


ANTHROPOLOGY, EDUCATION AND PERCEPTION: ENGAGEMENT AND MEANINGFUL LEARNING OF INDIGENOUS STUDENTS AT THE FEDERAL UNIVERSITY OF PAMPA/RS

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ABSTRACT

This article explores the critical convergence between anthropology and education, highlighting its essential role in the inclusion of indigenous students, especially in the context of the Physical Education course at the Federal University of Pampa (Unipampa). Anthropology is presented as a practical tool to understand and overcome structural barriers, promoting an education sensitive to cultural diversity. Active listening to students, curricular adaptation, and the creation of inclusive spaces are crucial strategies. The anthropology approach, especially in the context of Physical Education, aims to understand the different bodies in motion, promoting a more inclusive and equitable education.

Keywords: Inclusion. Indigenous Students. Cultural Diversity.

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INTRODUCTION

The admission of indigenous students to the Federal University of Pampa (Unipampa) was a carefully planned long-term process by the institution, which began even before the first actions were carried out. In 2011, Unipampa promoted the First Meeting with Indigenous Leaders at its rectory, in the city of Bagé, RS, where indigenous leaders and university administrators discussed strategies to facilitate access to higher education. The goal was to find solutions that would meet not only the legal requirements but also the specific needs of indigenous communities. During the event, issues related to student assistance were widely debated, with emphasis on the concern to avoid the cultural isolation of students. Thus, it was proposed to implement mechanisms that would guarantee the connection of students with their roots.

Indigenous leaders expressed dissatisfaction with the admission process via the National High School Exam (ENEM), which treated blacks, browns and indigenous people in a similar way, without taking into account the specific sociocultural characteristics, especially of communities from Rio Grande do Sul. At the time, Unipampa reserved 50% of the vacancies for affirmative action, as provided for in Federal Law 12.711/2012, but without differentiating the sociocultural specificities. The leaders sought to adjust the agreements previously established with the private sector, ensuring greater supervision of the communities over those who aspired to attend graduation.

For the indigenous villagers, the selection process now consists of an essay writing test, applied in their own communities. The evaluation criteria included compliance with the proposed theme, thematic progression, predominance of the essay typology and adequacy to the cultured norm of Brazilian Portuguese. In addition, the candidate had to present a declaration of indigenous village, which included the nomenclature of the indigenous land of origin and the signature of leaders, as well as a declaration of ethnic belonging. In Dom Pedrito, for the Rural Teaching Degree course, there is an additional specific selection process that takes place on campus facilities. This course unfolds into two distinct periods: the "university", which takes place during the conventional vacation period, and the "community", which takes place during the academic year, providing students with the opportunity to integrate into their communities while developing practical activities related to the course.

In 2011, Unipampa established the ANAUÊ Program, which aimed to integrate indigenous people into the academic environment, aiming to ensure their permanence and

autonomy. However, the program was extinguished and its activities did not extend throughout the student admission process, resulting in the loss of the opportunity to effectively contribute to the guarantee of the rights of indigenous students.

In the first semester of 2012, the first indigenous academics joined Unipampa, receiving financial support through the Indigenous Development Scholarship Program (PBDAl) and the Permanence Scholarship Program (PBP). This support included guarantees of pedagogical and social support, as well as monitoring by professors-tutors and course colleagues. As of 2013, the Ministry of Education, through the Permanence Scholarship Program, began to focus on the permanence of students in situations of socioeconomic vulnerability, including indigenous people. The scholarships for indigenous people had a double value compared to those for other students, considering cultural, geographical, linguistic specificities, beliefs and traditions, as supported by the Federal Constitution.

In 2014, with the improvement of the student assistance policy, the conditions of permanence were adjusted in response to the demands of the indigenous people themselves. In addition to the general policies of the Federal Government, Unipampa, characterized by its multi-campus structure, sought to adapt actions to meet the specific demands of each host city. The Federal University of Pampa is a relatively recent institution, established in 2008, with a little more than 10 years of operation. Its units were strategically installed in cities with a low Human Development Index (HDI) in the pampa region, covering parts of the states of Rio Grande do Sul and Santa Catarina. According to Unipampa's Institutional Development Plan (2019-2023), this area has particularities, such as small municipalities, low demographic density, and socioeconomic inequalities, making the creation of Unipampa a significant factor in regional development and access to higher education for local populations (FONSECA, 2015).

The region has characteristics that indicate opportunities for diversification of the economic base, such as its location in relation to MERCOSUR, excellence in agricultural production, mineral and energy reserves (coal and oil shale), in addition to the presence of teaching, research and extension institutions. Sectors such as electricity generation, ceramics industry, integrated meat chain, viticulture, olive growing, mineral extraction, rice and soybean cultivation, forestry, fruit growing, and grain storage capacity stand out as potential for development. Unipampa, committed to the identification of local limits and potentialities, aims to contribute and plan actions that modify the regional reality,

considering the preservation of the Pampa Biome. This commitment is reflected in all areas of the institution's activity, from management to extension and sustainable development activities (PDI UNIPAMPA, 2019-2023, p.20).

