

Motivation and collaboration as cultural ways of learning among rural Mapuche children of La Araucanía

Motivación y colaboración como maneras culturales de aprender entre niños y niñas mapuche rurales de La Araucanía

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Background

The study of children learning according to different cultural contexts has contributed to understand different and sometimes antagonist patterns of child raising.

The model of Learning by Observation and Pitching In (LOPI) has been applied to many indigenous communities of the Americas, which has demonstrated the participation of children into social organizations of their communities from early stages and to contribute as a child to the common goals or endeavors of the group.

In Chile, there are a few studies about the way of learning of the Mapuche children and development. What we certainly know, is that a Mapuche child has to struggle between his/her own cultural knowledge and tradition and those that school have imposed to them.

But, among Mapuche families there is a cultural model of learning which is transmitted to children in the daily life.

Aims

To describe cultural expressions of motivation and collaboration in the social interaction among rural Mapuche children, in formal and informal spaces.

Method & procedures

We use an ethnographic study based on natural observations. The study was carried on three rural elementary schools of the Araucania region of Chile. We observed the educational and apprentice relationships among students and teachers. Data were collected through observations that we wrote down in a field notes devices and videotaped.

We transcribed fieldnotes, and we analyzed them in Atlas.ti software. The study was approved by Ethical Board of Universidad de La Frontera.

Results & discussion

The results show that Mapuche children are willing to participate in collective activities. They are motivated to help others students in their chores, they like and prefer collective activities rather than individual ones. Children try to motivate their partners to work together in order to achieve a common or collective goals, for example, playing a traditional game call palin, to finish a school assignment or to answer questions from the test.

Motivation and collaboration are cultural behaviors in which children are socialized into their Mapuche families and communities from the very little.

The educational model of the Mapuche family promotes a system of values centered in collaboration, to be respectful and to contribute to collective endeavors. Children are taught to be respectful with people and nature, to be observer and the same time participating in the activities.

Conclusion

The Mapuche children get involved in helping others spontaneously trying to collaborate in different school assignments, they contribute to the collective goals and comfort observing and helping when is necessary and also, they tend to look for collective activities promoting collaboration among them.

Keywords: collaboration, Mapuche children, motivation, rural children

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