

## SPECIAL SECTION: DEMOCRACY AND UNIVERSITY EDUCATION: 60 YEARS AFTER THE 1964 COUP

### Teaching and resisting: learning with indigenous students into the democratic university context<sup>1</sup>

#### Docência e resistência: aprendendo com estudantes indígenas no contexto democrático universitário

#### Docencia y resistencia: aprendiendo de los estudiantes indígenas en el contexto democrático universitario

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#### ABSTRACT

This article reports a teaching experience in the initial pedagogues training of indigenous Laklãnõ/Xokleng at a Higher Education Federal Institution into the state of Santa Catarina, between 2018 and 2023. The goal is to problematize the social relationships made in the time and space of university erudite culture, mostly eurocentric, related to people education's whose main objective is qualification to work in their communities, schools and indigenous heritage centers and at the same time as their resistance to occupying them. To this end, the concepts of democracy, civil disobedience and indigenous resistance are discussed as guides for pedagogical practices, in addition to the theory historical-critical pedagogy from Dermeval Saviani. The results from the reported practices indicate that the social reality and the training objectives of indigenous students' diagnostic knowledge were fundamental for the educational practices construction anchored to the intention of strengthening formative spaces in the indigenous communities, in addition to the indigenous

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student body at the educational institution. It is concluded that the permanence of economic minorities is still an inconsistency in the Brazilian university and its effectiveness requires collective and institutional intercultural work, in order to strengthen national democracy and the social rights it proclaims.

**Keywords:** indigenous student; public education; teacher training; indigenous resistance; education's democracy.

## RESUMO

Este artigo trata de um relato de experiência docente na formação inicial de pedagogos indígenas Laklãnõ/Xokleng em uma Instituição Federal de Ensino Superior no interior do estado de Santa Catarina, entre 2018 e 2023. O objetivo é problematizar as relações sociais forjadas no tempo e espaço de cultura erudita, majoritariamente eurocêntrica, que é o da universidade, na formação de sujeitos, cujo objetivo maior é a qualificação para atuar em suas comunidades, escolas e centros culturais de tradição indígenas, ao passo de sua resistência em ocupá-los. Para isso, discute-se sobre conceitos de democracia, desobediência civil e resistência indígena como orientadores das práticas pedagógicas, além da pedagogia histórico-crítica de Dermeval Saviani. Os resultados das práticas relatadas apontam que o conhecimento diagnóstico da realidade social e dos objetivos de formação dos discentes indígenas foi fundamental para a construção de práticas educativas ancoradas na intenção do fortalecimento de espaços formativos das comunidades indígenas, além do corpo discente indígena na instituição. Conclui-se que a permanência das minorias econômicas ainda é uma inconstante na universidade e que sua efetividade necessita do trabalho intercultural coletivo e institucional, de modo a fortalecer a democracia nacional e os direitos sociais a que ela proclama.

**Palavras-chave:** estudante indígena; ensino público; formação de professores; resistência indígena; redemocratização do ensino.

## RESUMEN

Este artículo aborda un relato de la experiencia docente en la formación inicial de pedagogos indígenas Laklãnõ/Xokleng en una Institución Federal de Educación Superior en el interior del estado de Santa Catarina, entre 2018 y 2023. El objetivo es problematizar las relaciones sociales forjadas en el tiempo y espacio de la cultura erudita, mayoritariamente eurocéntrica, de la universidad, en la formación de sujetos, cuyo principal objetivo es la calificación para trabajar en sus comunidades, escuelas y centros culturales de tradición indígena y al mismo tiempo su resistencia a ocuparlos. Para esto, se discuten los conceptos de democracia, desobediencia civil y resistencia indígena como guías para las prácticas pedagógicas, además de la pedagogía histórico-crítica de Dermeval Saviani. Los resultados

de las prácticas reportadas indican que el conocimiento diagnóstico de la realidad social y los objetivos formativos de los estudiantes indígenas fue fundamental para la construcción de prácticas educativas ancladas en la intención de fortalecer los espacios de formación de las comunidades indígenas, además del estudiantado indígena en la institución. Se concluye que la permanencia de las minorías económicas sigue siendo una inconsistencia en la universidad y que su efectividad requiere de un trabajo intercultural colectivo e institucional, a fin de fortalecer la democracia nacional y los derechos sociales que proclama.

**Palabras clave:** estudiante indígena; educación pública; formación de profesores; resistencia indígena; redemocratización del' educación.

## INTRODUCTION

The year 1984 was remarkable in Brazil once social and political movements in favor of redemocratization helped to achieved the end of the national political-military dictatorship, what lasted between 1964 and 1985, and which, on the other hand, was weakening in the face of the global reorganization of capitalism, flexibility of national borders and local economies.

