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AN ETHNO-METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH TO THE FORMATION OF INDIGENOUS TEACHERS IN THE AMAZON REGION (ACRE, BRAZIL) - THE CONCEPT OF SOIL

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In Brazil, historically, indigenous education has not prioritized the preservation of indigenous culture. From the 90s onwards, however, the relevance of indigenous teachers in the Amazon region led to the definition of indigenous education policies that valued the culture of the people [1]. The development of indigenous teachers in Brazilian universities involves non-indigenous professionals, and for this reason, appropriate methodologies (ethno-methodologies) should be developed.

Action-research as a methodological approach was used in Indigenous Teacher Training Courses – CFI, in the Federal University of Acre – and UFAC, in the state of Acre, Brazil. This methodological approach addressed the concept of soil, building up from the daily village life of each student. Using this approach, previous knowledge, both individually and collectively held, assisted the acquisition of new knowledge.

The description of the samples given to the students was based on these aspects. Although the terms "clay" or "silt" were introduced during classes, it was the use of the magnifying glass, in experiments with water that allowed a better understanding of terms such as "coarse, medium and thin", as used to classify the "sands". Similarly, it was explained that the term clay (that students used) designated a material that had a greater amount of clay than of sand, and thus was more moisty and presented the adequate plasticity for moulding, as students demonstrated with the artefacts they produced in the classroom.

Classes indicated that the soil serves two basic functions in the daily lives of indigenous students, depending on their mineralogical characteristics – agriculture (sandy soils) or ceramics and construction (clay soils).

The respect for the knowledge that the students already possess is fundamental for the acquisition of new knowledge [2]. Accordingly, the previous experiences and conceptions of each student, in each ethnic group, were a starting point for the introduction of the concept of "soil" and allowed a closer relationship between scientific knowledge and the indigenous culture, which is the traditional knowledge of the students.

The theoretical framework that guided the interventions/classes looked into the intercultural knowledge to identify elements for the development of topics and contents.

References:

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[2] FREIRE, P. (1996) - Pedagogia da autonomia: Saberes necessários à prática educativa. São Paulo, Ed. Paz e Terra, 165 p.

