
*La contextualización curricular en la institución
educativa “Rosa Zárate de Peña” del municipio Yumbo
(Colombia)*

*The curricular contextualization of the “Rosa Zárate de
Peña” Educational Institution in the municipality Yumbo
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Resumen: La intención epistemológica fundamental de este artículo radica en ofrecer un análisis que permita revelar la capacidad del desempeño transformador de los colectivos docentes comprometidos con la educación y formación integral de los estudiantes. La lógica teórico-argumentativa que se utiliza parte de la adopción de una postura sistémico-estructural-funcional y connota su significación en la sistematización teórica del currículum como categoría y las dinámicas metodológicas de las prácticas educativas-transformadoras en la institución educativa “Rosa Zárate de Peña” del municipio de Yumbo-Valle, en la República de Colombia.

Palabras clave: Currículum; Contexto; Prácticas educativas; Transformación.

Abstract: The fundamental epistemological intention of this article lies in offering an analysis that reveals the capacity of the transforming performance of the teaching collectives committed to education and the integral formation of the students. The theoretical-argumentative logic that is used, starts from the adoption of a systemic-structural-functional position and connotes its significance in the theoretical systematization of the curriculum as a category and the methodological dynamics of the educational-transforming practices in the “Rosa Zárate de Peña” school from the municipality of Yumbo-Valle, in the Republic of Colombia.

Keywords: Curriculum; Context; Educational practices, Transformation.

Introduction

The curriculum, as a category, not only expresses the system of content selection and its grouping in different forms, according to teaching and learning; at the same time, it gives an account of the relationships that are established between culture-school-society in a given socio-historical context. In phenomena or processes of a social nature, nothing escapes the relationship between society (and the interests of the classes that run it)-social need, which comes in the form of a social commission to the school, as a resulting synergy between the interests of the ruling classes and their needs, nuanced by the most significant economic trends of the time. At the same time, it is related to the educational policies applied in each region, country, department and municipality, which acquires a special significance in the Colombian municipality of Yumbo, belonging to the department of Valle del Cauca, and especially in the I. E "Rosa Zárate de Peña", located in the sector known as Rincón Dapa, which presented limitations in the implemented curriculum and its relationship with the socio-cultural context, which is why the application of the scientific method was chosen, with the purpose of finding alternatives that would allow the construction of a pertinent curriculum with the historical, geographical, social, economic and cultural reality of the community in which the EI was located, addressing the following as a research problem :

How to strengthen the curricular contextualization in the Educational Institution "Rosa Zárate de Peña" in the municipality of Yumbo, Colombia?

In correspondence with this problem, a logic was established in the components of the research design as a systemic-structural-functional whole, in which the empirical evidence, the results of the initial diagnosis and the scientific problem constituted the parts of a whole, which were oriented to the fulfillment of the following objective: To generate a didactic-methodological strategy that favors the curricular contextualization in the Educational Institution "Rosa Zárate de Peña" of the municipality of Yumbo (Colombia).

Development

The curriculum has gone through an evolutionary process that expresses the levels of development and the social dynamics of each socio-historical stage, which leave their mark

on the structural conception of the concept and its use in the field of Pedagogical Sciences. In this sense, Kemmis (1993) offers a very interesting idea regarding the technical-pedagogical use of the term curriculum:

The word "curriculum", as a technical term in education, appears as part of a specific process of transformation of education at the University of Glasgow, extending from its Scottish use and the transformation of teaching in Scotland, to its widespread use. (p.11)

It is evident that the treatment and use of the category curriculum has been controversial, a situation that instead of generating limitations, connotes its significance to the extent that it traces an epistemological route that has forced theorists to carry out systematizations that allow the clarification of the theory, methodology and curricular practices. In this perspective, De Alba and Casimiro (2015) are intertwined when they express that

The curriculum is a cultural and political-educational proposal that is constituted from the overdetermination of a complex cultural and political-educational synthesis, as an educational device of power and knowledge in accordance with the mainstream of the political-cultural and educational configuration or the system in which this device is inscribed. (...). An engine that fosters, regulates and administers the production of spaces, discourses, and empowers institutions, social sectors and individuals. (p. 12)

In essence, the authors offer some features that serve to consolidate the ideas that have already been discussed, in particular, the relationship that is established between the learning experience - the development of skills and the confrontation with social reality. For his part, Rugg (1927) refers to the fact that the curriculum requires three aspects: objectives, activities and materials, which must be organized in order to function properly.

