



TRANSCONFLICT: ELEMENTS FOR A POSSIBLE UTOPIA FROM EDUCATION



Transconflicto: elementos para una utopía posible desde la educación

Trans-conflito: elementos para uma utopia possível desde a educação

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ABSTRACT

This article suggests, from a transconflict of The Global Coalition for Conflict Transformation (GCCT) point of view, some clues that could be implemented as guidelines when intervening different populations, sectors or groups within the peace education process in Colombia. This objective was developed as part of the documentary revision for the Education for Peace project carried out at the School of Education for Peace, belonging to the Monserrate University Foundation –Unimonserrate– in Bogotá, Colombia. This proposal is striking and relevant for the project due to the fact that this type of education requires different means, methods, and mediations that enable the viability and continuity of any type of strategy oriented to peace-building. Even though there are different tendencies when dealing with conflicts, the peculiarity of the Colombian situation demands innovative transdisciplinary approaches that guarantee the empowerment of the implied actors as well as the sustainability of the proposals. This article presents the perspective of transconflict and at the same time, interprets its guidelines by analyzing it in a reflexive way through alignments among knowledge, techniques, methodologies, and

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RESUMEN

Desde la perspectiva del transconflicto de The Global Coalition for Conflict Transformation (GCCT) y sus principales enunciados, este artículo desarrolla una serie de propuestas por implementarse en intervenciones de orden educativo con distintas poblaciones, sectores o grupos que estudien el fenómeno de la paz en Colombia. Este objetivo fue desarrollado como parte de la revisión documental para la fundamentación educación para la paz que actualmente se desarrolla en la Escuela de Educación para la Paz de la Fundación Universitaria Monserrate (Bogotá, Colombia). Si bien existen tendencias en el tratamiento de los conflictos, la particularidad del caso colombiano exige apuestas y enfoques transdisciplinarios novedosos que garanticen el empoderamiento de los actores implicados y la sostenibilidad de las propuestas. Este artículo no solo permite conocer en nuestro medio la perspectiva del transconflicto, sino que realiza una interpretación de sus enunciados y apuesta por una mirada analítico-reflexiva, que traza convergencias entre saberes, técnicas, metodologías e interpretaciones y permite comprender los conflictos como “entes vivos”, mutables y en evolución, dentro de ecosistemas sociales dinámicos y localmente situados. Se concluye

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RESUMO

Desde a perspectiva do Trans-conflito de The Global Coalition for Conflit Transformation (GCCT) e os seus principais enunciados, este artigo desenvolve uma série de propostas a se implementar em intervenções da orden educativa com diferentes populações, sectores ou grupos que estudem o fenômeno da paz na Colômbia. Este objetivo foi desenvolvido como parte da revisão documental para a fundamentação Educação para a Paz que atualmente se desenvolve na Escola de Educação para la Paz da Fundação Universitaria Monserrate, Unimonserrate em Bogotá-Colômbia. Embora existam tendências no tratamento dos conflitos, a particularidade do caso colombiano exige apostas e enfoques transdisciplinares inovadores que garantam o empoderamento dos atores implicados e a sustentabilidade das propostas. Este artigo não só permite conhecer no nosso meio a perspectiva do Trans-conflito mas que realiza uma interpretação dos seus enunciados, apostando por um olhar analítico/reflexivo, que traça convergências entre saberes, técnicas, metodologias, interpretações e permite compreender os conflitos como “entes vivos”, mutáveis e em evolução, dentro de ecosistemas sociais dinâmicos e localmente

interpretations, among others. This allows understanding conflicts as “live beings” that mutate and evolve within dynamic local social ecosystems. We conclude that by reviewing processes from the point of view of transconflict shall bring inclusive and reflexive peace experience which, at the same time, guarantee greater sustainability and knowledge-building in this field.

Keywords: Transconflict, peace education, peace-building, peacekeeping.

que una mirada a los procesos desde el transconflicto aportaría experiencias de paces incluyentes, reflexivas y con mayores garantías de sostenibilidad.

