Didactic perspective to assist in strengthening the indigenous identity of the Mendonça Potiguara people

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Abstract
The objective was to report the contributions of a teaching sequence that discussed the implications criterion for demarcating indigenous lands, which contributed to the elaboration of indigenous fables, in order to describe how this literature can help strengthen the ethnic identity of the Mendonça Potiguara people. The teaching sequence was developed in 2021, with approximately 150 students from the Escola Estadual Indígena de Ensino Fundamental e Médio Professor Francisco Silva do Nascimento. The methodological approach of socioscientific issues was adopted for the treatment of the implications of the criterion for demarcating indigenous, under the perspective of the Three Pedagogical Moments. The students were divided into five groups and had to plan and make up an indigenous fable, each one. The fables produced were written in two versions, one in Portuguese and another version translated into the mother tongue (Ancient Tupi).

Keywords:Criterion for demarcating indigenous. Socio-scientific issue. Ethnic-Racial Relation. Indigenous Fable.

Perspectiva didática para auxiliar no fortalecimento da identidade indígena do povo Mendonça Potiguara

Resumo
Objetivou-se relatar as contribuições de uma sequência de ensino, que discutiu as implicações do marco temporal de terras indígenas, que contribuiu na elaboração de fábulas indígenas, de modo, a descrever como essa literatura pode auxiliar no fortalecimento da identidade étnica do povo Mendonça Potiguara. A sequência de ensino foi desenvolvida em 2021 com, aproximadamente, 150 estudantes da Escola Estadual Indígena de Ensino Fundamental e Médio Professor Francisco Silva do Nascimento. Adotou-se à abordagem metodológica de Questões Sociocientíficas para o tratamento das implicações do marco temporal de terras indígenas, sob a perspectiva dos Três Momentos Pedagógicos. Os alunos foram divididos em cinco grupos e tiveram que planejar e constituir uma fábula indígena, cada um. As fábulas produzidas foram escritas em duas versões, uma na língua portuguesa e outra versão traduzida para a língua materna (Tupi Antigo).

1 Introduction

The legal instrument that regulated the mandatory inclusion of Afro-Brazilian and Indigenous History and Culture in the school curriculum in Elementary and High School in Brazil was approved by Law Nº 11.645, of March 10, 2008 (BRASIL, 2008). With this, the pedagogical practices should be oriented to contribute to the valorization of social aspects and the strengthening of the identity of native peoples in Brazil.

Given this framework, Brandileone and Valente (2018, p. 199) emphasize:

 [...] meant not only the recognition of the indigenous people in the process of formation of the Brazilian society, but also the establishment of new guidelines to enable actions for the implementation and effectiveness of (new) pedagogical practices in the school curriculum, more specifically in the areas of teaching history, Brazilian literature and art education.

It is well known that the indigenous peoples of Brazil present peculiar forms of identity, so that the social practices and their organization are different, as well as the symbolic values, traditions, knowledge, ways of constitution and dissemination of knowledge, which are directly linked to the cultural repertoire of the ethnic group. In view of this, in the educational field, these singularities of the indigenous peoples have become a fundamental element for the guidance of school practices, as a possibility to help in the valorization of culture, the strengthening of ethnic aspects and maintenance of intersocietal relations based on interculturality (HENRIQUES et al., 2007).

In view of the above, an example of public educational policy occurred through the approval of Resolution No. 5 of June 22, 2012, which defines the national curricular guidelines for indigenous school education in basic education, in order to guide indigenous schools in educational actions, taking into account their specificities, in view of their political-pedagogical project (BRASIL, 2012). This educational policy guided the construction of the Curricular Document of the State of Rio Grande do Norte, which guarantees:

The right to schooling in their own languages, the appreciation of their own learning processes, the training of teachers from their own community, the production of
specific teaching materials, the appreciation of traditional knowledge and practices, and pedagogical autonomy (RIO GRANDE DO NORTE, 2018, p. 45).