Taba (quoted by Portela, Taborda, and Cano, 2018) states in essence that the curriculum is a learning plan, which must contain the following: "a specific purpose and objectives, a selection and organization of content, fixed teaching and learning standards and a schedule for the respective evaluation" (p. 24).

This is a perspective of the curriculum that expresses the projective dimension of learning and its structuring according to the selection of that part of the culture to be taught and the assessment of learning outcomes.

Likewise, Stenhouse (quoted by Osorio, 2017) defends the following idea: "The curriculum is an attempt to communicate the principles and essential features of educational purposes in such a way that it remains open to critical discussion and can be effectively transferred into practice" (p. 9).

This perspective deepens the reflective analysis by referring to several important elements: First, principles and essential features of educational purposes. This idea includes the different relationships that are established between education and society by raising those guiding ideas at the social level and the institutions, which come to become general pedagogical purposes that do not start only from the school, but have their basis in social needs. Secondly, it is based on critical debate for its realization, that is, it recognizes the dynamic, changing and adaptive character of the curriculum as opposed to other positions, which assume the curriculum as a rigid imposition against which there is no other option but to reproduce it.

The curriculum has a dialectic and open character; it is based on the leading role of the student and the transforming actions of the education professionals, in a special relationship between that part of the culture that has been selected for the teaching-learning and the preparation of the present and future generations for the coexistence in a complex world.

In the scientific literature, it is frequent to use words such as meta-theories, approaches, trends, conceptions, models, etc., to refer to the existing theories on the curriculum category, an idea with which authors such as Castro, Correa and Lira (2006), and Kemmis (1993), among others, agree. In the area of curriculum, the existence of several theories is recognized, including: technique, practice, and socio-criticism.

Technical theory about the curriculum, like others, expresses social needs in context. For this reason, its goals are directed towards the achievement of learning results, conceived as an instructional plan with well-defined learning objectives and procedures for the

achievement of the established goal. *The practical theory* arises from the seventies of the twentieth century, is based on a new look at curricular elements and tries to offer alternatives in terms of curricular integration. *The critical theory* of the curriculum arises from the application of the theoretical principles of the Frankfurt school and the postulates of Critical Pedagogy to curricular theory. It was developed in the 1970s and reached schools (in Spain and other countries) in the second half of the 1980s. There are several authors who stand out for the validity of the theoretical nucleus that integrates it, among them, Apple (1997), Freire (1975), Giroux (2001), and Kemmis (1993). The critical theory of the curriculum has a theoretical platform characterized by dialectical reasoning, emancipatory interests and critical-ideological commitment.

Curriculum Contextualization

The curricular theories analyzed above, in some way and to different degrees, address the links between curriculum and context, especially socio-critical theory. Throughout this article, emphasis has been placed on this problem; however, it continues to be a difficulty in different countries. In this sense, analyzing the Spanish reality and confirming the previous idea, Zabalza (2012) proposes the following:

At present, educational and curricular policies are more concerned with aligning themselves with global approaches than with prioritizing the local. The importance of contextualization is assumed, but this philosophy finds little facility to project itself onto everyday school practices. Quality assurance systems and international evaluations are leading to a modeling of educational practices that is highly conditioned by international standards. (p. 10)

As can be seen, this situation is not only inherent to the Colombian reality, but constitutes a scourge at the global level. The analysis carried out by this author is very accurate, as it relates educational policies, the curriculum, global approaches and their impact on the detriment of the needs of the local socio-cultural context. There is no doubt that the student must have knowledge of the global, but starting from the local. Otherwise, components such as the family, traditions, popular culture and the heritage of the physical-geographical-community space in which he or she was born would be left out of the teaching; even the

student's affective relations with the environment would not be taken into account in the process of his or her own learning.

