oppressed, through a banking education (Freire, 2005) which is limited to depositing content in students, relegating local knowledge and giving primacy to Western epistemologies, blurring the historicity and identity of the territory and therefore of its inhabitants.

Well, this panorama requires reflecting on the pedagogies developed in educational institutions today, in order to move from rational and functional intercultural learning structures, where unequal discourses and practices are superficially addressed, to transcend to frameworks of critical interculturality (Walsh, C. 2010) which analyzes and rethinks neocolonial realities to deconstruct them through decolonial pedagogies. To this end, the participation of peoples who have been systemically oppressed and marginalized, those who are in the territories resisting and defending their cosmoexperiences, implementing their own mechanisms, epistemologies that fight, dialogue and analyze the environment to re-exist in the face of capitalist dynamics that try to continue alienating them is essential (Páez et al., 2011). The epistemic subject and the community become one, purposes, feelings and thoughts that are spun and act in a reciprocal and synergistic way and which must be known, disseminated and recognized in the territory, with institutional education and academia being the channel for this, and not, on the contrary, continue under the status quo where it is thought that the academy is above popular knowledge and therefore cannot be cataloged as a scientist.

To this extent, the walls of the school must be broken down and it must be recognized that education and communication are not treated separately, but as an indissoluble practice, where the teacher educates and communicates at the same time. Thus, the act of communication transcends the exchange of messages between interlocutors, and education goes beyond the intention of transferring knowledge, such as pouring content into empty vessels (Freire, 2005). In this way, communication/education is assumed, quoting Fernández et al (2001) as "a common territory, woven by being in that place with others, shaped by memories, by struggles, by projects. They signify the recognition of the other in the fabric of <<us-others>>" (p. 29)

However, it should not stop there, but concatenate it with a third party, and that is the cultural component. Communication/education must be anchored to the culture, the context in which it is located, the idiosyncrasies of its participants, and with them, their beliefs, spiritualities, practices, ways of life, and geographical and environmental characteristics. (Fernández et al, 2001) But how do we move from communication/education to intercultural communication and, as if that were not enough, to criticism? In the first place, moving from the cultural to the intercultural is the exercise of recognizing ourselves in difference, within the framework of educommunicative dialoguing dynamics, where the participants visualize

themselves as close in the same territory, living and sentient beings, with shared problems and needs to dynamize the field of knowledge, feeling and therefore living together. and soon we will be going through the exercise to enter the field of the critical, not approaching the problems from the superficial, but from their historical, colonial and racial bases (Walsh, C. 2010)

Well, in order to expose the process developed, the document is broken down into three sections, firstly, the approach that led the research, its paradigm, methodology and the five interaction techniques for qualitative research are exposed (García et al, 2022); Next, it is exposed the way in which other pedagogies can be critical, reflective and active, evidenced in the results of the activities and processes developed both in class and by students in their own neighborhoods, based on dialogues with the community; Finally, to reach conclusions about the importance of weaving processes between institutional education and ancestral knowledge, given that those who know the territory and students move from communication to common-action in favor of the deconstruction of realities.

Methodology

The field of the school is a constant accumulation of experiences, opinions and feelings, which, within the framework of an educational proposal that reflects on the rethinking of everyday pedagogical practices, must therefore have an appropriate methodological design. That is why the research is framed in a qualitative approach, emphasizing the reflection of the events, the actors, their actions and the relationships they build, taking into account that the reflective act is a dynamic, constant and analytical process typical of qualitative research, with a high incidence of the researcher, since it puts in interaction the portion of the observed reality and its historical-cultural construct. their intellectual and epistemic inclinations and those they weave with the participants (Torres & Granados, 2023) Likewise, the research is accompanied by a sociocritical paradigm, this being a set of principles and concatenation of actions to execute a methodology (Alvarado & García, 2008), in this case, being sociocritical seeks to break stereotypes and sociocultural canons that have been constructed throughout history and reinforced through multiple colonial dynamics, including the mass media

The media create forms of representation, in many cases in a biased or spectacularizing way, which causes culture to be permeated by this type of representation and triggers the real invisibilization of cultures and the blurring of it. (García, 2018, p. 62)

In this way, the sociocritical paradigm enters the research as an element that leads to the construction of new realities and the observation of the configuration of the context from other positions and with different interactants.