With ten campuses distributed in border cities, some on the border with Argentina and others with Uruguay, such as São Borja, Itaqui, Uruguiana, Alegrete, Santana do Livramento, Dom Pedrito, São Gabriel, Caçapava do Sul, Jaguarão and Bagé, where the rectory is located, Unipampa was created with the intention of meeting local needs. Each city was chosen to host a campus based on the lack of specialized labor in the region. For example, Alegrete offers courses aimed at the engineering sector. It is important to note that each campus has its own identity and course offer, giving Unipampa the appearance of ten distinct institutions.

The pampa region, marked by an agricultural tradition and a rich cultural diversity with indigenous, African and European influences, directly impacts Unipampa's academic and research activities. The university seeks to dialogue with local demands and potentialities, promoting regional development. In this context, Unipampa has as one of its main objectives to democratize access to quality higher education in the region, offering undergraduate and graduate courses in various areas of knowledge. In addition, the institution implements student inclusion and permanence policies, through scholarship and student assistance programs, aiming to ensure equal opportunities and contribute to the formation of a more just and democratic society.

METHODOLOGY

In line with the above, the present study addresses the experience of indigenous students enrolled in Higher Education courses at the Federal University of Pampa (Unipampa) in the state of Rio Grande do Sul, from 2017 to 2021. Using a multi-situated approach, we investigate how these students access and stay in the institution, identifying policies and practices to promote inclusion and empowerment. In addition, we explore the role of anthropology in supporting Indigenous inclusion in education, analyzing how perception and the learning process manifest in diverse cultural and social contexts.

In this sense, we adopted the methodology proposed by Tim Ingold (2018), which is based on the anthropology of life. The research follows a participatory and immersive approach, involving interactive engagements with indigenous students from the Federal University of Pampa. Central features include close observation of everyday practices and

an emphasis on the connection between their lives and the surrounding environment. By incorporating principles from the anthropology of perception and ecology, we seek an understanding of the complex relationships between subjects and their contexts, contributing to an integrated analysis of the experiences lived by indigenous students in the academic environment.

Through fieldwork on the Uruguaiana and Dom Pedrito campuses of Unipampa, we developed actions that enabled us to observe, describe and understand aspects of the daily lives of indigenous students. Experiences and narratives intertwined, forming a complex web of meanings, where learning emerges as a fundamental way of apprehending the world and understanding the indigenous experience in the context of higher education. Indigenous knowledge, rooted in the understanding and appreciation of the natural environment and communities, plays an essential role in academic training, contributing to knowledge that respects cultural specificities. The indigenous experience at Unipampa not only enriches the institution, but also contributes to the creation and recreation of paths, integrating indigenous knowledge into the intricate tapestry of the world and the unique trajectory of its students.

The relationship between perception and education plays a key role in understanding how individuals relate to knowledge and experiences in the learning process. Perception, understood as the process by which human beings interpret and assign meaning to information in the environment, is intrinsically linked to learning. The latter is responsible for providing the means and opportunities for the acquisition of knowledge, skills and values.

The intersection between Anthropology and Education, with a focus on the Anthropology of Perception, seeks to understand the various forms of perception and how they are influenced by cultural, social, and individual factors. This approach recognizes that people have distinct cognitive structures and interpret the world in different ways, based on their social and cultural context. By integrating students' prior knowledge, educators can create more meaningful and relevant learning environments, promoting greater understanding and retention of information.

In addition, the Anthropology of Perception considers a wide range of factors that influence perception, such as biological, psychological, social, and cultural aspects, enriching the educational process and allowing for a more comprehensive understanding of students' cognitive and emotional development. The adoption of pedagogical strategies adapted to the individual characteristics and specific contexts of each student, based on the

insights of the Anthropology of Perception, can promote more effective learning. This approach also encourages critical reflection on our perceptions and how they are socially constructed. By bringing this perspective into education, students are encouraged to question their own perceptions and develop critical thinking, analysis, and problem-solving skills, resulting in deeper and more autonomous learning.

According to Ingold (2000), learning is not restricted to a mental or cerebral process, but occurs through practice, through movements engaged in the world. In other words, learning is closely related to the experience lived by the individual in his physical and social environment. Thus, learning is not only limited to acquiring knowledge and skills but also building meaningful connections between the people, objects, and places around them. Ingold emphasizes that learning is a relational process, which takes place in a specific context and begins with exploration and experimentation, as people interact with the world around them and discover how things work. In addition, it highlights the importance of movement in learning, arguing that knowledge is engaged through practice and direct sensory experience.

According to Lave (1991), learning does not occur in isolation, but in specific social and cultural contexts, integrated with the activity, the language and the community of practice. In this sense, learning is seen as a process of active participation in communities of practice, where individuals learn together, share knowledge, and collaborate on problem-solving. This theory highlights the importance of social interaction and practical experience in learning, emphasizing that the construction of knowledge occurs from participation in real situations in the world (WENGER, 1998).