In the end of the Brazilian dictatorship context, which one of the most important philosophers of Brazilian education mentions as "military-business" dictatorship (Saviani, 2017 p. 5) since it articulated the national economy to international commands, and by consequence to the social discussions about the re-democratization of Brazil, a new Federal Constitution was approved in 1988. This new constitution stated that the Democratic State should be responsible for ensuring the development and exercise of social and individual rights to any Brazilian citizen, be in charge of peaceful solutions in case of conflict situations as well provide equality, justice, security, freedom and well-being in a fraternal, pluralistic and unprejudiced society (Brazil, 1988). Therefore, it's been forty years of discussions about the democratization of society Brazilian ruled by law.

However, although the supreme law expresses the defense of national sovereignty, social citizenship and equality among Brazilians, being in favor of social rights, the law also can be doubly interpreted in favor of the neoliberalization of these rights as private commodities. It is in this political-economic contradiction the national public education branches in two: as a socialization and humanization right through elaborated knowledge and, on the other hand, as a commodity that maintaining an economic system through basic knowledge enough for their own functioning.

It is also in this contradiction that Brazilian economic minorities social rights manifest themselves as the right to public education of indigenous peoples that the Federal Constitution and pursuant to the Law of Directives and Bases of National Education states to

(Brazil, 1996) but only putted into practice under the force of civil resistance. This means that these rights are implemented according to the constant action of social groups democratically articulated in ensuring the indigenous entrance and permanence and then from these the guarantees the proper formation, enrichment, preservation and improvement of indigenous people plural knowledge.

This article points out that, despite the last forty years of Brazilian Democratic sovereignty, the constitutional rights are developed *pari passu* to the determined action. Furthermore, it highlights that the democratic values need to be constantly asserted, even if it is by 'civil disobedience' (Saviani, 2017), to the minorities economic achieve the access to the elaborate culture and, with it, may them build knowledges that strengthen social groups as a plural democracy.

Within the action research method's scope as which one that uses the scientific research to produce knowledge and transform the own professional practice (Tripp, 2005), this paper reports a pedagogue teacher training experience by a professor from a Federal Institute of Higher Education (FIHE) in her relationship with students from Laklãnõ/Xokleng indigenous community, state of Santa Catarina/Brazil, from 2018 to 2023.

Its sought to problematize the social relations inside the university space of erudite culture, mostly Eurocentric, when graduating these students whose main objective is

to act in their communities, schools and indigenous cultural centers – whereas certain communities try to preserve their cultures from the influence of non-indigenous – in order to observe the Brazilian public university as a space of strengthening, valorization and respect of ancestral knowledge, as a context of civil resistance, faced of the social and political contradictions evoked by the occupation and permanence of these students and in what characterizes and specifies this political struggle in the interior of the state of Santa Catarina.

Understanding 'occupation' as a term that, abstracted from Ferreira (2019), has the meaning of using public places by people or groups who have been removed or excluded from, the socio-historical context of this paper, therefore, reflects on the contradictions permeated by the indigenous students' occupation in an FIHE and the pedagogical developments promoted by a Pedagogy course in their training path.

Remembering the 1970s, when the Krenak's indigenous lands in states of Minas Gerais were taken by squatters with the help of the Brazilian State, using torture and mistreatment against this people but from this situation Ailton Krenak became one of the most important contemporary indigenous thinkers, this paper has the term resistance indigenous as fundamental one.

As in Cappellari's thesis (2022), indigenous resistance means the act against the colonization of customs, beliefs and religions, against violence promoted by landowners, miners and loggers, against prejudice and discrimination for being indigenous and against capitalism that submits nature to interests economic and in favor of action that results the strengthening of voices that create life's understanding, identification and belonging.

Regarding the Laklãnõ/Xokleng indigenous resistance, this resistance concept is characterized by the struggle against the occupation of their original lands by others, against acculturation and demonization of the their existence, against the exoticism and caricature and against the cultural ties dissolution that promote ideologies that minimize, marginalize, criminalize and, consequently, depersonalize the community existence that traditionally perpetuates itself in a symbiotic relationship with nature.

In summary, the text is divided into five topics. The first one points to the Historical-Critical Pedagogy Theory postulates about the strengthening of democratic values in the educational formation which demonstrates the theoretical support in this report of experience. The second emphasizes the access to public higher education by Laklãnõ/Xokleng indigenous students in a state of Santa Catarina/Brazil's FIHE as economic minorities excluded from the development history of the national society.

Continuing, the third one begins the pedagogical teaching experience report in the pre-pandemic time and theoretical reflections around these practices. The fourth reports the emphasis on art and more specifically indigenous art as a promoter of formative pedagogical practices of students in the Pedagogy course, after the return of face-to-face activities, post-pandemic time. Finally, the fifth topic presents the dilemmas and motivations of a specific indigenous student, plus the individual practice of monitoring and encouraging your formative process.

## DEMOCRACY AND HISTORICAL-CRITICAL PEDAGOGY THEORY IN THE UNIVERSITY TEACHING PRACTICE

Revisiting the last forty years of history on democracy and education, at the time of the dictatorship military-business in the country, student protests between 1970 and 1980, often occurred in Brazilian schools and universities, especially to coincide with the French student protests that, on the other side of the Atlantic ocean and under other perspectives, aimed at the social revolution through cultural revolution (Saviani, 2005).