In this same logic, Mallarino (2007) refers to the implementation of a contextual model of curriculum, based on the identification of three types of context: "The context of pedagogical intervention-horizon of meaning, the context of didactic intervention-operational horizon and the context of discursive intervention-epistemological horizon" (p. 37). In essence, the author recognizes the pedagogical, didactic and discursive dimension of the context.

In the first typology, the purposes, educational practices and social nature of curricular knowledge are highlighted. The second emphasizes didactic strategies, methodologies, teaching models and the subject-object-knowledge relationship. The third position refers to the teacher's modes and positions of reflection in the face of professional and curricular knowledge.

In this sense, Velasquez (2007) refers to the process of curricular contextualization as such:

This refers to the fact that the curricula developed by the normative and legal system, as well as by the educational institutions and the operationalization of the same by the nursery educators, respond to the different contexts with which the various educational agents relate and interact (p. 37)

This definition of the process of curricular contextualization is interesting not only because of its epistemic perspective, but also because it reflects the integration of socio-educational agents, those who make possible curricular decentralization and the solution of the contradictions between prescription and diversity of contexts. Evidently, the relationship curriculum-context has much to do with history, traditions, popular culture, heritage and cultural identity. One of the theoretical constructions with the greatest capacity to synthesize in a single category the socio-cultural curriculum-school-context relations is that provided by Naples and Cordova (2016), which they called the local school socio-cultural context, defining it as follows

It constitutes the physical-geographical-community space of human groups and institutions existing within its boundaries, characterized by socio-economic relations; it is formed in the long historical process, it is the bearer of continuous exchanges of educational-cultural influences and it is manifested through the communicative activity that makes them unique, where the school, the curriculum and the student-professional protagonism occupy an essential place in the formation of its members as subjects of identity. (p. 9)

The fundamental elements that make up this category are: *the socio-cultural characteristics of the local context, the territorial-natural and the work activity*, all of which are related to the curriculum and the school institution. This means that each local school socio-cultural context is the bearer of history and popular traditions, which cannot be ignored by the school, even when they are not part of the ministerial curricular guidelines.

Valle del Cauca is the most important department territorially, politically and economically in the Pacific region of Colombia. The municipality of Yumbo is located in this department. The education provided in this municipality has 13 official educational institutions: 8 of them are located in the urban zone, representing 62% of the total educational offer, and 5 in the rural zone, for 38%, respectively. In addition, there are 44 schools that complement the educational service of the municipality and a teaching staff made up of 630 teachers.

The "Rosa Zárate de Peña" Educational Institution is an official rural institution, located in the Vereda de Rincón Dapa and offers pre-school, primary, secondary, technical high school education with emphasis on environmental tourism, and academic high school (youth and adults in weekend mode). It mainly serves students from the town of La Olga, and from the villages of La Sonora, El Diamante, Las Vegas, La Carolina, Rincón, Condado, El Rodadero, and Cantarrana in the municipality of Yumbo. Additionally, it attends to students from the town of La Paz (Cali) and from the villages of El Chicoral and El Retiro (La Cumbre).

The economic activity in which the students' families work is mainly that of restaurants - cooks, waiters and general services. There are also farm caretakers, cultivation of aromatic

plants and spices, work in nurseries and other informal jobs. The institution has 483 students during the day, 120 during the weekend, 28 teachers and 2 directors.