Situated learning (LAVE, 1991) is seen as a social process, where people learn with and through other people, using tools and technologies that are present in their context. According to Lave and Wenger (1991), situated learning is "a continuous process of legitimate peripheral participation in the community of practice, through which individuals learn the skills, values and knowledge necessary for full participation in the community".

The perspective in question is similar to the approach developed by Marcel Mauss in his work "The Techniques of the Body" (MAUSS, 2003), in which the author highlights the relevance of body techniques for learning and the transmission of intergenerational knowledge. Mauss points out that the techniques of the body are socially constructed and incorporated by the individual through repetition and practice, in a learning process that involves both the body and the mind.

From Pierre Bourdieu's theory of practice (1990), it is understood that bodily practices are concrete expressions of internalized dispositions, resulting from a long process of socialization. Bourdieu argues that bodily practices are endowed with meanings and values closely related to the social and cultural structures of a given society.

However, Ingold (2000) directs a criticism to Bourdieu in the conception of habitus as a universal mediator between objective structures and social practices. For Ingold, habitus is understood as a set of appropriation and action schemes that are experienced and put into practice. However, this conception ignores the fundamental interconnection between body and mind, as well as between sign and meaning.

Thus, Ingold (2000) argues that habitus cannot be understood as an entity separate from bodily perception and experience. Instead, he argues that habitus is inseparable from bodily experience and that any attempt to separate it from corporeality is problematic. Furthermore, Ingold points out that Bourdieu's emphasis on objective structure and the role of habitus as a universal mediator implies a limited understanding of individual agency and creativity. For Ingold (2000), it is necessary to consider the interdependence between body, mind and culture for a more adequate understanding of habitus and its practices. This expanded perspective can offer new possibilities for analyzing social relations and human action.

Thus, body techniques are not restricted to mere forms of physical exercises or movements, but are sociocultural constructions that imply learning processes and knowledge transmission. Thus, by understanding the importance of body techniques, it is possible to broaden the understanding of the relationships between body, culture and society.

According to Csordas' (2000) theory of corporeality and perception, the human experience is inseparable from the body. In this sense, perception is not only a cognitive process, but also a somatic one, involving the senses, bodily sensations, and emotions. For the author, the body is a source of knowledge and a tool for action in the world, being fundamental for us to experience the world and relate to others.

Perception, according to Csordas, involves both cognition and corporeality, and is not a purely mental activity, but is constructed from bodily sensations and interactions with the environment. For example, when we touch an object, in addition to perceiving its shape and texture, we also feel its temperature and weight. These bodily sensations are incorporated into our perception of the object and influence our action in relation to it. The author also

highlights that perception is shaped by culture and social norms, emphasizing that it is not an individual process, but influenced by cultural expectations and the meanings attributed to bodies (CSORDAS, 2000).

Steil and Carvalho (2015) argue that the production of meaning in the human experience is a dynamic and contingent process that occurs in direct relation to the physical and social environment in which the person is inserted. To support this reflection, the authors draw on Tim Ingold's studies on perception and practice.

Thus, the purpose of this study is to contribute to the understanding of the experience of indigenous students at Unipampa, from an anthropological approach that values their experiences and knowledge. By considering the importance of bodily perception and practices in the learning process, we seek to highlight the central role of the experiences lived by indigenous students in the educational context, contributing to the strengthening of inclusion and diversity in higher education.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

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Steil and Carvalho (2015) argue that the production of meaning in the human experience is a dynamic and contingent process that occurs in direct relation to the physical and social environment in which the person is inserted. To support this reflection, the authors rely on the studies of Tim Ingold and Thomas Csordas. Ingold (2000) argues that the environment in which we live is a field of relations and flows, in which individuals are constantly engaged in practices and interactions that shape their perception and action in the world. In this way, the production of meaning is not an internal and individual process, but rather a result of the relationship between the subject and the world around him.

In addition, Csordas (1999) emphasizes that the human experience is always embodied and embodied, that is, it is mediated by the body and emotions. Thus, meaning is produced not only cognitively, but also sensorially and affectively, through sensations, feelings, and emotions that arise in interaction with the world. Based on this basis, Steil and Carvalho (2015) conclude that the production of meaning is a situated practice, which occurs in a specific context and involves the body, emotions and social relations. They highlight the importance of understanding the human experience as a dynamic and contingent process, which is always in constant transformation and construction.

According to Tim Ingold (2015), the line is a dynamic entity that emerges from the movement of materials and objects. According to the author, lines are "a continuous flow of dots" (Ingold, 2015, p. 5) and, therefore, a form of life in constant evolution. For Ingold, lines are created through a process of growth and development, being affected by the environment and interactions with other objects and people (INGOLD, 2015). The author highlights the importance of engagement for understanding the formation and maintenance of lines. For Ingold (2015), lines are always in the process of engaging with the world around them, and this engagement is fundamental for their survival and evolution. Through this process of engagement, the lines are shaped and transformed over time, as stated by Ingold (2015, p. 6): "The line is, therefore, an entity that is never complete, but always in a process of growth and evolution".