In addition, as it is a dynamic, dialogic and constructive process based on horizontal relationships, the knowledge produced must be democratic (Freire, 1998) and for this it is decided to use the Participatory Action Research (CRI) methodology, deconstructing the classroom to produce a space open to the collective fabric of knowledge, so that students and knowers generate a network of knowledge. a critical intercultural encounter, since it speaks from the exclusions and marginalities produced by colonial dynamics of power, knowledge and being (Quijano, 2014), thus generating an ecology of knowledge, a sharing of views where none is above the other, but rather they make symbiosis to produce new knowledge. Alluding to Boaventura de Sousa Santos, Tamayo (2011) indicates that "in contrast to the monoculture of scientific knowledge, it offers the ecology of different forms of knowledge with the necessary dialogue and the unavoidable confrontation between them" (p. 47)

And finally, this construction of new knowledge is driven by four qualitative social research techniques, which were distributed during the seven sessions: 1) participant observation, with the researcher and at the same time being observant, reflective and analytical, as well as experiencing the processes and being part of the educational proposal; 2) discussion groups,

applied in the first three meetings between experts and students and later between working groups of students, assimilated as a multilateral dialogic exercise, without the knowledge being concentrated on a subject, but on the contrary, the feeling of thought of each participant is valid, producing dialogues and threading words between the participants; 3) problem tree, being a technique for the student to recognize problematic situations in their territory and analyze them in depth from historical, sociocultural, economic and political perspectives, which was developed during the fourth and fifth sessions and, finally, 4) photolanguage, developed in the last two sessions, with the intention of putting into play visual semiotics through photography as a discursive means to relate a part of reality. In addition to these techniques, the connoisseurs also applied their own exercises, such as the reading of ancestral stories and the fractal as a tool to organize and express thought and memory.

However, the techniques were not atomized exercises, unrelated to each other, but were conducted by four subcategories of analysis and that in turn potentiated the students' communicative skills, which are: memory, orality, cosmo-experience and territory, which are only a part of the many and millenary epistemologies of the community.

These subcategories were linked within the framework of two categories of analysis, the first "knowledge in movement" conceived as epistemes of social, popular movements and indigenous peoples that militate, so called because of their great weight and sense of resistance to systems that segregate and violate; they are not static, neither in time nor space, they are not passive, they are not passive, they are not passive, they are and much less useless, on the contrary, they are knowledges and practices that constantly move, march, act and weave thinking and feeling with one main intention: to re-exist (Flores et al, 2011) and the second category is Cosmic Communication explained by Plaza and Campuzano (2022) as "the sweet life with structural characteristics such as the conception of multidimensional links put at the service of listening to organic and cosmic bodies to heal them" (p.253) is therefore a communication as an integrating element of everything existing in the territory, showing us a different perspective, which breaks with the linear study of Western communication. This perspective, on the contrary, delves into interdependence, a connective network where organic and non-organic elements interact in the construction of life itself, where the code is not limited to the grammatical, nor the emirec² (Kaplún, 1985) only to living beings, and the context to the simple physical place, but context as soil. supra-ground; heaven and superheaven, in the present and the past. In other words, communication here overflows in its manifestations, assuming itself as a physical exercise, but also a multitemporal and spiritual one (Plaza & Campuzano, 2020)

Results

As mentioned, the pedagogical proposal was a participatory process between the connoisseurs of the Myska community – Centro Experimental Juvenil del Tunjo and the eleventh grade students of the Funza Community Cooperative School, a private educational institution, located at Calle 15 #16-46/50 barrio El Centro in Funza, Cundinamarca, which has 50 years of educational service. The student group was composed of 31 students: 18 men and 13 women, aged between 14 and 18 years, from different socioeconomic strata and who lived in Funza, as well as other neighboring municipalities: Mosquera, Madrid and the city of Bogotá.