Method

The research was framed under the social-critical paradigm, prevailing the methodology called participatory action research. **The selected population** was composed of a wide representation of the local educational agents, among which were directors, teachers attached to the Educational Institution, students, parents and community leaders. **The sample selected** was based on a stratified random sampling, which guaranteed that all the strata were represented in the process of applying the instruments: a) a first teaching stratum composed of educational leaders and teachers from different levels and areas; b) a second student stratum, made up of students; and c) a third stratum called community, made up of parents and representatives of the community action boards, as well as leaders of the different social organizations.

Methods of the theoretical level

Methods at this level were used throughout the research and are interrelated. The method of analysis-synthesis was used for the abstract division of the educational process, in terms of the relationship curriculum-context and its unity to obtain essential judgments. The inductive-deductive method was used for the elaboration of general and particular reasoning and conclusions about the theoretical systematization of categories such as curriculum, socio-cultural context and professional pedagogical practices. The historical-logical method was used to characterize the tendency of the educational process in relation to the curriculum-context.

Empirical Level Methods

The participant observation was used to describe the main results of the activities carried out in the Educational Institution "Rosa Zárate de Peña" regarding the relationship curriculum-context. The Survey was used to obtain the perceptions of teachers, students, parents and community leaders, in the diagnostic phase and in the evaluation phase. The socialization workshops were used to assess the teachers' protagonist participation in the different

situations in the proposal implementation phase. The focus group was used to determine the feasibility of the theoretical construction of the activities and their methodological application. The pre and post tests were used to determine the real level of knowledge acquired by the educational agents. In addition, the statistical methods were used to interpret, inferentially and descriptively, the information obtained.

Results

The results of the research are projected according to the fulfillment of a system of phases, which order a logic posed as follows: i) Phase 1: diagnosis; ii) phase 2: program design; iii) phase 3: application and evaluation of the program.

Phase 1: Diagnosis

This phase is considered of high importance and was carried out through the application of a survey (teachers, parents, students) and an interview (community leaders), which gave an account of the initial real state of the object of investigation, with the following main results

- A significant group of teachers has a limited conceptualization of the curriculum, associating it exclusively with pre-established content.
- The ministerial curricular orientations do not correspond to the reality of the community in which the EI is immersed.
- Standardized tests limit the possibility of rethinking one's own contextualized curriculum.
- The Institutional Educational Project does not offer clear methodological orientations for the contextualization of the curriculum.
- The EI is recognized by its educational function, but not by its cultural and social function
- Students report that they are rarely consulted regarding their learning expectations; furthermore, they consider that the content they receive has little relation to the country, department, and community in which they live.
- Parents refer that they are pleased with the school, but consider that they are not taken into account regarding their children's learning expectations.

- Community leaders report that the communities live their realities and that the EI educates children and youth based on government programs. They consider that they are going through different paths.

In general, the diagnosis reflected the need to train transformative and progressive teachers, who are able to move towards a more comprehensive and contextualized curriculum that leads to the formation of an integral subject as a socio-political actor, who can help improve the conditions of his family, the village, the municipality and the country.

The previous results lead to the elaboration of a system of activities with a view to solving the limitations previously determined and which are part of the second phase of the research.

Phase 2: Program Design

Considering the results of the diagnostic stage, we proceeded to design two large projects with their respective activities that would strengthen the contextualization of the curriculum and establish transformative educational practices, as shown in table 1.

Table 1: Activities

Project/Activity	Objectives	Scope	Time	Methodology
Research and Dissemination Project "Gastronomic Roots of the Great Dapa	To investigate about the historical, cultural, geographical and culinary traditional elements of the village of Dapa. - To design and develop products of cultural diffusion, centered in elements of the gastronomic tourism of the region	510 Educational Community	12 Months	Courses and talks on traditional cooking
Pedagogical research project "Critical Pedagogy, curriculum and cultural identity in the local school socio-cultural context of the I. E. "Rosa Zárate de Peña", from Rincón Dapa, Yumbo	To generate research spaces that make possible the creation of didactic-methodological alternatives that propitiate the curricular contextualization in the I. E. "Rosa Zárate de Peña" of the municipality, located in Rincón Dapa, municipality of Yumbo	28 Executive Teachers 350 Educational community	18 Months	Trainings, workshops, talks and meetings

Source: self-elaboration

Discussion

In the municipal context of Yumbo, there was no significant research on curricular contextualization and the treatment of transformative practices of educational professionals;

therefore, the assessment and discussion of the results are of significant importance and imply that phase 3 be systematized in this section.

