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Artículos de investigación científica y tecnológica

ORAL TRADITION AND TRANSMISSION OF ANCESTRAL KNOWLEDGE FROM EARLY CHILDHOOD

Tradición oral y transmisión de saberes ancestrales desde las
infancias

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INTRODUCTION

Solidary action, encompassing the holistic study of oral tradition in early childhood, is based on governmental policies of inclusion, participation, diversity, multiculturalism and respect for children's rights (Sarle, Ivaldi, & Hernandez, 2014). It promotes strategies to preserve its uses and customs based on the aesthetic of living words through oral traditions as literary creations, it is a wager on children as the immediate future of our development-integrated surroundings (Toro, 2012). It has been driven by referential and meaningful ludic and didactics in the teaching-learning process through pedagogical practices offered to the population linked to the study.

Participative diagnosis applied as a tool in educational counseling (Castro & Alarcon, 2007) allowed to evince the need to solve the problem of loss of cultural identity and oral tradition of Latin-American peoples. The importance of regional research on uses and customs of our multiculturalism's orality in symbolic and written contributions (Montero, 2004) is noteworthy, it has led to streamlining pedagogical practices in the teaching-learning process for the region's sustainable development. The aforementioned, based on the acknowledgement and

preservation of our people's oral tradition, aimed at taking advantage of their popular knowledge to provide prospective answers to their needs.

UNAD, in its Region Lectureship (*Catedra Region*), has established solidary diagnosis as an initial resource to acknowledge students' immediate local context. This resource inquires into the context's own features, goes deeper on the identified local needs from the students' discipline, all within the framework of fulfilling the Sustainable Development Goals in their region. This way, the significance of making up for oral traditions expressions that take place in early childhood has been identified. Therefore, solidary actions are planned and developed as UNAD's contribution, in the framework of community interaction and reciprocal recognition with communities (Moreno, press).

Students of the children pedagogy bachelor's degree at UNAD are active participants in solidary acknowledgement and action as transforming leaders engaged in the institution's social services: Servicio Social Unadista. This based on studying the theory of communicative action by Garrido (2011), developing solidary diagnosis and understanding solidary action. The aforementioned has contributed empirical evidence in the knowledge of the nature of solidary action as a fundamental element in developing transforming leadership and associative management, in order to promote interaction and dialog with different community leaders from the perspective of knowing to know, and to contribute to the generation of specific solutions concerning issues identified in different implemented social interaction projects (Moreno, 2018).

Oral Tradition in Early Childhood

Colombia's cultural expressions are manifestations of each place's cultural heritage and allow for differences and traditions to be recognized and to value tolerance as essential element of coexistence, within diversity and multiculturalism, which demand values of respect, solidarity and regard for what is different and valuable from a historical and cultural essence. Each expression has constituted different types of oral tradition, which refer to knowledge that has been orally transmitted from generation to generation, and that usually occurs in the familial and communal context in order to solidify socializing coexistence as an example of integration of childhood, following society's cultural guidelines and different groups' communal and social development. It has been known that said practices enrich creative and critical thinking as the foundation to consolidate cultural, moral and ethical values (Ramirez, 2009), providing self-acknowledgement and, consequently, identity.

Oral tradition's significance from sociocultural, artistic and autochthonous language perspectives has been mostly oriented towards the characterization of Latin-American peoples. However, nowadays, an incidence of identities that are foreign to our realities leads to a conscientious study based on research and fieldwork (Rebollo, 2012), since evidently, Latin-American peoples have been experiencing the loss

of ancestral customs and traditions, endangering cultural heritage and risking its extinction (Martinez, 2016); a phenomenon that should question our tasks from our daily roles.

As a result, it is necessary to delve into the value of the practice of peoples' oral traditions as core axis of culture for sustainability and development of cultures, and consequently, of regions. In that regard, the solidarity exercise of rescuing oral tradition has several advantages that are related to its significance as element that strengthens family connections transmitted from generation to generation, promotion of love for culture as an important feeling shaped from early age and social interaction from communal action in building new knowledge based on ancestral wisdom.

Visualization of the Region's Legends and Myths

Taking language and literature didactics as reference, the intention is to defend the communicative-functional approach as a protecting agent of teaching-learning processes in particular communities, based on the joint construction of what linguistic-communicative facts mean for people engaged in education (Lopez & Encabo, 2001a). There is no use in reproducing given language structures when they favor a progressive loss of linguistic identity. Hence the relevance of permanently reclaiming and transmitting legends, myths and all manifestations of oral tradition that represent identity, techniques, beliefs and knowledge to ancestral communities, and which constitute a bond of closeness and affection between community members.