Engaging indigenous students with the possibility of meaningful learning is crucial for them to succeed in higher education and for the university to be truly inclusive and plural. Thus, the aim of this chapter is to explore the intersection between anthropology and

education, and to illustrate how indigenous students connect with their knowledge in specific situations within the university setting. To achieve this objective, it is assumed that the learning of indigenous students is influenced by the way they perceive and value their own ethnicities. Therefore, it is essential to understand the practices and knowledge of indigenous students and how this knowledge can be integrated into higher education.

The implementation of the Degree in Rural Education at Unipampa represents a significant advance in the process of indigenous teacher training, offering a specific alternative for those who wish to work as teachers in their communities. However, this path faces challenges that require constant adaptation and improvement.

By addressing the challenges faced by indigenous students during teacher training, the complexity of reconciling the traditional elements of indigenous communities with the academic demands of the course becomes evident. The dichotomy between university time and community time, highlighted in the two-time model of the course, is a sensitive aspect that requires a careful approach.

The need to ensure training that respects and values indigenous cultural particularities is also reflected in the selection and evaluation processes. The introduction of an essay writing test carried out in the indigenous communities themselves demonstrates Unipampa's effort to recognize and welcome the different forms of expression and knowledge present in these communities (ARAÚJO, 2018).

The regular enrollment of indigenous students in Teaching Degree courses at Unipampa ends up being more effective in the Teaching Degree in Rural Education at the Dom Pedrito campus. Some factors that contribute to this are the specific entrance exam of the course, in addition to the indigenous selection process and the separation of the course into two stages, the University and the Community, there is the meaning in the training.

The training of indigenous teachers in the Rural Education course is a necessity to ensure quality intercultural and bilingual education in schools located in rural areas. According to Araújo (2018), the training of indigenous teachers is an essential process for valuing the culture and identity of indigenous peoples, as well as for promoting schooling that respects differences.

Rural Education, in turn, seeks to value peasant culture and the specificities of rural communities, including indigenous ones. According to the Ministry of Education (MEC, 2004), Rural Education is a set of pedagogical practices that aims at integral human formation and the social transformation of rural realities. In this sense, the training of

indigenous teachers in the Rural Education course can contribute to the strengthening of indigenous communities, as well as to the sustainable development of rural areas.

The presence of indigenous teachers in indigenous schools is a key element for valuing indigenous culture and language, as highlighted by Leite (2018). Indigenous teachers are able to share their knowledge and practices with students, in addition to getting to know the reality and culture of the community up close. This allows teaching to be delivered more effectively and respecting cultural diversity.

In addition, the training of indigenous teachers can contribute to the fight for the rights of indigenous peoples and the confrontation of prejudice and discrimination. According to the Articulation of Indigenous Peoples of Brazil (APIB, 2019), the presence of indigenous teachers in schools is one of the main demands of indigenous peoples in Brazil. The training of these teachers is seen as a way to strengthen indigenous communities and promote schooling that respects the country's cultural and linguistic diversity.

The Rural Education course has important particularities in the training of indigenous teachers, who return almost immediately to their communities and, consequently, to indigenous schools. According to Caldart (2004), community time is one of the dimensions of school time in the countryside, related to the time of life and work in the field of the subjects involved in the educational process. This time is characterized by the relationship with nature, productive activities and social and cultural coexistence typical of the communities. Such aspects contribute to the construction of a more contextualized and meaningful school for students. Teacher training is a crucial issue in ensuring quality schooling.

In addition to the degree in Rural Education at the Dom Pedrito campus, the Physical Education course in Uruguaiana stands out, whose protagonism in recent years is attributed to the Institutional Program of Scholarships for Initiation to Teaching (PIBID). This program has played a crucial role in teacher training, with a particularly relevant impact on the Degree in Physical Education. Although PIBID does not have a specific focus on the training of indigenous teachers, the opportunity to enter teaching through subsidized scholarships has generated significant benefits for indigenous students. On the other hand, the Rural Education course in Dom Pedrito also contributes to educational diversity, providing specialized training focused on the particularities of the rural context.

In addition to assisting in the training of students, PIBID provides a means of permanence for indigenous students, allowing them to develop their skills and knowledge in

direct contact with the reality of the classroom, in addition to a training scholarship. This experience can generate an empowerment of their knowledge, contributing to the improvement of the quality of education in general.

Indigenous students who participated in the Institutional Program for Teaching Initiation Scholarships (PIBID) of the Physical Education course until 2021 had the opportunity to contribute to schools in the implementation of Federal Laws 10.639/03 and 11.645/08, which refer to the Education of Ethnic and Racial Relations. This contribution was made through the introduction of indigenous games, such as archery, spear throwing and log racing, which rescue the history of indigenous peoples during sports practices. This work was highlighted in a Course Completion Paper prepared by one of the students in May 2021.

