

---

# *La educación identitaria: una visión desde la preparación del profesor de Geografía*

## *Identity education: reviewed from the preparation of the Geography teacher*

**Rafael Jorge-Hechavarría**

**Jesús Piclín-Minot**

Universidad de Guantánamo, Cuba.

**Correo electrónico(s):**

[rafaelj@cug.co.cu](mailto:rafaelj@cug.co.cu)

[piclin@cug.co.cu](mailto:piclin@cug.co.cu)

---

Recibido: 23 de septiembre de 2016

Aceptado: 5 de enero de 2017

---

**Resumen:** El limitado estudio de la educación identitaria, así como la forma asistemática de tratar el aspecto geográfico más distintivo del entorno local guantanamero en su relación con los hechos históricos en función de la identidad cultural local por parte del profesor de Geografía, dan muestras de la necesidad y novedad del presente trabajo. Atendiendo a ello se ofrecen consideraciones didáctico- metodológicas que permiten comprender la importancia y necesidad del tratamiento a la educación identitaria desde la preparación del profesor de Geografía.

**Palabras clave:** Educación identitaria; Preparación docente; Enfoque geohistórico; Identidad cultural local

---

**Abstract:** The limited study of identity education, as well as the unsystematic way of dealing with the most distinctive geographical aspect of the Guantánamo local environment in its relation to historical events in function of the local cultural identity of the Geography teacher show the need and novelty of this paper. To address the topic, some didactic and methodological considerations are offered for Geography teachers to realize the importance and necessity of the treatment to identity education.

**Keywords:** Identity education; Teacher preparation; Geo-historical approach; Local cultural identity

---

### **Introduction**

Education in the different moments of history, from the beginnings of man to the present, has represented a fundamental element that determines the levels of development of the individual and of society. Causing economic, social changes and different ideological influences, has resulted in a society where education, identity and culture are closely related, misunderstood and ignored by some, and recognized by others.

Therefore, it is necessary to think about a conception of integral teaching of students (knowledge, skills, values and feelings) that includes aspects concerning identity.

Latin American education in the 21st century is aimed at obtaining certain aims of educational and cultural value that must be projected towards life in the local community, towards the Latin American homeland and the world. Such –fines for the teaching of Geography have their expression in the following aspects, according to the perspective of analysis emanating from the recent historiographical review:

- Knowledge and reflection of the local geographical reality, in order to understand the relationship between society - nature and geographic space - culture.
- Understanding and application of basic aspects of geographic theory and methodology from a geo-historical perspective that allows explaining the relationship of historical processes in local geographic contexts due to their significance in historical consciousness.
- Foster the values of solidarity, commitment, social responsibility and belonging and identity with the local, national, regional and global space that favors the formation of a humanist and environmentalist conscience for sustainability and local development.

Therefore, it is necessary to teach geography in order to train men of science, critics, reflective, dialecticians, committed to their environment and the society where it grows and develops, which is possible if in the current conceptions of learning is attended to the relationship education, identity, culture; which would enhance the quality of education required by Latin American countries for the development of their human capital and survive the globalized world in which they inexorably live, in which the loss of identities is already a fact.

The development of this identity poses challenges of great interest to the geography teacher. The first is of an epistemological nature, because the problem of identity is complex and has demanded a multi and interdisciplinary approach; In many cases the search for answers has been in an intelligent combination of knowledge provided by other sciences such as ethnography, psychology, among others.

In Cuba, the geography professor among its fundamental tasks the integral formation of citizens capable of contributing to the harmonious and planned development of their country. With the new economic policy of local development a new look at identity education is necessary, which enhances the integral formation for local development.

Therefore, in the work didactic-methodological considerations are offered that allow understanding the importance and necessity of the treatment to the identity education from the preparation of the geography teacher, so that it allows a teaching-learning process that educates in the identity values from the teaching content.

## **Development**

### **Considerations about identity education**

The historiographical review on identity education is very recent, in this respect the researcher Coll (2010) considers:

The field of studies on identity is still under construction and needs to continue to develop at the same time that our knowledge of the concept that is at its base and which is its origin, the concept of identity, we can say that we need (re) to build the identity of the field of studies on identity (Coll, 2010, p.26).