Reading and Comprehension of Stories

Speaking of a narrative genre within an educational context immediately entails a categorization within children's and juvenile literature; this genre is focused on specific ages or aims at people in evolutionary ages, i.e., between 4 and 16 (Nobile, 1992). This could be the age range in which storytelling would be susceptible to didactic value that has an effect on training. According to Sanchez (1995a), children's and juvenile literature has a propaedeutic ideal that is cemented in construction of the self, in and by the discourse, which indicates that it tries approaching a notion of the linguistic-communicative ideal, attempting to initiate new generations in the cultural dialog existing in any type of society through literary communication (Colomer, 1999).

METHODOLOGY

The methodological approach selected for this study was qualitative, and oriented towards understanding the phenomena, inquiring from the perspective of participants' context. This took place within the framework of service provision for the institution's social services: Servicio Social Unadista-SISSU, articulated with the research project *Oral Tradition in*

Infancy: Uses and Customs. The study was laid down developing three stages that are conducted in the community with which the interaction is established: solidary diagnosis, solidary action plan and solidary action development.

Stage 1. Solidary Diagnosis

The provider of Servicio Social Unadista conducted a theoretical acknowledgement and an observation of oral tradition expressions that are familiar in early childhood in his region. This process of acknowledgement focused on identifying oral expressions related to the region's traditional knowledge (lullabies, songs, verses, stories, strings of words, sayings, etc.) following primary and secondary sources, with the objective of selecting one of the regions' oral tradition expressions and understanding its meaning, as well as the significance of regional knowledge and oral tradition as comprehensive development elements for boys and girls.

Stage 2. Action Plan

After identifying the region's particularities and communities' traits resulting from the initial stage, a solidary action plan was structured, then, a ludic and didactic pedagogic resource was designed to encourage the use and practice of selected oral traditions by boys and girls.

Stage 3. Solidary Actions

This stage refers to the implementation of proposed solidary actions. Solidary actions are the outcome of critical and social thinking of students in connection with their regions' traits in light of the topics proposed in solidary projects. To do so, members of the community are summoned, in particular a group of boys and girls who were accompanied by their mothers, to socialize and develop the planned solidary action.

INSTRUMENTS

The process of observation and identification of oral tradition was conducted with field journals and unstructured interviews with the population.

Participant Population

The group included ten participants ranged between 7 and 10 years of age who hailed from the township of Santa Cruz, department of Nariño. 23 participants ranged between 5 and 23 years of age who lived in La Rosa neighborhood, commune 5, city of San Juan de Pasto, department

of Nariño. Fourteen boys and girls ranged between 3 and 7 years of age who are members of the “Rositas” community home, municipality of Ipiales, township of Las Lajas. The aforementioned locations are based in Colombia.

RESULTS

The following are the results obtained in the course of three solidary actions that took place in the department of Nariño, Colombia. Initially, information on oral traditions for early childhood was collected. Then, oral traditions to encourage were defined: community’s typical myths and legends. Finally, solidary actions were planned and developed applying teaching-learning processes.

Geographic Location	Solidary Diagnosis and Action Plan	Solidary Action in Oral Tradition	Beneficiaries
Township of Santa Cruz, department of Nariño, Colombia	Conducted in the township of Santa Cruz, municipality of Policarpa, Nariño. The community seemed to be receptive despite their status as victims of the armed conflict violence. The process of acknowledgement allowed to identify a need for remembrance of some myths and legends of the region with content oriented towards learning values from early childhood, such as solidarity, coexistence, respect and helping others.	The solidary action took place on November 28 th , 2017, in the township’s Vive Digital kiosk. It focused on reading and critical and analytical comprehension of the content in stories and legends in the region.	Direct beneficiaries included ten participants aged 7-10, they reflected on the importance of becoming familiar with and replicating these oral traditions, based on the relevance they may have on learning and practicing of values.

Table 1.
Solidary action to create culture with oral expressions.

Geographic Location	Solidary Diagnosis and Action Plan	Solidary Action in Oral Tradition	Beneficiaries
La Rosa neighborhood, commune 5, city of San Juan de Pasto, department of Nariño, Colombia	<p>This community is made up of people of low socioeconomic background. The solidary diagnosis set the following priority activities to promote oral tradition focused on early childhood:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading and comprehension of myths and legends that are typical of the region. Three reading sessions took place and children were asked to explain what they had understood. • Visualization and analysis of dance and songs from Nariño. Children were shown videos including regional dance. • Creating a poster with each child's topics and understanding of the concepts acquired at an individual level and 	<p>The activity took place on November 10th in the facility of Fundacion Mundo Educativo, it began at 3:00 pm and concluded at 5:00 pm. From a total of 24 attendees, 21 participated. Groups were set up by age. The first group was of 5 to 10-year-old's and the second of 12 to 15-year-old's. the organizer introduced the purpose of the solidary action and then read a myth and a legend, the story of the Blacks and Whites' Carnival (<i>Carnaval de Negros y Blancos</i>) was told and images were shown, a video taught them the <i>Guaneña</i> dance (similar to <i>Bambuco</i>) and different melodies</p>	<p>Direct beneficiaries of this action included 23 children aged 5-13, who received direct knowledge, yet the number of beneficiaries could be larger because thanks to this action, boys and girls will teach many others about the topic they learned.</p>