According to Roberto Cardoso de Oliveira (1995), indigenous games have a significant function in the transmission of cultural values. In addition, they assist in the development of essential skills for survival in the wild, such as agility, strength, and endurance. The games are a way of valuing the culture and history of indigenous peoples, promoting inclusion and diversity in schools (SANTOS, 2014).

In this way, it is perceived that indigenous games are an important tool to preserve and transmit ancestral traditions and knowledge, in addition to promoting integration and strengthening of social relations within schools. As Oliveira (1995) points out, "indigenous games are of fundamental importance in the education of young people, because through them teachings are transmitted that aim at their integration into the group, peaceful coexistence, respect for others, obedience to rules and overcoming personal limits" (p. 69).

In addition, the practice of these games can bring significant benefits to both those who teach and those who learn. According to Santos (2014), "by rescuing indigenous games in the classroom, in addition to promoting culture, it is also possible to work with other disciplines such as mathematics, geography, history and literature, in a playful and pleasurable way" (p. 47).

The training of indigenous teachers is essential to ensure the preservation of indigenous ethnicities in Brazil. Therefore, it is necessary that this training is carried out in a meaningful way, considering the specificities of each people and respecting their traditions and knowledge. It is essential to invest in pedagogical practices that value orality, the body, community participation and the relationship with nature, fundamental elements in the worldview of indigenous peoples. According to the researcher Maria Inês Ladeira,

"indigenous school education, when guided by the logic of indigenous peoples, must seek forms of knowledge that are not only cognitive, but that are related to the affective, spiritual and social dimensions of the subjects' lives" (LADEIRA, 2008, p. 17), in which one can consider themselves guided by different ways of perceiving what is around them and their meanings.

As Paulo Freire stated, "There is no neutral education. Either one is in favor of a just and solidary society, or one is in favor of social inequalities and exclusion" (FREIRE, 1996, p. 17). Thus, it is possible to affirm that education should go beyond the simple transmission of knowledge, being a process of awareness that considers the existing power structures in society. This critical and liberating approach is especially important for the most marginalized groups, who often do not have access to knowledge and spaces of power (FREIRE, 1996).

However, this approach has been criticized by those who advocate for more "traditional" schooling, centered on the transmission of content to prepare students for the job market. However, it is possible to argue that critical and liberating education is not incompatible with the transmission of content and preparation for the job market. In fact, this approach can enrich these aspects and connect them with the needs of society (Freire, 1996).

Furthermore, it is important to emphasize that education should not be seen in isolation, but rather as part of a larger process of social transformation. In this sense, Paulo Freire's critical and liberating approach can be a fundamental element for this transformation, encouraging students to reflect on the world in which they live and to engage in transformative actions in their communities (FREIRE, 1996).

In the indigenous context, it is essential to train indigenous teachers who know the reality of the communities and have a critical and liberating understanding of education. According to Torres Santomé (2002), "The training of indigenous teachers is a fundamental step for the effectiveness of indigenous school education, as it allows the presence of teachers who know the culture and reality of indigenous communities, in addition to having a critical and liberating education education essential for social transformation" (TORRES SANTOMÉ, 2002, p. 33).

The article "The Cultural Nature of Human Spatial Cognition: Evidence from Navigation," by Levinson and Wilkins (2006), investigates the connection between cultural practices and spatial orientation skills in different societies. The authors state that culture

exerts an influence on spatial cognition, with navigation being an example of this influence. They highlight the importance of understanding this relationship to account for variations in spatial understanding and navigation between people from different cultures.

Orienteering Running, known as ecosport, is approached as a sport that involves navigating in unknown terrain using maps and compasses. The text highlights its status as a space sport, involving navigation in unexplored and challenging environments. The rise in popularity of Orienteering Running is attributed to its ability to combine intellectual challenges with physical activity, as indicated by Arriaga et al. (2021).

The practice of Orienteering Running is perceived as an opportunity to explore new places and overcome personal limits. Baquet et al. (2019) highlight the unique and enriching experience that allows practitioners to connect with nature, develop orientation skills, and make decisions in adverse situations.

Indigenous students at Unipampa stand out in this sport due to their deep knowledge of nature, facilitating orientation in indigenous lands, and bodily engagement in sports practice. Merleau-Ponty's (1945) theory of bodily engagement is invoked to emphasize the importance of the body in understanding the world, presenting Orienteering Race as a way to explore the environment through direct bodily experience.

Merleau-Ponty suggests that direct experience of the natural environment is key to understanding the world around us. Orienteering Race, by promoting the fusion between body and natural environment, provides a direct connection with nature, integrating the individual with his surroundings.