In order to enhance the students' communication skills at a reflective and critical level, the process was developed in 7 sessions, three of them in dialogue with the community and the other four in participatory action processes, all virtually, implementing the Meet application.

² Since Mario Kaplún visualizes the act of communication not unidirectional, but that sender is at the same time receiver and vice versa, he already conceives of us separately, otherwise he calls them "emirec".

In the first session, there was a speech circle with the elder of the community, John Fredy González, who shows the wetland through a virtual tour, using photographs to show what this place was like in its beginning and how it has been transformed thanks to the revitalization and protection work by the community. In the same way, as can be seen in Figure 1, the ancestral communication of the people is explained as a multi-sign decoding process, which goes beyond the written/oral to use other mechanisms, including the spiritual, processing in the students an introduction to the Myska cosmo-experience and thought. In the same way, the value of the territory for its inhabitants is exposed, perceiving it as the basis of thought and order of organic and inorganic life, which breaks with the teaching paradigm exposed from the West where it is seen as a soil for agro-industrial and business use, limited to the geospatial.

Figure 1 First Dialogue of Knowledge: Territory and Other Languages



In the second session, the meeting was with Lina Siu Camacho, a myska-pijao scholar, a space in which they discussed orality and memory to recover, preserve and transfer the worldviews of the peoples. On this occasion, as can be seen in Figure 2, we explain how the fractal becomes a method for organizing thought and structuring ideas, learning and what is acquired every day, forming a network of knowledge similar to mycelium or a spider's web; A metaphorical technique in the way that Mother Earth is a wise and reciprocal interconnection.

Figure 2 Second Dialogue: The Fractal as a Technique for Organizing and Preserving Knowledge



Here the students recognized other ways of representing ideas outside of linear grammar, the way in which thought is interconnected between one knowledge and another and should not be seen and understood separately, as institutional academia is accustomed to segmenting it.

In the third meeting, an activity focused on oralitura is carried out, such as spoken literature, which in the past was used by ancestral peoples to tell their world. To do this, the students talked with the elders of their house about a native folk story of their villages or of their time, and transcribed it to be told in class. As can be seen in figure 3, the story of a student is loaded

with cultural symbolisms of gender, machismo, a strong evidence of armed conflict existing at this time, signs that show the ways of life and resistance of the grandmothers of this generation.

Figure 3 Oralitura transcribed by a student



In this way, the students recognized the knowledge, experiences and abilities to narrate the world that grandfathers and grandmothers have, and of which, in many cases, are not known by young people or children due to the generational boundaries and the socioculturally constructed abysses, where children or young people see the elders as obsolete or backward.

This is followed by a sensitivity exercise, which is anchored with the activity called "Exquisite Corpse", where students stood under a door frame (either at school or at home), put their arms at shoulder height and pushed the side frames out while their eyes were closed. Afterwards they returned to the session and we began to build a story by uniting the sensations that each one experienced:

"The brain has predetermined the action of raising its arms, imagining everyday and repetitive actions when it does not feel any stimulus. Helping the relaxation of the body, mental health and stimulation of the imagination. I start to feel a tingling sensation running through my arms, from my fingertips, to my shoulders, leaving thoughts and congestion."

This narrative was intended to demonstrate the way in which we are able to construct narratives based on the sensory, the feeling of the body as a result of an experience. It is a call to the manifestation of ideas and feelings, an invitation to create and construct narratives to express the world from the body as the first territory and connecting vehicle of the sensory with what surrounds us.

Finally, by way of closing, Lina related an ancestral story of the Myska people, which exposed the birth of everything from Bachué; A story chronologically constructed in five nights, since it is at that time of the day that the thought cools down and the word emerges purer, more prudent.