Palabras clave: Transconflicto, educación para la paz, construcción de paz, mantenimiento de la paz.

situados. Conclui-se que um olhar aos processos desde o Trans-conflito, aportaria experiências de pazes com inclusão, reflexivas e com maiores garantias de sustentabilidade.

Palavras chave: trans-conflito, educação para a paz, construção de paz, manutenção da paz.

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IS NEOLIBERAL PEACE REALLY POSSIBLE?

At present, the general agreement for termination of armed conflict in Colombia is a step in the construction of a stable and lasting peace, after decades of cultural internalization of habits and meanings supported of violence of all kinds, both subtle and explicit. However, to achieve the desired peace, the neoliberal model suggests a peace founded on instrumental rationality, which conceives humanity only as a means to realize the ends of market, after a vision of development sustained by the progress ideology, in last, an economicism as foundation of a positive peace that dismisses economic-social rights and exacerbates social inequalities, which ends up stimulating direct violence, structural violence and cultural violence (Alvear, 2008).

This means that on a very basic level and beyond the great studies, postures, strategies or even the same narratives and stories of victims and perpetrators about pains, resentments, the tacit or real pardons and possible reconciliations, the achievement of peace is reduced to a matter of eminently economic nature. (Rodriguez, 2006).

"Liberalization, institutionalization and democratization are posed as the necessary steps for the arrival in a peace scenario at internal level that impact positively in international security" (Newman, Paris and Richmond, 2009, quoted by Castaño, 2013, p. 91).

For some people, the conception of a purely economist peace, which contributes to tranquil markets and foreign investment, may seem

sufficient and effective, without a very judicious consideration of conditions that are in the global profile for sustaining a decaying planet and a widespread crisis, conditions that paradoxically have been aggravated, not by a theory or ideology, but this government technology, which has created economic actors that enhance their skills and freedoms from the ethical imperative of becoming entrepreneurs of themselves, as well as in indebted men and women.

Without confusing radicalism with a certain reaction or a nihilistic and hopeless posture, we force ourselves to the permanent search for wisdom as a necessary condition for the design of new opportunities and possibility spaces that make peace an experience achievable for the majority, expandable, located and immersive. From this perspective, we talk about a peace that does not postulate itself as true, hegemonic and dominant, but a particular and differentiated experience that transforms all interaction spaces, the communicative dynamics and even state forms.

Peace building had political liberalization and a economic liberalization components: On one side, democratization, free and competitive elections, the constitutional model of the rule of law that puts limits on power of the Government and a broad catalogue of rights and freedoms are promoted; on the other hand, the commodification of the intervened society is defended, promoting the state deregulation of the economy, free trade and free investment of foreign capital (Paris, 2004, pp. 5-6, quoted by Castaño, 2013, p. 92).

Hence, a form of non-universalist peace or drawn on positivist, econometric or foundational paradigms requires another perspective when imagining and making it possible.

Krumwiede points out that a democratic system is unstable when there is an excess of consensus (which in

addition, such a consensus can be simply simulated by the political leadership of the country and not reflect possible conflicts that survive in basis of society), or when there is an excess of dissent (which could be reflected in serious problems of what has been called "governability") (Castaño, 2013, p. 94).

In a country like ours that stands out because of its multiple heterogeneities and historical problems, both structural and symbolic, of representation and identity, peace as a dream of all is a great metaphor that solves our various mutilations that deserve the construction of masks that allow us to live in other ways, as the work of sculptor Anna Coleman Ladd made possible during World War I by making prostheses for returning soldiers disfigured.