Considering the aspects of teaching autonomy, especially the development of specific teaching materials that help in the critical formation of students and ethnic valorization, the educational project entitled "The curious case of the Jabutino family: lessons for a sociopolitical action", this educational action was linked to a teaching sequence that addressed the tensions that exist in this theme, mainly, aiming at understanding the social, political, economic, environmental, ethical and moral implications of the temporal framework of indigenous lands, in view of its scope and the level of repercussion in the media, the methodological approach of Socioscientific Questions (QSC) was adopted (MARTÍNEZ-PEREZ, 2012; RATCLIFFE; CRACE, 2003), because it is a borderline issue between various areas of knowledge, being a controversial topic, but with the possibility of leading to sociopolitical decision-making, involving ethical and moral reasoning, presenting notoriety by the national scope, through the conflicts of interest, dividing opinions and arguments between indigenous, indigenists and ruralists, so that it gained prominence in the media, especially in the period when this issue was being debated by the Federal Supreme Court (STF).

The discussion of the thesis of the temporal milestone of indigenous lands is a legal action, which was in progress at the Supreme Court, which was judging the future of the indigenous land Ibirama-La Klãnõ, of the Xokleng, Kaingang and Guarani peoples. Since it is a matter of general repercussion, the STF's jurisprudence, based on the appreciation of the argument of the ruralists, indigenous and indigenists, would determine the future of demarcations of areas in Brazil. In this sense, the ruralists claimed legal security from the definition of the temporal criterion, in other words, the indigenous people would only have the right to claim possession of the land if they were able to prove that they occupied it on the date of the promulgation of the Constituent Assembly on October 5, 1988, thus disregarding the "original right to land" and not taking into consideration the indigenous people who were expelled from their traditionally occupied areas (ANJOS et al., 2021).
Given the scope of the subject in question, the proposal to ensure critical training, the possibility to assist in the formation of a value judgment and decision-making by students in the context of Indigenous School Education modality, the educational project was developed and applied in an Indigenous State School of Primary and Secondary Education, located in the Indigenous Territory of Mendonça Potiguara People, in the municipality of João Câmara/RN.

The history of the Mendonça Potiguara people, although there are some discrepancies in the oral history report, which retraces the origin of the Mendonça family group, what is known so far is that this group corresponds to the miscegenation of Tapuia Indians with the Potiguara ethnicity, so that occurred the migration in the eighteenth century of Indians from the Brejo de Bananeiras / PB to a vast region, which was called Amarelão, where they established the Mendonça group, which adopts this name to this day. It is worth noting that the community of Amarelão is located in the Rural Zone, in the municipality of João Câmara, but the entire Mendonça Potiguara Territory consists of several localities that belong to the limits of other municipalities (GUERRA, 2011).

Therefore, the objective of this work is to report the contributions of a teaching sequence, which discussed the implications of the temporal landmark of indigenous lands, from a QSC approach, which contributed to the elaboration of indigenous fables, above all, it is intended to describe how this literature can assist in strengthening the ethnic identity of the people Mendonça Potiguara.

2 Methodology

The preparation of the teaching proposal occurred with the aid of the Instrument for Planning and Didactic Evaluation of Socioscientific Issues (IPADQSC), from the criteria described for the planning stage (FONSECA; COSTA, 2022). Thus, the teaching sequence "The curious case of the Jabutino's family: lessons for a sociopolitical action", authored by the first author of this article, was defined and counted with the cooperation of all teachers.
of the school, and with the support of the indigenous leaders of the Mendonça Potiguara Territory.

The teaching sequence was developed between October and November 2021, corresponding to the third bimester of the school year, so that it was applied with approximately 150 students in Elementary and Secondary Education, in regular and EJA modality, all enrolled in the night shift, at the Escola Estadual Indígena de Ensino Fundamental e Médio Professor Francisco Silva do Nascimento. The project was carried out in person, since the students, because they are indigenous, were included in the priority group for vaccination, so that the majority of them were vaccinated with two doses of the immunization against SARS-CoV-2. It is also noteworthy that some other activities of this teaching sequence were carried out in the after school hours, so the orientations were passed on remotely.