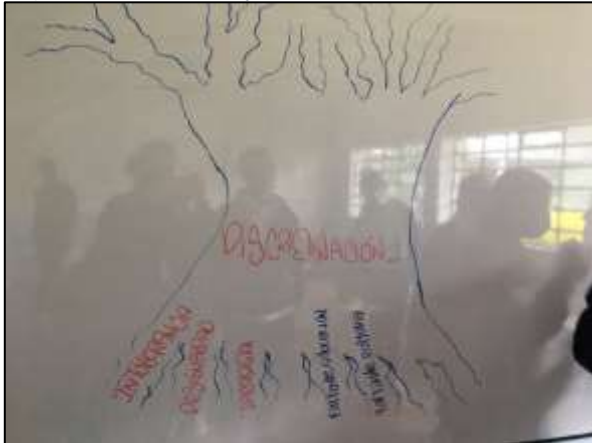
In the next meeting, without the participation of the knowledgers, a reflection and report of what they learned in these spaces was carried out, the students indicated their position towards this knowledge, mentioning that 1) they had never been taught this type of knowledge, 2) it is surprising how there can be a space so full of life in the middle of a city like Bogotá, 3) It is incredible the way in which this community still protects and uses millenary practices in the midst of a historical context that seeks to implant the idea that the old is useless and the new is the solution to problems. Very valuable aspects that generated reflection in the students.

In order to continue enhancing their communication skills, taken from a reflective stage to a critical stance, we proceeded to build a problem tree collectively, drawing it on the board, where everyone was building it, as shown in figures 4 and 5. Next, the students form groups without a specified number of participants, to determine a problem and build a tree which was socialized in the next meeting.

Figure 4 Collective construction of the problem tree



Figure 5 Collectively Built Problem Tree Advancement

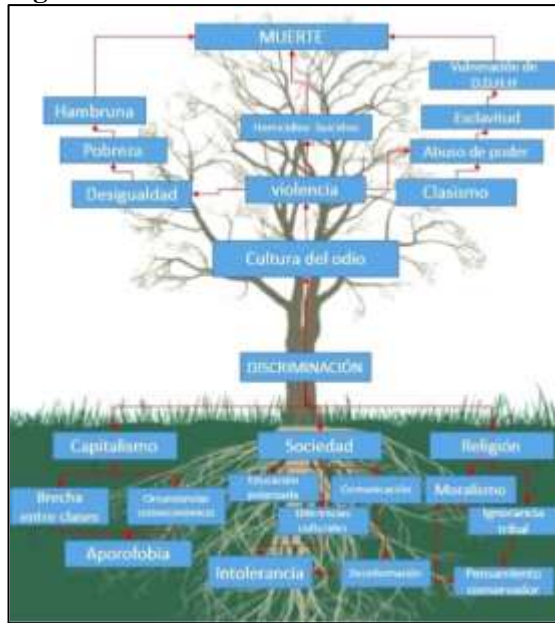


Note: as can be seen, the problem tree developed among the students focused on the problem of discrimination, which emerged from the dialogues and the learning built with the knowers. Here it is determined that the causes of this problem are ideology, intolerance, inequality,

inadequately channeled multicultural clashes and communication as a mediation for social polarization. It's an unfinished tree since a group of two students finished it for the next class.

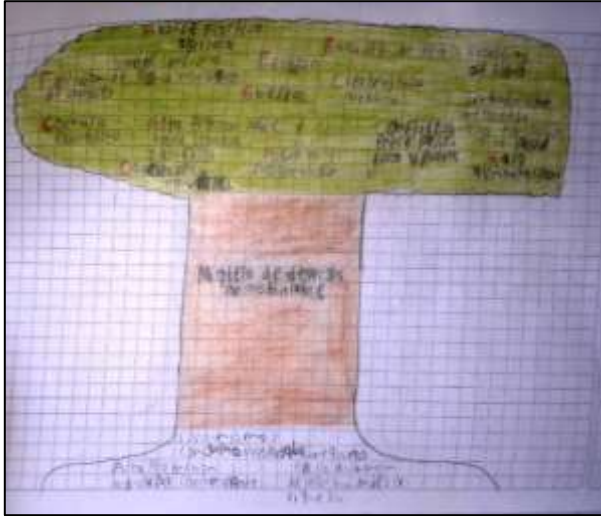
In the fifth and sixth sessions, a dialogue of knowledge is held with the students around the construction of the problem trees they elaborated. As can be seen in Figure 6 and as mentioned above, one of the groups completed the tree developed in class, while other groups took different situations, as is the case of two students who took the capitalist model as a socioeconomic system that is not sustainable for all forms of life, as seen in Figure 7. and corruption as a structural problem, shown in Figure 8.