SOME PEACE-BUILDING STRATEGIES

Contrary to the neoliberal perspective, the process of achieving peace of a society means dealing with conflicts by non-violent ways, so far it is inferred that the conflict is connatural to human condition and life and also the "rational civilizational" processes give the subjects an optimal toolbox to resolve their differences without reaching the multiple ways of escalating conflict. But it also means that acceptance of conflicts determines in turn that their origins and feeding patterns of resentment may be latent. Latency is a state of quieting but not of cessation, then at any time the emergence of conflicts could be waiting for favorable conditions to proliferate.

materialize as artifacts of a Partial convenience, but when tension and factors associated with conflict are diversify and multiply, they will be even more violent and aggressive. Overcoming the will to eliminate adversary and viciousness that perpetuates fear through barbarism is a socio-economic and cultural problem internalized as the only way of possible life.

In the meantime, working approaches to achieve peace or mediating conflicts are an epistemic disputed field, which curiously, far from proposing an integrative look, propose practices to define epistemic fields that end up being violent and highly competitive, which shows that peace is also an object of knowledge that we cannot detach from damaging intellectual egos. According to Castaño's tracing (2013), there are numerous approaches or "paradigms" for intervention in conflict situations (many of them applied without even contextualizing them and situating them): "Management, regulation and agreement", "analytical of problems", "conflicts transformation", "reconciliation", "resolution", "regulation", "agreement", etc.

An integrative view of such models should be sustained on the configuration of their senses, the effective use of their mediations and their respective toolboxes, hence, the danger that these paradigms will be held in the "exclusive defense" of their truths, in the legitimation of their fields and not in the treatment of the specific problems.

Without ignoring such paradigms of peaceful intervention and treatment of armed conflict, our proposal is initially to stop at a certain time before it constitutes a novel entry for researching for peace and Education for peace: understanding any

conflict as a *dynamic field of pluralistic forces in relation*, whose microphysics configures complex strategic situations to command or obey, as specific forces to determine affections being spontaneous *in order to affect* and being receptive to be able to be *affected*, as well as being able to warp by imposing any task to any human multiplicity. These power actions of Forces act by placing or situating locally the eventual or current actions (future or present) of others, making distributions, ordainments and spatial-temporal compositions *closed* (or striated, for non-numerous multiplicities, measurable as quantifiable) or *open* (or smooth, for numerous bio political multiplicities, probable as fast).

Learning to read and map these *dynamic fields of pluralistic forces* in relation to conflicts is an investigative immersion work to understand their conditions of possibility, which means, to apprehend their *tras*¹-nature: fluid, fluctuating, unstable and mutant, since there is never a balance of strategic relations between forces. In such a way that diagrams or resulting interpretative will always be unstable, interim and changing, an open multiplicity of diagrams, as they are always intermediaries between social groups, social fields that are disappearing and social fields that are coming. "These knowledge-power mutations that suddenly make things no longer perceived, described, enunciated, characterized, classified, and known in the same way" (Foucault, 1985, p. 13).

There is no doubt that violence is related to force, is the effect of a force on a body, about something or someone, a macro-physics that acts molecularly,

forcing, bowing, breaking, destroying, disappearing, annihilating individually and collectively, all that implies actions on forms previously established that can act passively or with resistance. However, by highlighting the microphysics of forces and their power relations, we put the accent on conflicting relationships in which the recognition and the strategic difference between forces prevail, since they are mobile relations, reversible that can always be modified, while the domination relationships are fixed, irreversible and unmodifiable. As Foucault theorized (1985), we go from power relations to domination relations through government technologies, which are modes of control and organization of these types of relationship, which by modifying the ethical and aesthetic freedom degrees transform the relations power in domination relations: Basically they are three types: The sovereignty techniques, disciplinary and security techniques (or control, as Deleuze calls them, these are techniques that work in open spaces, on indeterminate and fast temporalities and subjectivities that — neo-liberally speaking — they have the impression of being freer).

NOTES FOR A TRANSCONFLICT

PERSPECTIVE AND ITS

USEFULNESS IN EDUCATION FOR

PEACE

The Global Coalition for Conflict Transformation² initiative establishes some

(transferring, transmitting, transplanting) or a change (Transforming, Transmutating) (American Heritage, 2011).