Phase 3: Application and evaluation of the program

The development of the projects with their respective activities was aimed at students and teachers, with the participation of the community and parents. They were carried out through a planned and systematized process.

Among the main results, we can mention

Research project Gastronomic Roots of the Great Dapa

11.9% of the participants were directors and teachers of the "Rosa Zárate de Peña" school; 68% were students; 4.8% were parents, and the rest were key factors and informants, including settler grandparents, historians, traditional cooks, environmentalists, and artisans, among other knowledge holders who showed interest in contributing to the research

The educational research project Gastronomic Roots of Gran Dapa was of great importance since the directors and teachers were able to mobilize the students, their families and key actors in the community, collectively making a recognition and characterization of the community, in relation to the first inhabitants and the cultural and culinary traditions they brought with them. Traditional recipes that are still part of the community's kitchen were also recognized and a recipe book was developed because of the systematization of 169 recipes that the students and their families contributed to the research.

The pedagogical research project also produced and shot the documentary Knowledge and Flavors of Gran Dapa (see link: <https://bit.ly/36IJv5D>), which highlighted the most representative aspects of the community in terms of the historical-population, environmental, economic, cultural and culinary traditions component, linking with the most representative activities and achievements of the I. E. Similarly, courses and talks were held on traditional cooking, the use of aromatic herbs and the environment, among other aspects, which encouraged teachers, parents and students to learn about and raise awareness of their roots, history and traditions, and to become active agents in their rural community of La Rioja and Yumbia.

Pedagogical research project "Critical Pedagogy, curriculum and cultural identity", in the local school socio-cultural context of the I. E. "Rosa Zárate de Peña", of Rincón Dapa, Yumbo.

All the participants were linked to the Rosa Zarate de Peña School, of which three were directors and 26 were teachers; 62% were women and 38% men.

Of the participants, 37.9% had a Master's degree, 34.4% were Educational Specialists, 17.2% had a Bachelor's degree in Education, and the rest were other professionals.

The pedagogical research project called Critical Pedagogy, Curriculum and Cultural Identity passed through a series of trainings, workshops, conversations and meetings that managed to generate several relevant elements for the contextual curricular integration of the E. I.

Among these, the characterization of the socio-cultural context of the E. I. was achieved; the updating and characterization of the EIP, according to the needs and possibilities of both the E. I. and the community; the adjustment of the Manual for School Coexistence with a dialogical approach; the adjustment of the Institutional Evaluation System, moving from a quantitative approach to a qualitative training approach; the consolidation of a system of context, project and subject indicators that could be considered when planning the curriculum; the progress in the collective redesign of the institution's General Study Plan, which considered the integration of disciplines, transversal projects and the elements of the context.

Progress was also made in the collective design of the Classroom Plan and the elaboration of a "Guide for socio-cultural contextualization at the class level", which has a structure composed of generalities, introduction, development and conclusions, all coherently based and related to each other.

These results were introduced by the teachers in the development of their classes, in a tendency in which the protagonism among teachers, students and student group, could be articulated in the solution of the different problems that arise in the teaching-learning process of the different school subjects.

In a very special way, progress was made in the percentage of participation of the teaching collective in the processes of training, qualification and research, observation, systematization and discussion, which allow progress towards transformative pedagogical practices.