Despite the emphasis on the subject in recent times, has made possible that its analysis has contextualization from the pedagogical perspective, hence previously already appear research in the international and national field on identity education and the pertinent that this results in the pedagogical preparation of the teacher to assume with quality his professional performance in order to fulfill his basic tasks of educating and instructing.

Studies on identity education in the Latin American context are nuanced by a great diversity of sometimes contradictory interpretations, and insufficient precision with respect to the concept of cultural identity from the educational context, which has generated the proliferation of a large number of definitions not integrated into a general theory. This situation is manifested not only in the scientific theory, but it is revealed with greater clarity in the pedagogical practice

In the works of Laurencio (2002) this problematic is connoted in a succinct way when considering that the theoretical study of the identity phenomenon reveals the cosmivisive amplitude of its essence and how deeply controversial its content is. These issues, says the specialist, are evident from the diversity of intellectual positions and assumptions assumed and defended by scholars of the subject. The trends go from the oversizing of certain components of the process, through the definition and conceptualization of the rich variety of its essentials, to

impostures that are oriented towards the existential nihilism of the phenomenon, leading to consider the definitions and theoretical formulations unnecessary. This concept.

He also considers that Cuban social thought has a solid theoretical background capable of guiding social studies around the phenomenon of identity. The epistemological precepts existing in the works of José Martí and Fernando Ortiz stand out for their significance, in which, although a definition of the phenomenon is not specified, coherent methodological prescriptions are projected according to the unraveling, comprehension and contextualization of the identity in the plane phenomenal

In the conformation of the Latin American sociocultural imaginary, Martí warns the existence in the continent of "new peoples", whose nature does not obey the traditional rationality of other peoples. The fact denotes the existential certainty of an American nature, based on the cultural unity of the plurality of ethnic groups that formed and still conform, an issue that implies the requirement of own solutions that respond to the contextual demands of the Latin American socio-cultural reality.

Ortiz establishes precise directions for the concrete analysis of the identity phenomenon, understood in its dynamics as an active process of creation and permanent reconstruction, guarantor of the inclusion of differences in the face of unity. Aspect that materializes in the characteristics and values of identity, whose singularity is expressed in the national and local particularities in its relation with the national, regional and global historical evolution; question that points towards the perception of identity as a process of interaction between macro and micro in the socio - historical context.

Several authors, whose scientific direction is projected towards the conceptualization of identity, include Torres (1995), Pupo (1991), Ubieta (1993). In this regard it can be argued that identity has been seen as a value, a process or phenomenon, and according to the analysis plane has assumed several nuances, among them are:

- Ways of life and awareness of sameness.
- Community of social, cultural, ethnic and linguistic aspects in which it is assumed as historical awareness of the social being.

- It is a cultural fact resulting from an object and subjective personality process.

All the aforementioned ideas are rational and approach the problem of identity scientifically; however, they do not manage to encompass it in its complex integrality. We cannot forget that identity is mysticism and otherness, and in its construction various factors influence from their level of influence.

Therefore, the conception of identity, from this holistic and integrating perspective, in addition to the previously referenced aspects, considers others that are oriented to the relationship established by the subjects of culture with natural objects of a certain geographical context, and in their relations this subject of culture in his performance becomes the subject of identity.

#### Identity education and its treatment from teacher preparation

The researcher González (2013) in his work "The formation of cultural identity: a look from the school associated with Unesco" exposes some reflections about the formation of cultural identity in the students of a basic secondary school, associated with the Unesco, from the interrelation of the school curriculum with the local heritage and from the potential of the current Cuban Basic Secondary School Model that can be contextualized in any other place in the world. In his thesis work, he also offers a didactic procedure to use local heritage based on the formation of cultural identity through the proposed organizational forms.

The ideas summarized here are part of his doctoral thesis and have been enriched by the author of this article, because the systematization of the theoretical foundations on cultural identity and its formation from the teaching-learning process of the humanities is one of the main referents in the systematization that is made of identity education from the teaching-learning process of geography.