Considering the comprehensiveness of the theme, we adopted the methodological approach of Socioscientific Issues (RATCLIFFE; CRACE, 2003), to deal with the controversial and conflicting aspects that permeate the theme of the temporal frame under the perspective of the Three Pedagogical Moments (DELIZOICOV; ANGOTTI; PERNAMBUCO, 2002), namely, i) Initial problematization, ii) Knowledge organization and iii) Knowledge application.

The presentation of the problem, the stages of data collection and treatment occurred through the use of the textual genre Short Story with narrative typology, in which through a fictional story, a character named “Jabutino” relates some of the memories of his grandfather when he lived in the Territory of the Xokleng people, before the invasion of this area.

The choice of this problematization strategy aimed to expose the case study in an attractive, interactive and playful way. In this way, the character created (Jabutino) delimits the steps and actions to face the theme, guiding the students in the collection of information and appreciation of data, through a set of articulated and triggered activities. Below is the Story that served as an instrument for thematizing the teaching sequence (FIGURE 1).

I) Initial Problematization:
II) Knowledge organization:

Figure 1. Short story used as a resource to thematize the case study.
III) Application of knowledge:

Based on the above, from the information narrated by "Jabutino" in the first moment, initial problematization, there is the exposure of a problem situation that needs to be investigated by students. In the second moment, organization of knowledge, the students, in possession of the collected data, would have to produce materials for the dissemination of the theme of the teaching sequence, summarizing them and highlighting key information for understanding the theme in question. Then, in the last moment of knowledge application, it is verified that the character launches new problem situations, to lead the students to a reflection, in face of the effects of the temporal framework in the Mendonça Potiguara Territory.

However, it is noteworthy that this article does not aim to disclose the contributions of the project in general, given that the teaching sequence resulted in a set of data, which will be explored in future publications, in other words, the focus of the manuscript, in screen, is in the description of the actions, which led to the elaboration of indigenous fables written by students.
To start the action, the students were divided into five groups, which gathered students from different classes, in order to guarantee the heterogeneity to carry out the work in a social interactionist perspective (VYGOTSKY, 1988).

Until the students reached the stage of elaborating the fables, which occurred in the second moment of knowledge organization, they had to investigate the implications of the temporal framework and socialize them in the large group, which was organized in the form of a plenary session to favor dialogical interactions in a collective way.

Subsequently, it was emphasized in the plenary, by the students, that the time frame could affect the indigenous communities and their cultural practices, so that the oral histories that portray the indigenous communities' worldview could be lost. To contribute to the preservation of cultural practices and ethnic identity, the textual genre Fable was presented, with its characteristics and examples of some texts of indigenous origin, emphasizing, through collective discussion, the level of importance of this textual genre in the maintenance of cultural aspects of the history of the.

Therefore, it was explained to the students that indigenous communities have a unique worldview, inviting them to reflect on stories that the elders of the Mendonça community told, through oral history, revealing symbolic aspects of the culture: the values, beliefs, customs, norms, language, perception and ways of relating to the world, etc.

Soon after, the groups were divided and received an instrument to guide their actions in the planning and creation of the indigenous fable, with the help of the guiding teacher. The material used in this activity can be accessed through the link: https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1kloUbvlopKlJEQOi2QbD4epFD8QkbOW.

The groups had to use the graphic design resources of the Canva platform to create the visual image of their productions, and the teacher and author of the project acted supporting the groups. Later, the fables that were written in Portuguese were translated into the mother tongue (Old Tupi), for this, the teacher of this curricular component gave the necessary support to guarantee the translation. All the produced material was delivered to the school manager and is available at the institution, to be used as a didactic resource for the next classes.
3 Results and Discussion

We verified that each group, at the end of two days, managed to elaborate at least one fable, totaling five productions written by indigenous students (FIGURES 2, 3 and 4), in which they portray the cultural values of the Mendonça Potiguara people. As can be observed, the animals present in the productions and that make up the core of characters, for the most part, correspond to specimens of the local fauna, with the exception of Group 2, which made use of an alligator as one of the characters.