Gibson's (2015) theory of affordance is introduced to explain perception in orienteering running. It is noteworthy that perception is direct and based on information from the environment, as suggested by the concept of affordance. This approach is essential to understand how indigenous students use perception efficiently and effectively during sports practice.

Descola's (2006) theory of "multinatural perspectivism" is applied to understand the participation of indigenous students in the Orienteering Race. The theory proposes that different societies see and interact with nature in distinct ways, reflecting their unique worldviews.

In Orienteering Race, competitors need to consider landscape features such as terrain, vegetation, and water, influenced by different cultural perspectives. Ingold (2011)

highlights how these cultural perspectives shape perception and orientation in the environment.

The practice of Orienteering Race offers an enriching opportunity to explore the interplay between culture, perception, and orienteering in the natural environment. Observing how indigenous students utilize their bodies and perception highlights the importance of diverse cultural perspectives in interpreting the environment and spatial orientation.

By participating in the Orienteering Race, indigenous students apply their prior knowledge of the natural environment and their unique cultural perspectives, giving them a competitive advantage. In addition, they share their ancestral knowledge, promoting greater understanding and respect for cultural diversity. The practice of sports becomes an opportunity to connect with nature, discover new places and overcome personal challenges, highlighting the complex interaction between culture, spatial cognition and the natural environment.

In his 2008 book "Ways of Walking: Ethnography and Practice," anthropologist Tim Ingold explores the practice of walking as a form of knowledge and understanding of the world. For him, walking is not just a means of transportation or physical exercise, but an engagement with the natural and cultural environment that allows us to involve all the senses in the activity, not just sight (Ingold, 2008).

According to Ingold, walking can allow us to develop a more intimate and sensitive relationship with the natural and cultural world, understanding the landscape, topography, ecology, history and culture of the place and the people who inhabit it. In addition, walking is a way to create connections and relationships with other people and the natural world, promoting the construction of social bonds and the strengthening of the sense of community (INGOLD, 2008).

The author also examines cultural differences in the way people walk and how these differences can affect how we perceive and interact with the environment around us. He highlights the importance of mindfulness and sensory perception while walking and how this can lead to a greater connection with the environment and with other people (INGOLD, 2008). Therefore, walking is more than a simple physical activity or means of transportation, it is a way to connect with the world and the people around us, developing a more intimate and sensitive relationship with the nature and culture that surround us.

Indigenous learning is deeply rooted in the daily practices of their community, as demonstrated by walking. While for those raised in the city, walking is seen as a common form of commuting, for Indigenous people, it is a way to reconnect with their environment and their Indigenous identity. This view is relevant to teacher training, especially in Physical Education, which can benefit from an interdisciplinary approach, including environmental education.

According to Krenak (2020), for indigenous peoples, the relationship with nature is one of total interdependence, therefore, everything that is necessary for their survival is extracted from the natural environment. This includes knowledge of the local fauna and flora, the ability to move around the territory, and the ability to use available resources. Walking, as mentioned, is an example of these daily practices and deeply related to indigenous culture and identity.

It was a May afternoon, and the Uruguay River was right next to us as we walked through the city of Itaqui. The sun was already beginning to say goodbye to the day in the waters of the river. After lunch, we decided to go for a walk and talked animatedly about everything. That's when I commented that I wanted to teach my daughter how to do a "little star", that acrobatics where we throw our feet in the air while our hands are fixed on the ground. The students who were with us got excited and started doing the maneuvers, showing the correct position of the body and the momentum necessary to execute the movement perfectly. Then, something unexpected happened. As they touched the ground, one of the students exclaimed: "It's going to rain!" I looked up at the sky and saw nothing to indicate impending rain. Curious, I asked him how he knew and it was then that he explained: when he touched the ground, he felt the humidity and vibration of the north wind, infallible signs that a storm was on the way. Soon the weather turned and the first raindrops suddenly wet us. (Field Diary 05/27/2019)

According to Ingold (2000), Western culture tends to privilege vision to the detriment of the other senses, which is reflected in the structuring of language and the adoption of expressions such as "seeing is believing" or "eyes that do not see, heart that does not feel". This primacy of vision is problematic, as it reduces the human experience to a form of visual perception, disregarding the various ways in which we interact with the world. Ingold points out that the other senses, such as hearing, touch, smell and taste, are also important in shaping our understanding of the world. In fact, they work in tandem with the vision to create a complete experience. The primacy of vision contributes to a fragmented view of the

world, where things are reduced to their visual appearances, while tactile, olfactory, gustatory and sound aspects are ignored. This can lead to a superficial understanding of the world, where the relationships between different elements are ignored in favor of a more superficial and visual understanding (INGOLD, 2000).

Ingold argues that perception is a never-ending process, a two-way engagement between the perceiver and his environment. This idea is based on the anthropology of corporeality, such as the methodological perspective of Csordas, who proposes that the body is not an object to be studied in relation to culture, but as the subject of culture. This means that the field diary passage can be interpreted by other senses, in addition to sight. These senses are part of the perspective of practice, as if it were a recognition of oneself in the world through the location of the individual in the culture and its link with perceptive processes and their cultural meanings (Csordas, 1990).