The phenomenon of education for the treatment of identity has incorporated the vision of the culture of those who participate in the pedagogical process, which presents new challenges for the teaching-learning approach of the identity elements in the educational centers that have gone from being monocultural to pluricultural, which should lead to new approaches in the didactic of the subjects for the treatment of identity.

Hence, the Geography Didactics needs approaches that allow it to contextualize the geographical culture from an integrating perspective and at the same time educate in the identity values.

In view of the above considerations, the improvement of the pedagogical process of training of the education professional, in accordance with the current problem of identity education, tends to be oriented towards two main directions:

- Precision of the theoretical and pedagogical foundations that govern this process, as a formative process of undergraduate and postgraduate education that has its specificities.
- Establishment of a methodology of a general nature, pedagogically grounded, and with the necessary flexibility for the treatment of local cultural identity in professional training.

This reveals a contradiction in the relationship established between the need and importance of the improvement of the process of pedagogical professional training from the vision of identity and the current level of development of the theoretical-pedagogical foundations of pedagogy in general and of the didactic in particular for the treatment of identity education.

Although many of the approaches of the new pedagogical model that should support the preparation of the geography teacher to enhance identity education are already in the educational centers of Cuba, based on pedagogical approaches to identity contained in the educational thinking of pedagogues outstanding, however, teaching-learning for the treatment of cultural identity in schools has been done in a compartmentalized, unsystematic way, without a common objective, and from the axiological-evaluative perspective, without taking into account the uniqueness of the differences and similarities that may exist between one and other people, between one and other social contexts within the same culture, within the same nation. This uniqueness is offered by local environments, especially if one looks at their history and geography, a question that is not always considered but present in Cuban pedagogical thought.

Thus, the methodological approaches to the treatment of identity have been based on the patrimonial element, then, from a geo-historical perspective, the patrimonial enriches learning, since this vision would be based on the interdisciplinary nature of the subject.

Therefore, there are elements that are not sufficiently highlighted in the previous proposals, among which the essential role of the teacher stands out not only as a facilitator or mediator in the

development of cultural identity, but as a stimulator of the said process (education for identity) , when the content to be taught is potentiated, according to the science taught, and conditions the peculiarity of the learning process for identity, the content that is learned determines how it is learned, and that the mechanisms of learning and education Identity are not parallel essences but a single process of instruction, education and personality development, for the development of the culture in which the subject is inserted.

The school is one of the social institutions that has contributed most to generate the cultural identity of the country, this is a wealth that boosts the possibilities of realization of the human species by mobilizing each people and each group to nourish their past, and welcome the external contributions compatible with their idiosyncrasies and continue the process of their own creation.

The aforementioned makes it possible to assume the postulate of the Cuban professor Díaz (2005) when he expresses: "we are identity, among other things, because we are memory" (p.1).

Educating for identity, as González Saéz (2010) considers, and then becomes one of the great commissions that society makes to the pedagogical sciences: the training of an individual prepared to face the complex cultural and social panorama that stands in front of him, which dominates the science and the technique with a deeply humanistic approach.

The school is a privileged framework for dealing with cultural diversity from a perspective of social cohesion since it constitutes a microcosm in which it is possible to intervene in a controlled manner to show that social and cultural diversity is a positive and projective reality of development local, show that the social and cultural diversity of the environment is a complex fact, explain that social and cultural diversity is an advantage for social development, facilitate the non-problematic treatment of local cultural identity within the national cultural pattern, establish a context communicative in which the cultural interactions are made from the significant elements of the local environment, educate in the treatment of identity cultural conflicts.

If the teaching staff in general has a positive attitude towards the identity present in the classroom, it can help the students to reinforce the concept of identity that is closely linked to the communicative competence and the predisposition towards the use of identity elements in the pedagogical activity and communication.

Geography teachers can help unmask prejudices and stereotypes that often distort or distort reality, due to cultural misunderstandings between citizens of different origins who live in the same society, in the same local cultural context.

To carry out these changes necessary for a new approach to identity pedagogy, changes must also be made in the initial and permanent teacher training that will facilitate both future teachers and those who are in practice to face these new challenges and find valid solutions to ensure that their students have sufficient skills and abilities that will convert them into local citizens in the immediate future.