² Transconflict was first established in response to challenges faced by intra-and inter-ethnic relations in Western Balkans. For Transconflict, the successful transformation of conflicts requires a multi-dimensional approach, which points to the transformation of interests, relationships, speeches, and

¹ In Spanish the preposition 'trans', applied to space and time, is equivalent to after, later, a thing that is behind something, that pursues or that is behind something. In Spanish and in English the trans-prefix, originally from Latin, it means "on the other side of" or "through" or "beyond", and is used for verbal forms denoting movement or displacement from one place to another

principles that could be modified, including other aspects recommended by the experience as relevant (Davis, S. F.). Each principle can be proclaimed as a guideline for its signification and contextualization from a perspective of conflicts, which means, for an analytical consideration of *forces* that are able to map spaces, places, memories, events, protagonists, legacies, limits and overflows.

As Deleuze says:

In other terms the force is already a multiplicity. Force is the relationship of a force with another, the thought of force has always been the only way to challenge one. The thought of the force is the thought of multiple (2014, p. 66).

This re-construction of forces in the socio-symbolic of times/ places/ courses allows the reference of the life itself of conflict (as causal of forces), reason why its transit is traceable as a kind of "footprints" within a relationship ecosystem. The layout of conflict stages assumes that is possible to determine to certain point the way in which conflicts behave as living organisms and generate interactions (dominant, predatory, dependent, and parasitic, etc.).

As "living matter", mapping of conflict moves and transforms the actions of political order that its cartographers assign to it. The idea of these transitions is to try, in addition to monitoring, anticipate and project the new hatching and compositions of force dynamics.

situation of conflicts that can orient transforming actions and evolution, transpose, transport, transit...

Let's see how The Global Coalition for Conflict Transformation raises these principles and what we could build from them:

1. *The conflict should not be considered an isolated fact that can be solved or managed, but as an integral part of the ongoing society, evolution and development*, the main point is not to assume that the strategies implemented in the intervention with people and communities naturalized the stage of transformation as a negative reversal or perverse concealment of disputes causes, but as a historical recognition of that configures fields of subjectivities and power dynamics in social structures.
2. *The conflict should not be understood only as an inherently negative and destructive fact, but rather as a potentially positive and productive force for change if it is constructively exploited*, in such a way that in relationships recognition of strength that educational devices can fluctuate between sensitization and potency of victims, perpetrators or survivors that allow scenarios with palpable effects only in the third generations of the protagonists, who would be in such a case the direct beneficiaries of changes.
3. *The conflict transformation goes beyond trying to contain and manage the conflict, instead, it seeks to transform the root cause that produces them or perceptions of root causes of a particular conflict.*
In the context of a peace education, for

example, the recognition of cruelty modalities that mobilize actors, suggests a genealogical exercise of perceptions that have been internalized even as determinations that slow down processes, in the dispersion but not in containment may appear signs of what becomes from conflict and that makes possible the transformation in political, aesthetic and ethical orders.

4. *The conflict transformation is in long term, it is a gradual and complex process, which requires a sustained commitment and permanent interaction*, so one of the fundamental aspects in peace education is precisely communication as a guarantor of permanent focus and self-regulation.
5. The conflicts transformation is not only an approach and a set of techniques, but a way of thinking and understanding the conflict itself; Therefore, beyond suppose that possible interventions generated for transformation are reduced to punctual actions or application of recipes, better promote sustainability on the creative basis of those who agency that change, hence its permanent nature.
6. *The conflict transformation is especially appropriate for intractable conflicts*, where fuel is a rooted issue and a continuation of violence, so what we call taboo can even be addressed in a way that debunk its reactivity without that means propitiating forgetfulness without reparation or reconciliation.
7. *The conflict transformation fits to ever-changing nature of a conflict, in particular during the preceding and subsequent phases of violence and at any stage of the escalation cycle*; from the

beginning the recognition of climbing after the first mediations prevents possible clashes between wills that want to be shown again as dominant or hegemonic.