According to Csordas (1990), culture plays a predominant role in the perception of the world, and his phenomenological approach based on the paradigm of corporeality highlights the importance of the world-oriented cultural practice present in the formation of environmental perception. On the other hand, Ingold (2000) believes that culture could not exist without being intrinsically linked to nature, with both influencing each other. In this way, Ingold focuses on the totality of the body crossed by flows that allow us to understand and inhabit the world to produce meanings.

Although these two perspectives may seem at odds, it is possible to find points of convergence between them. For example, both recognize the importance of ecological relationships in building bonds with the world. In addition, Ingold's inhabiting world, built by beings and things, can be adjusted to Csordas' paradigm of corporeality, since both recognize the interconnection between body and environment (SOUZA, 2020).

It was not only in this context that walking became a significant element of learning. Within the Physical Education course at Unipampa in Uruguaiana, there is the Movement and Environment Study and Extension Group (GEEMA). This research group intends to integrate the dimensions of the body, environment, culture and society in an educational practice that aims to enhance teacher training. In its genesis and discourse of the indigenous students, the group highlights the importance of the body as a culture of movement and its intrinsic relationship with nature.

During the course of the doctorate, the indigenous students emphasized, in our various meetings, the theme of the body and its relationship with nature. As cited by

Figueiredo (2018, p. 34), these students reinforced the idea that the environment is sacred, therefore, its preservation and respect are essential. Thus, the understanding of their identity and belonging is intrinsically linked to the recognition of their cultural practices and the way they relate to the environment.

According to Santos (2017, p. 46), self-recognition, under these conditions, is not possible without an interdisciplinary perspective that promotes a critical analysis of social and environmental relations. In this context, GEEMA presented itself as a space for dialogue and reflection in relation to the body, nature and culture. According to Bueno and Santos (2015, p. 78), interdisciplinarity is an approach that integrates different knowledge and perspectives, seeking to build a broader and deeper understanding of social and environmental phenomena. Thus, for indigenous students, participation in GEEMA made it possible to recognize and value their worldview, which contributed significantly to the construction of their identity and belonging.

The group uses the walking technique, which, despite apparently being something simple, for the indigenous people, this activity is a way to reconnect with space, with observation and with their own identity. In this way, the act of walking is transformed into a social research, which expands the pedagogical space of Physical Education, going beyond the courtyards and courts (MENEZES; VELHO, 2015).

A topic of great interest is the unique logic of indigenous people in relation to their participation in group activities. Such logic is aligned with how they perceive the environment around them. Unlike the Western logic of following a demarcated trail in a straight line, the indigenous people move around different spaces. This way of perceiving the environment can be explained by the indigenous worldview, which values the interaction and harmonious relationship between human beings and nature.

Viveiros de Castro (2002) defines the indigenous worldview as based on the idea that the human being is part of a larger whole, which includes not only other human beings, but also animals, plants, rivers and mountains. This worldview implies an understanding that all natural beings and elements are interconnected and interdependent, and that the survival and well-being of each of them depends on the balance and harmony of the whole. Therefore, the differentiated logic of indigenous people when participating in group activities reflects their way of perceiving and interacting with the environment, valuing harmony and collectivity. In addition, this differentiated logic contributes to the promotion of balance and harmony between human beings and nature, which is so important for the survival of both.

In this sense, GEEMA, by promoting the integration of these dimensions in an educational practice, not only contributes to the training of more conscious teachers, but also to the promotion of environmental preservation and sustainability. Through this group, indigenous people significantly value the complex relationships between body, environment, culture and society, fundamental elements for their way of life.

According to Ingold (2011), the interaction of the human body with the environment through movement is essential for the exploration and understanding of the world around us. It is not only about receiving sensory information, but also about adapting and responding to this information, in a bodily process of perception and behavioral adjustment. With regard to the learning and practice of body-environment interaction, the ability to move and interact is acquired and developed over time, through experience, training and constant practice. For Cunha (2009), indigenous people learn from childhood to walk in the forest through the observation and guidance of parents and community members. Thus, body movement is a continuous process of learning and interacting with the environment, fundamental for exploring and understanding the world around us. Perception is a bodily process that involves the interaction of the senses with the environment, and the ability to move and interact with the environment is acquired and developed through experience, training and constant practice (INGOLD, 2011).

Physical Education is an extremely important area of knowledge for human development. It is directly linked to the relationship between the body and the environment, including the practice of physical activities and the appreciation of the body culture of movement. According to Oliveira et al. (2020), Physical Education seeks to study human movement in its different forms of manifestation, and this relationship between the body and the environment is even more significant when it comes to indigenous communities.