Figure 6 Discrimination-Focused Problem Tree



Note: here discrimination is evidenced as a structural problem, generated mainly by capitalism, society and religion and that in turn this comes from the origin of societies with social gaps, polarized education, conservative thoughts and little ability to recognize other ways of thinking and believing. In this way, discrimination generates a culture of hatred, producing inequality, abuses of power, slavery and even situations in which life itself is threatened.

Figure 7 Problem tree focused on an unsustainable development model



Note: In this tree it can be observed that the main causes that generate an unsustainable development model are excessive consumption, inequality in the distribution of resources, high industrial production, triggering multiple consequences such as wars, climate impact, extinction of species, arms conflicts, expansion of urban and industrial areas over agricultural and rural areas.

Figure 8 Problem tree that analyzes the problem of corruption



Note: this exercise denotes the structural problem that is corruption, seen from the students as an issue caused by the abuse of power, greed, lack of values and the lack of corruption. triggered by a lack of legitimacy and social disbelief in the state.

This way of conceiving the participation and production of knowledge of students evidences their own conceptual baggage, a critical epistemic universe of the students, linked to what is

investigated, reflected and potentiated thanks to the dialogues with the knowledgeable of the community, producing new knowledge for them.

Finally, in the second part of the sixth session and the seventh session, the photolanguage technique is carried out. To do this, the groups themselves must visit their neighborhood or, if they want, surrounding neighborhoods, to identify a problem in the territory, the actors it affects, causes, effects and strategies to contribute to its solution, all through photographs that show it.

In this exercise, problems were recognized, such as lack of awareness on the part of the population for the care of mother earth; Figure 8 shows what is generated by the accumulation of garbage in public spaces, such as diseases and effects on the health of all forms of life that live there, exposing characteristics of this conflict, actors, causes, consequences and the way in which it could contribute to transforming this panorama. In contrast to the vision and sense of territory that is held from the Myska cosmogony exposed by the knowers.

Figure 9 The lack of appropriation of the territory affects the multiple forms of life



Similarly, another interesting problem was exposed by a group that identified marginalization, racism and state abandonment of the native peoples who arrive in the municipality of Funza. Figure 9 shows the lack of guarantees for indigenous communities, who are forced to beg and scavenge to meet their basic needs such as food and shelter, both for themselves and their children.

Figure 10 Forced displacement



Finally, the photolanguage technique was used so that the student could narrate his world in a way different from the mechanisms of grammatical linear writing, using the visual memory captured in the photograph to critically expose a portion of the reality he inhabits, since he analyzed its causes, effects, actors and ways of influencing its transformation from the possibilities and the position it occupies there.

With the intention of exposing all the exercise developed and reported above, a table is presented where the main categories of analysis frame the subcategories that the knowers used

and that were the basis to potentiate the communicative skills of the students to lead them to a knowledge-action, where they reached a level of interpretation from the territory as a space to teach to live as a species. to the worldview as a sense of life to live in correlation with the whole, memory as a cultural, corporal and historical mechanism to preserve knowledge, and orality as a means to narrate knowledge. As well as the techniques used and the actors involved in each of them.