Table 2.
Oral tradition solidary action in La Rosa neighborhood's children's community

Geographic Location	Solidary Diagnosis and Action Plan	Solidary Action in Oral Tradition	Beneficiaries
"Rositas" community home, municipality of Ipiales, township of Las Lajas.	With the goal of rescuing the cultural identity's oral tradition of the Pastos culture and focusing on uses and customs that were being lost, it was found that the community is located in a rural geographic setting that relies on agriculture and tourism. Nuclear families live in the region, and they are characterized by noticeable indexes of domestic violence and low socioeconomic backgrounds. The diagnosis highlighted the need of strengthening the Pastos culture from its oral tradition, which is expressed in myths, stories and legends. This is critical to address the issue of identity loss and to consolidate multiculturalidad of peoples.	Concrete activities were as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Myths and legends of the Pastos culture. Regional stories, such as <i>La Turumana</i> and <i>El Chutun</i> were read (National System of Cultural Information, Ministry of Culture). • Logos, emblems and icons of the Pastos culture were designed to solidify regional identity. Some were displayed for children to recognize them as typical of the region. • Subsequently, pedagogical practices related to ludic and didactics were conducted to refer to oral traditions of the ancestors of the peoples of the Pastos culture. 	Direct beneficiaries included 14 boys and girls aged 3-7.

Table 3.
Oral tradition solidary action "I Build my Own Life by Reading and Writing it". Township of Las Lajas.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

Cultural practices of oral traditions constitute solidary actions that benefit the relationship between individuals of different ages to incite feelings of acknowledgement and appreciation for their ancestors. Likewise, these practices strengthen community roots, and thus cultural identity and pertinence, which is why it is necessary to instill it from early childhood as "one of the means to assure continuity of a social group by fostering cultural identity" (Ramirez 2009, p.23).

Results give visibility to the importance of rescuing, promoting and preserving different oral traditions of Colombia's southern area's multiculturalidad. It is concluded that a positive impact transverses the teaching-learning process in rescuing, promoting and preserving different expressions of oral tradition in our communities. The aforementioned, to

contribute to cultural strengthening as core element of the SDG (ONU, 2017) and to the advancement of regions, from the perspectives of ludic and didactics.

One of the accomplishments of the solidary actions was the identification of appropriation of cultural practices of ancestral knowledge found in the content of stories, legends, myths, songs, dance and history of culture in Nariño. This knowledge has been passed on from generation to generation through oral tradition and play an essential role in social conducting and community policy as part of social control.

Solidary actions also granted time to evoke and disseminate regional knowledge and oral tradition manifestations, as key elements in children's comprehensive development. Activities aimed at strengthening learning strategies implementing didactic pedagogic techniques, to rescue and preserve traditions, culture, autochthonous knowledge of regions and the evolution of communities.

Indeed, recovering oral tradition practices that are introduced to children in their early years helps restore and appreciate ancestors' cultural manifestations, it has become an innovative educational strategy that is good for infants since this interesting tales speak of values, teachings and behaviors that transform and evolve society on a daily basis, thus contributing with the region's sustainable development.

This work gave visibility to the fact that implementation of solidary actions leads to strengthened processes of associativity, which manifest in empowerment, support, accompaniment and promotion of teamwork for the benefit of a community or region, integrating community members. Likewise, oral traditions are consolidated through myths and legends, focusing on rescuing traditions as a guideline for children to perpetuate this traditions in forthcoming generations within the same communities.

Finally, this experience considers how important it is for teachers' training to learn about and undertake solidary actions that add to society's positive change as an indispensable factor to build more prosperous and developed communities. The priority of educational work and its approach based on pedagogical, cultural and social needs is validated when students affirm that: "as humans, we are part of a society, we must be interested in it, love it and value it"; "working for communities is contributing a grain of sand to the world, to our life and to our generations"; "this work teaches us how to be more solidary, to become interested in the common good" (service providers at Servicio Social Unadista, 2017). Change has to be built from the perspective of the most vulnerable populations, working together for the sustainable development of the world they will inhabit.

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