Indigenous communities have a very particular way of life, in which the preservation of culture and traditions is fundamental. In this sense, the connection with nature and the practice of physical activities are important elements for the maintenance of the identity and cultural heritage of these peoples. According to Bracht (2015), Physical Education can contribute to the preservation of indigenous culture, since it is capable of valuing and respecting the bodily practices and cultural manifestations of these peoples.

The Degree in Physical Education offered by the Federal University of Pampa (Unipampa) is a training that contemplates the particularities and demands of indigenous communities, with emphasis on its interdisciplinary approach and reflection on the

relationship between the body and culture. This training contributes to the appreciation and preservation of indigenous culture, since understanding the relationship between the body and the environment is essential for the maintenance of the ways of life of these peoples. In addition, the course prepares graduates to act appropriately and respectfully in indigenous communities, considering their beliefs and traditions.

According to Alves, Ferreira and Lopes (2019), Physical Education is fundamental for the appreciation and preservation of indigenous culture, since the practice of physical activities is directly related to the identity and cultural heritage of these peoples. In addition, Physical Education can be used as a tool to promote intercultural dialogue and the building of bridges between indigenous peoples and the majority society.

The training of Physical Education professionals must respect cultural differences and recognize bodily practices as forms of cultural expression. It is necessary to understand that bodily practices and cultural manifestations are essential parts of the identity of indigenous peoples. The Degree in Physical Education at Unipampa is fundamental for indigenous permanence, since it values and preserves the culture of these peoples through the understanding of the relationship between the body and the environment. In addition, the course prepares graduates to act appropriately and respectfully in indigenous communities, contributing to the promotion of the health and well-being of individuals.

CONCLUSION

Anthropology plays a crucial role in analyzing educational practices in different contexts, helping to identify essential and peripheral issues that affect Indigenous students' access to and permanence in university. The Federal University of Pampa (Unipampa) has been dedicated to overcoming these barriers and promoting inclusion and equality, offering opportunities to indigenous students to access higher education, despite the internal and external structural challenges faced by the institution.

Teaching faces several challenges, including the need to deal with students' ethnic issues and to make knowledge relevant and sensitive to their realities. It is imperative to ensure that education not only benefits the individual but also contributes to the development of indigenous communities as a whole. For this, it is essential to develop strategies that become effective educational public policies. In this context, anthropology is a valuable ally in the identification of pedagogical approaches that value knowledge and practices that can be incorporated into higher education.

Active listening to indigenous students is essential to understand their expectations and needs, and this understanding must be reflected in the curricular structure, which must respect and value the knowledge of traditional peoples. The insertion of indigenous themes in university curricula is an urgent demand to rethink historically rooted logics of exclusion, as highlighted in the research carried out by Pereira and Meneses (2020). In addition, Souza (2019) points out that the creation of physical and virtual spaces for the exchange of experiences between indigenous and non-indigenous students and professors can be an effective strategy to build a more inclusive and respectful academic environment.

Understanding the social dynamics in the university and how they are perceived by indigenous students is crucial to deepen the understanding of human relationships and their particularities in the learning process. This insight allows for a more complete view of social dynamics and how ethnicities influence learning, as well as highlighting how these dynamics can impact the development of meaningful learning.

In the book "Anthropology and Education: A Look at the Brazilian School" (2004), Lígia Ferreira emphasizes the importance of anthropology in the critical analysis of educational practice. This perspective makes it possible to examine the power relations and hierarchies present in the school and in society, in addition to understanding how educational practices are inserted in specific cultural and historical contexts, being affected by issues of gender, class and ethnicity. Thus, anthropology offers a valuable lens through which to reflect on educational practice and its interaction with broader social reality.

Following the arguments of Viveiros de Castro (2002), anthropology is a fundamental tool to encourage intercultural education. By promoting a critical reflection on the notion of culture and challenging the idea that some cultures are superior to others, anthropology contributes to demystifying stereotyped representations of indigenous peoples, valuing differences and otherness. This approach can help to break down barriers of ignorance and prejudice, promoting an education that recognizes and values different worldviews, beliefs, and traditions.

It is noteworthy that the relationship between anthropology and education transcends mere theoretical reflection, and can be applied in concrete pedagogical practices. The use of anthropology in the educational context provides experiences that emphasize the importance of understanding different bodies in motion. An example of this is the Physical Education course at Unipampa, where the presence of anthropology in the theoretical and methodological bases is noticeable. Through an interdisciplinary approach, anthropology

contributes to the understanding of how social, cultural, and historical characteristics influence bodily practices, allowing the development of a more inclusive and contextualized physical education.

Therefore, by intertwining anthropology and education, valuable possibilities are opened up for a more inclusive approach to the educational process. Understanding the different contexts in which people are inserted allows the creation of diversified curricula that are sensitive to the plurality of experiences and knowledge. In addition, anthropology can help to train critical and reflective teachers, capable of recognizing and questioning prejudices and stereotypes that permeate educational practices. The intersection between anthropology and education reveals itself as an important path for the promotion of a more democratic, equitable and humane schooling.

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