Board 1

Potentiation of students' communicative skills within the framework of the categories of analysis

Analysis Category	Analysis subcategory	Knowledge / Communicative skills enhanced in the student	Activity / Technique	Participants
Knowledge in Motion / Cosmic Communication	Territory	Knowing how to live as a species	Participant observation, focus groups, photolanguage, problem tree, fractal.	Experts, students and professor-researcher
	Worldview	Knowing how to live in correlation		
	Memory	Knowing how to preserve knowledge		
	Oraliture	Knowing how to narrate the world	Participant Observation, Fractal, Photolanguage, and Problem Tree	

Discussion:

In the course of the dialogues that were generated between the students and the experts, the former were able to identify that the community has its own, individual and collective practices with a deep anti-systemic capitalist component, since the word is taken from ancestral knowledge as a dynamic to rethink and organize to resist the multiple state threats. as Florencia et al (2011) mention:

Social movements transcend denunciation and denaturalization by building cognitive bridges to new possible nominalizations of the world, in tune with their emancipatory projects. This new knowledge emerges inclusive of historically excluded groups, naming their perspectives through particular categories, words and modes of appropriation of language, from logics very different from those of "Western" thought. (p. 432)

Likewise, the way of assuming and appropriating the component of "territory" demonstrates an intrinsic relationship between the community and the place they inhabit, to interact, communicate and learn with each other, but also with those who were (ancestors or ancestors) as well as a network of life, a network of correlation between the organic and the inorganic. They understand that territories are networked sites articulated with rivers that transmit spiritual messages, with metaecological and social orders" (Plaza & Campuzano, 2020, p. 253) And that the students perceived with the photolanguage technique the way in which the territory is constantly violated by human activity.

Dialogue emerged here as a reflexive and horizontal exercise led by listening in order to get to know the other: "Authentic education, we repeat, is not made from A to B or from A to B,

but A to B, with the mediation of the world. A world that impresses and challenges some and others, originating visions and points of view around it" (Freire, 2005, p. 113) where the students acquired, thanks to what they discussed with the experts, an analytical stance in the face of current problems and that are those that constitute networks of sociocultural interaction, generating stereotypes such as consumerism, a construct of life and identity; denigration of other ways of living, thinking and acting; social marginalization and racism; and social stratification and insensitivity to different manifestations of life (ecocides)

All this demonstrates a pedagogical commitment that achieved a critical intercultural fabric, which expanded the walls (physical and virtual) of the Communal Cooperative School of Funza, to accommodate ancestral cosmoexperiences and epistemes in encounter with equidistant perspectives of the world, that of the students, who had not been given the possibility of recognizing other ways of learning. as Walsh (2010) puts it, "to promote a communicative and critical relationship between different beings and groups, and also to extend that relationship in the task of building truly plural and equitable societies" (p. 27)

Conclusions

From the outset, this proposal evidenced an insurgent educational process, since it went against the principles and philosophy of the educational institution, which is based on commercial technical education and its intention is to teach for the creation of a company and enrichment through production, which ends up being a deconstructive act not thought of until then in this school.

In the same way, it facilitated the students to build learning plots from their context, taking the reflection of critical intercultural dialogue to action in the territory, going through three stages, 1) dialogue as a vehicle to recognize other ways of knowing and making the world, 2) dynamics such as the fractal and the tree of problems to reflect on other ways of making the world and the way in which they are perceived from a capitalist point of view, generating in them a critical reading of this panorama and the position they occupy in their immediate context, and finally 3) writing as a participatory action for the transformation of their context. This generated appropriation of the territory and self-recognition as actors with the capacity for social agency, having an impact on the problematic situations that surround it.

In the same way, the educational proposal is forged as a commitment to the updating of the school, where the existing social dynamics of power are rethought in order to transform them, exposing that it is possible to spin between the institutional and the popular, it is possible to rethink education from dialogue and the integration of other actors into the teaching-learning process.

And finally, to break with the existing educational gap due to epistemic polarization, where, instead of continuing to marginalize local knowledge, it was possible to build a bridge, using virtual platforms as extensions of knowledge, being a proposal that, just like the green life that sprouts from the wall and breaks it, critical intercultural educommunication shakes the foundations, who believe themselves to be immovable, of monocultural and Western education.

"What would the windows say,
Your mother and her sister
And all the centuries of Spanish colonialism
That not in vain have made you a coward.
What would God say
if you love without the church
AND without the law?"
Silvio Rodriguez

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