8. *The conflict transformation is always a non-violent process, which is fundamentally opposed to violent expressions of conflict*; non-violence as imperative of processes would require the construction of new scenarios in which the modalities of heterogeneous recognition allowed other expressions, different oriented to perpetuation of personal and collective effort and attenuation of barbarism
9. *The conflict transformation treats a range of dimensions, the micro, macro-levels and local and global*; this global aspect assumes that spheres of conflicts intersect in nodes that can favor attenuation and negotiation areas, as well as places where it is possible the coexistence and the recognition of the judged as an enemy or as a rival to eliminate.
10. *The conflict transformation has to do with five specific types of transformation, and focuses on the structural, behavioral and conflicting aspects:*
 1. Actors,-changing the actors goals and their approach to achieve these objectives, in particular reinforcing the understanding as to causes and consequences of their respective actions.
 2. Contexts, which defy the sense and perceptions of conflict itself, particularly the respective attitudes and interpretations of individual actors towards each other.

3. Issues, redefining issues that are essential to prevailing conflict, and reformulating the position of stakeholders on the same issues.
 4. Rules, change norms and rules that govern decision-making at all levels in order to ensure that conflicts are dealt with constructively through institutional channels.
 5. Structures, adjustment of the relation predominant structure, distributions of power and socioeconomic conditions that are embedded and inform about conflict, which affects the same interaction tissue between incompatible actors, problems and objectives
11. *In order to occur the conflicts transformation, tensions between the parties to the conflict must be overcome, firstly by ensuring that all actors recognize that their respective interests are not cared by resorting to violence; and in second place, by finding a consensus on what needs to be transformed and how; this is where an education designed for peace defines its model of action, its tools of action and its evaluation schemes as all research and knowledge production.*
 12. *The conflict transformation stands out human dimension by reminding the parties of the compatible nature of their needs, instead of emphasizing their counter positional interests, by rejecting unilateral decisions and action, in particular those that represent a victory of one of the parties to conflict; The place of who wins or loses problematizes concern for truth and*

recognizes that this is always subjective from the experience of each actor, beyond the supposed victory is privileged the process through which the parties find their own learning.

13. *The conflict transformation does not appeal to a pre-determined set of approaches and actions, but respects and adapts to particularities of each place; that is why the option placed and demarcated by mapping of conflict life clarifies the different options that methodologically and epistemologically must interact to overcome the prevalence of approaches or tendencies that are revealed as exclusive or messianic.*
14. *The conflict transformation goes beyond the visible problems and is characterized by creative problem solving, the perspectives incorporation of a wide range of actors, which includes those who are often marginalized from these considerations, these are the invisible ones who recover their voice and their capacities of action.*
15. *The conflict transformation implies a third impartial part, in order to help actors to change their cognitive and emotional views in the "other one", which helps to break the divisions between "us" and "them"; The change of point of view does not mean the alienation or reduction of the opposite, but the affirmative discovery of its difference and its power of reconstruction.*
16. *The conflict transformation represents an ambitious and demanding task, which is equipped to deal with the asymmetric, complex*

*and prolonged nature of contemporary conflicts
than prevailing techniques and approaches*

FINAL INVITATION

Our country is in a phase of so-called peace process, which demands the state structures and organizations from society and wants to intervene directly in a new phase of peace, which intervention approaches are problematized (one of them is education) in the spirit that efforts will not end up historical, structural, cultural fuels of conflicts and the disappointment and hopelessness of inconclusive are sown in naive processes. The academic community in general, guilds, associations, sets and devices of the State etc., must work together to minimize the possible impact of initiatives that, from an academic look, try to take advantage of the juncture to obtain selfish returns in a nation that enters the so-called post-conflict under a global situation, in which social sciences, humanities, education and philosophy tend to disappear. A transconflict perspective (of the living but attenuated and administered conflict) can help a sustainable and lasting peace.

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