Figure 2. Indigenous fable elaborated by the members of Group 1 and Group 2, respectively (version written in Portuguese language and ancient Tupi language).

Source: Data from the teaching sequence (2021).
Figure 3. Indigenous fable elaborated by the members of Group 3 and Group 4, respectively (version written in Portuguese language and ancient Tupi language).

![Indigenous fable](image)

Source: Data from the teaching sequence (2021).

Figure 4. Indigenous fable elaborated by the members of Group 5 (version written in Portuguese language and ancient Tupi language, respectively).

![Indigenous fable](image)

Source: Data from the teaching sequence (2021).
As can be seen, in the productions, students were able to understand the elements that characterize the fable, representing them in a short form, the stories were written in prose, with narrative typology, the characters, which are animals, have anthropomorphic features and that in the end expose a moral, which reveal the values and wisdom of the Mendonça Potiguara people. Furthermore, there are indications of words typical of the indigenous culture, namely the expression "fojo" which corresponds to a kind of trap commonly used in hunting practices in the region and "cauim" - an alcoholic beverage of indigenous origin (FIGURE 2).

This is indicative of the unique worldview of the indigenous communities, which surfaced in the educational productions of the students. Thus, the production of fables is configured as an important teaching strategy, for the preservation of sociocultural elements of the indigenous community ethnicity, especially the elaboration of these educational products, by presenting specific elements of the community, can be explored in the future, in specific classes in the curricular components of this educational institution. It is emphasized that this didactic-pedagogical action meets the curricular guidelines of indigenous school education, with regard to sociocultural valorization and the production of specific teaching materials (RIO GRANDE DO NORTE, 2018).

However, there are some obstacles facing the process for the realization of these productions, the first consisted in the difficulty of writing students, as can be seen in the fables, there are some deviations from the normative grammar, this may be the effect of the in-person paralization of classes, This may be due to the fact that these students had not attended classes for almost two years due to the pandemic, while the other, especially the students of EJA were away from school for a considerable time, aggravated by the absence of a qualified teacher in Portuguese Language at school, who could give support in discussing the norms of reference that govern the grammar.

However, it is noteworthy that the preservation of these deviations, found in the student community's textual productions, are linguistic variations, especially, portrayed by the students’ colloquial language, so that basically the corrections made were pointed out
by other members of the group itself, being the fables the results of the collective elaboration of each team.

The second obstacle was connected to the students’ difficulty in handling computers, but when they received the teacher’s/guidance counselor’s orientations, through the Canva workshop, for the visual production of the fables, the students were able to guarantee the elaboration of the visual resources, in a short period of time, which happened in only two days.

As a third obstacle, it is observed that the representation of animals from the local fauna presented distinct features from the species of the region. An example of this is the representation of the "ox", the "tanajura" (FIGURE 2), and the “fox” (FIGURE 3). Thus, the use of fables, without proper contextualization, implies in possible image distortions, which are consequences of the limitations of Canva's resources. In this sense, we highlight that this platform, although it is an attractive, intuitive and useful tool in the educational field to assist in productions of this nature, it is valid to highlight and problematize that this tool is immersed in the globalizing context, which can eventually potentiate the imagetic homogenization leading to misrepresentations of the regional fauna.

However, it is important, as far as the use of these fables as a didactic resource is concerned, that there is an Environmental Education work in order to ensure the understanding that these representations of species are the result of the platform limitations, and that there must be an effective work to invite students to search for images of the animals in the region, to strengthen, in the memory of the indigenous students, the real representations of the animals of their fauna. To help in this work, asking students to reflect about the differences is an important aspect, to avoid this homogenization imposed by globalization.