Hence, it is necessary to guide teachers so that there is real intercommunication in the classroom between them, students and the cultural environment, and raise awareness about the importance that beliefs, identities, attitudes and motivation have for the education and development of the identities in the students.

In this regard, the idea of Venezuelan researcher Mora García (2009) is suggested when he suggests that the greatest methodological error has been to separate customs and traditions from sociocultural processes of educational and pedagogical practice. On the other hand, for the researcher Carmen Seijas (2008) the identity with the local keeps a relationship that merits continue to be precise for its cultural value, since in the reaffirmation of identities a process is generated that provides each local culture with an unmistakable stamp, that is why it is meant that the distinctive elements are the artistic, historical or geographical treasures of the localities.

In this way, insofar as students' contact with the elements that identify them as a locality, people and nation is guaranteed, they will be contributing to the formation of a man committed to his history, geography and culture.

The local environment offers potentialities not always taken into account when cultural identity is spoken, an issue that has already been raised from different subjects and especially from Geography. It is about giving a space in the classroom to the identity components, to the identity invariants of the environment, to the significant, to the patrimonial, to those elements of the heritage that were not always seen from their interdisciplinary perspective. The geo-historical as an approach in a territorial context, object of comparative study with other contexts, should serve

as a pretext for the encounter and socialization with the other, of socialization and individual structuring, so that the awakening of the student's identity consciousness is a work of all the teachers, of education, and specifically of the professor of geography.

In this aspect, the identity consciousness from geography and history, from an interdisciplinary approach, leads to create first a geo-historical awareness. Thus, it is appreciated as the didactic nature of the laws, which are the essence and foundation of the educational teaching process, linking the social with the individual in the formation of men for life. The fundamental characteristics, both structural and dynamic behavior of the educational process, are the foundation to establish the specific characteristics of the training process and determine a theoretical model that addresses its special didactics. Following then the logic of the investigation, it is necessary to establish the relationships that are established as an educational process of the formation of man.

The relationship that mediates between the patrimonial elements and the symbolic - identity components is another one of the edges of this phenomenon that has been object of analysis by many researchers, and that currently acquires a special value for what it represents, especially as a result of the globalizing and neoliberal changes.

For the researcher Le Gof (1998) the aforementioned relationship is seen as entities that as soon join as they separate, but that ultimately converge because they have common historical motivations. On the one hand, the need to recognize, to defend the common heritage, and on the other, to define, maintain and affirm a space, also common, both in terms of history and in that of institutions, customs, mentalities , anthropological, cultural, political, daily practices; a space that is none other than the one defined by the identity bonds. In reality, heritage as a trace of history is the basis, the foundation of identity, and at the same time that as a cultural manifestation it contributes many of the elements that constitute the identity

Among the organizational forms for the treatment of cultural identity are classes, and excursions or tours of places of historical, geographical or cultural interest of local, national or global relevance. In this way, the didactic-methodological considerations presented contribute to the

preparation of the Geography teacher in the treatment of local cultural identity and are specified in the following ideas:

1. To make a cultural identity diagnosis of the geo-historical context of Guantánamo that takes into consideration the potentialities and identity needs of the students, in a way that allows to know the representative elements from a geographical and historical point of view.
2. Analyze deeply the geography programs from the possibilities of the content to proceed to the contextualization of the objects, processes or geographic phenomena representative of the Guantánamo identity culture from the geo-historical approach.
3. Determine how and when the topic of the treatment of local cultural identity will be introduced in Geography classes taking into account the representative elements of the local geo-historical context.
4. Encourage identity debate and cultural reflection, so that the student in his communication with the Geography teacher, transits from the subject of culture to subject of identity.
5. Promote the emotional relationship of the students of the Geography specialty with the values of the local heritage that will be worked on.

## **Conclusions**

The authorial considerations on the identity education in the preparation of the geography teacher have to be considered in the design of any proposal of formation or development of the local cultural identity, but they do not constitute in themselves a pedagogical theory, much less they represent a methodology for your treatment.