Methodological triangulation

The selected population was composed of a wide representation of the educational agents of the municipality of Yumbo and in a special way of the I. E. "Rosa Zárate de Peña" and its zone of influence, among which were directors of the educational sector, teachers, students, parents and community leaders.

The systematization of the information provided by the survey revealed that students, parents and teachers had made progress in overcoming the limitations detected in the diagnostic phase. Figure 1 shows the percentages of TTB obtained in each group for the corresponding items.

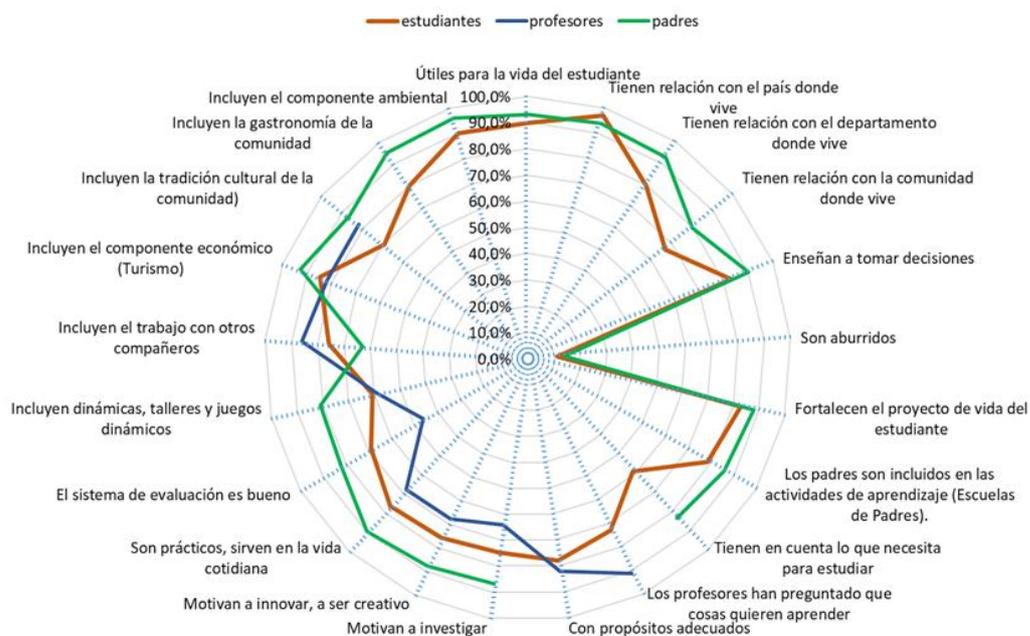


Figure 1: Percentages of TTB obtained in each group

Source: self- elaboration

Figure 1 shows a significant advance in the process of curricular integration in the context, since students, teachers and parents coincide in evaluating the curriculum at a high level in

the aspect of including the tourism component, which is the main reference of the context, in which the students strengthen their skills in tourism, entrepreneurship, gastronomy and environmental guards, so that students can recognize and value their own cultural tradition, as well as respect and preserve the environment, thus allowing the realization of entrepreneurial initiatives or employment in the tourism sector, the pillar of development of the municipality of Yumbo (Colombia).

Conclusions

The curriculum is the bearer of the relational synthesis that is established between society-education-educational institutions, which are mediated by the very social need of the context, the leading groups and the historical period. Social values, socioeconomic relations, the market and technological development, constitute elements that transversalize the curriculum in its socio-cultural dynamics. At the same time, it is the guiding vehicle for the formative activity of the subject and the bearer of the educational-formative policies of the students, where the teachers and the entire educational community play a transcendental role.

Transformative professional pedagogical practices give account of a new professional role, which connotes its importance in the management of the teacher as a social activist who recognizes and carries out actions for the transformation of the socio-cultural context where the school is located, based on problematic pedagogical mediation and research for action, where critical-formative reflection and humanist convictions are of great importance to carry out the configuration of a pedagogy of greater social character and committed to change.

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