Chagas (2011) provides some possibilities of educational practices that contribute to strengthen the bonds with the elements of nature, for this, the author proposes the strategy of using interpretative trails, in which students are invited to explore the various senses of the body, in natural spaces, to enjoy and stimulate the organic sensations and
strengthen the bond of belonging, which are indispensable in the appreciation and respect for the natural environment.

In this scope, Morales et al. (2012) add multiculturalism as a proposal for educational practice, so that one can understand the various cultures and existing relationships, enriching the students' perspectives and social repertoires, which expand the students' level of consciousness, allowing them to see their particularities, which make their identity different from the others.

Considering the teaching systems, in the indigenous school education modality, Henriques et al. (2007, p. 32) add elements that were explored during this educational practice:

Indigenous School Education today is experiencing impasses with respect to the implementation of what is guaranteed in various legal and regulatory texts. It is necessary to reflect on what alternatives can be proposed to speed up the process of developing indigenous school education under the principles of interculturality and bilingualism or multilingualism.

Thus, the strategy employed in this activity, which aimed at valuing the ethnic identity, language, and knowledge of indigenous peoples towards the preservation of sociocultural aspects, especially linked to the issue of interculturality and bilingualism, therefore, it is of paramount importance to ensure intercultural teacher training that meets the principles and demands of this teaching modality.

However, this is still a challenge of public policies for the training of teachers for intercultural work, especially in the state of Rio Grande do Norte, where this proposed teacher training course is still in its incipient phase and is not yet properly implemented.

On the other hand, considering the formative process, from the methodological proposal implemented, the work developed from the use of the temporal framework of indigenous lands, marked by QSC, became useful as an important methodological approach, to understand the conflicting aspects that permeate the theme analyzed.

Moreover, it was demonstrated, in the fables, the appreciation of the sociocultural identity of the Mendonça Potiguara people, by having provided a space for students to explore their creativity, in understanding the effects of the problem investigated in the face
of their own social practice. That is, the students after experiencing an educational practice, which used the sociocultural elements of their reality and favored the establishment of a collective space for reflection, on the effect of the time frame and on their own territory, thus helped these students to create a value judgment on the subject investigated, so that they were able to position themselves (FIGURE 5).

**Figure 5.** Picture of the group’s positioning on the time frame thesis.

The image above represents the last activity of the teaching sequence, which asked the groups to position themselves about the thesis of the temporal landmark of indigenous lands, this occurred after the social, political, economic, environmental, ethical and moral implications, which were revealed by the analysis of the arguments of indigenous people and ruralists, this corresponded to the activities before the production of the fables.
In this sense, the students were able to express their value judgment, highlighting their identity as an original ethnic group and their opinion before the imposition of this temporal criterion for land demarcation.

4 Concluding remarks

It is considered that the choice of the theme “Temporal Marking of Indigenous Lands” proved to be an important resource for the treatment of controversial aspects that permeate the arguments of the agents involved. Therefore, the methodological approach employed in this sequence enabled the creation of indigenous fables, which managed to register the cosmovision of the Mendonça Potiguara people, configuring itself as a strategy for strengthening ethnic identity, and serving as an instrument for preserving the language, values, norms, principles, and perceptions of the world that are unique to this family group. Thus, the school played a fundamental role in mobilizing teachers, employees, and other leaders of the Mendonça Territory to make this teaching sequence effective.

However, there is a need for greater investment in public policies aimed at teacher training, in the context of interculturality and the constitution of new QSC, directly linked to the indigenous issue, also ensuring the encouragement of teachers to deal with these aspects in pedagogical practice, so that useful theoretical and methodological tools are produced to assist in the formation of critical and reflective thinking, in socio-political actions, of students in indigenous territories and thus contribute to the strengthening, appreciation and (re)affirmation of their ethnic identity.

References


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