The contemporary Cuban society demands the education of an individual developed in all its potentialities, defender of the best of its traditions and identified with the social project of the Revolution. From this perspective, pedagogy as a science is capable of responding to the demands that society imposes on identity education for its significant role in the preparation of professionals in the specialty of Geography with a focus on local development and the protection of the autochthonous values of the Guantánamo culture.

Hence, the coherent design in the Geography teacher preparation is aimed not only to enhance the knowledge system but also to accentuate the values of the local culture from the geohistorical approach, and that is a fundamental element in its preparation and contribution to the local development.

### **Bibliographic references**

- Aponte, E. (2006). La geohistoria, un enfoque para el estudio del espacio venezolano desde una perspectiva interdisciplinaria. *Scripta Nova*. X (218). Recuperado de <http://www.ub.edu/geocrit/sn/sn-218-08.htm>
- Blanco, A. (2014). *La educación patrimonial en el preuniversitario*. (Tesis de doctorado). Universidad “José de la Luz y Caballero”, Holguín.
- Coll, C. y Falsafi, L. (2010). *Presentación. Identidad y educación: tendencias y desafíos*. España: Universidad de Barcelona.
- Colás, Agripina. (2008). *Metodología para la preparación de los maestros en la realización de adaptaciones curriculares para los escolares con retraso mental*. (Tesis de doctorado). Instituto Superior Pedagógico “Enrique José Varona”, La Habana.
- Delors, J. (1996). *La educación encierra un tesoro*. Informe de la Comisión Internacional sobre la Educación para el siglo xxi. Compendio. París: Ediciones Unesco.
- González Sáez, O. J. (2013). *Estrategia didáctica dirigida a la formación de la identidad cultural en los estudiantes de Secundaria Básica*. (Tesis de doctorado). Universidad de Ciencias Pedagógicas “Félix Varela”, Villa Clara.
- González, Z. (2007). *La preparación del maestro de la escuela primaria para la realización efectiva del diagnóstico escolar integral*. (Tesis de doctorado). Instituto Superior Pedagógico “Félix Varela”, Villa Clara.
- Laurencio, A. (2002). *Historia local y proyección axiológico-identitaria en el proceso de enseñanza-aprendizaje de la Historia de Cuba en Secundaria Básica*. (Tesis de doctorado). Universidad “José de la Luz y Caballero”, Holguín.

- Leal Spengler, E. (s.f.). *El papel del patrimonio cultural en la identidad de una nación*. Recuperado de <http://www.habananuestra.cu/>
- Martí, J. (1992). *Obras escogidas*. Parte 2. La Habana: Ciencias Sociales.
- Morillas González, A. (2010, julio). *La creación de nuestra identidad a partir de la educación del patrimonio*. XXIII Encuentro de Escuelas Asociadas de la Unesco, España.
- Rincón, N. (2006). La enseñanza de la geografía y el proyecto pedagógico de aula bajo el enfoque geohistórico. *Omnia*, 12(2), 148-165. Recuperado de <http://www.redalyc.org/pdf/737/73712207.pdf>
- Seijas Bague, C. R. (2008). *La preparación de la maestra del grado preescolar en el área de desarrollo de la educación plástica para el tratamiento a la identidad cultural local en la actividad programada*. (Tesis de doctorado). Universidad “José de La Luz y Caballero”, Holguín.
- Tamayo, I. (2009). *Potencialidades formativas del pensamiento de Fidel Castro Ruz para el desarrollo de la identidad cultural del maestro primario*. (Tesis de doctorado). Universidad “José de la Luz y Caballero”, Holguín.
- Varona, S. (2007). *La labor del maestro en el proceso de formación y desarrollo de la identidad nacional cubana*. (Tesis de doctorado). Universidad “José de la Luz y Caballero”, Holguín.
- Villalón, M. (2012). La preparación del profesor, una necesidad en la formación inicial y permanente en la carrera de Biología- Geografía. *EduSol*, (39). Universidad de Guantánamo. Recuperado de [https://www.redib.org/.../oai\\_articulo1028639](https://www.redib.org/.../oai_articulo1028639)