These debates resonated in the discussion about the new Brazilian Democracy that, for part of the educational researchers at that time, should be inspired by Dialectical-Historical Democracy: "We are not talking about things that belong to the nineteenth century, and that are bad and ephemeral, but about categories that are eternal" (Engels, 1894, p. 3 – free

translation by the authors). This means a historical categories of democracy transformation, a *might be* the overcoming of the social contradictions and the institutions co-agents of certain practices or relations to then the social and political spheres merge into the act of community existence in its generic essence.

Considering the political act as a people activity and not as a state's specificity that, by division of labor, divides the democratic institution in powers, Marx (2011) expresses Democracy as the content resulting from human potentialities arising from conscious activity, therefore, a Democracy resulting from the material and spiritual senses developed in a free society.

With the end of the Brazilian military-business dictatorship and the approval of the new Federal Constitution in 1988, the discussion and the consolidation of pedagogical ideals influenced mainly by the Historical-Dialectical Materialism strengthened into Brazilian universities contributing to think about education as a social right – by overcoming its use as a tool for basic industrial worker training – with a view to a more egalitarian and democratic society in opposition to totalitarianism, political conflicts and the of social rights cutting down.

By questioning the possibility of a Pedagogy course that was not only critical and conscious of social determinants but also that could guide for social transformation through pedagogical action, Saviani (2005) points to the Critical-Historical Pedagogy as educational theory of education inserted the capitalist society but in opposition to, that is, forged within the social contradictions of capitalism, but having as function the assumption of its radical overcoming by the transformation of the social pillars privatized into public, amplified and socialized through the instrumentalization of the working class.

In this sense and regarding the teachers training, Saviani (2009) argues that Pedagogy field aims to develop an acute awareness of educational reality, theoretical foundations and practical instrumentalizations based on historical, philosophical, scientific, aesthetics and technology sciences that are careful not to limiting the reality knowledge, but in from of it, a practice attentive to largest social transformation, which is only possible by a constantly reflective philosophical posture focused on the educational problems that philosophical consciousness evokes. This is the theory that underlies the teaching practice described in this paper and that guides the understanding of the contradictions that interfere in indigenous teachers training process reported.

Thus, the next topic reveals some of these contradictions, especially in relation to the living conditions and access to higher education of the Lăklăno/Xokleng indigenous people resident in the state of Santa Catarina/Brazil and then describes the pedagogical practices built in the time and space of a FIHE's Pedagogy course to the indigenous teachers training.

## **JOINING, RESISTING AND GRADUATING AS LAKLÃNÕ/XOKLENG PEDAGOGUE AND TEACHER: A DEMOCRATIC ACT OF CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE**

Regarding to public initial teacher training courses, Brazilian's FIHE must guarantee 20% of vacancies to attend the demand for basic education teachers around the country. In addition, aiming provide higher certifications, improvement and specialization of professionals active in the labor market, the FIHE must have as institutional goals provide initial and continuing training courses in the areas of professional and technological education (Brazil, 2008a). By law the FIHE are equated to Federal universities and follow the same set of rules for higher education training courses and certifications.

Following this reasoning, the Brazilian Public Law number 12.711/2012 (popularly known as the Law of Social Quotas) stipulated that at least 25% of the FIHE vacancies must be allocated to self-declared as black, brown or indigenous students and to people with disabilities (Brazil, 2012). This law aims at historical reparation in the socio-economic sphere by strengthening the representativeness and ethnic diversity-racial of the Brazilian people in all professional levels to the labor market and to the social institutions, once those people were stigmatized by exclusion and invisibility throughout the national society development.

However, unlike the intercultural teacher licenses degrees, in which the Pedagogical Course Projects are conceived inside the original communities' socio-cultural dynamics, this FIHE's Pedagogy course reported in this paper is open to the entire Brazilian population, but keeps its curriculum formatted in the European universities curriculum traditions, historically built into the Brazilian university in detriment of national cultural and social diversity.

Then, when the first class joined this FIHE's Pedagogy course in 2016, the most part of the students originated from German and Italian immigrants' families descended who occupied the territory of the Upper Valley of Itajaí in the early nineteenth century, usually called European Upper Valley. The same happened with the class in 2017. However, in 2018 a new configuration was presented: of the 35 students enrolled, four come from the indigenous communities Lãklãno/Xokleng, located near the city of José Boiteux, 47 kilometers from the campus.

According to these students, the search for a degree in Pedagogy at this institution was due to being closer to their community and because it is a public higher educational quality degree. They entered in this FIHE in order to qualify for educational work in local indigenous schools, in opposition to the historical evangelization promoted by religious entities since the beginning of the Portuguese invasion in the lands that are now considered Brazil, as a civilizing process of inculcation of European culture on the natives by educational work.



Next, the Table 1 illustrates the number of indigenous students from these communities enrolled by Law of Social Quotas/2012 in this FIHE's Pedagogy course, between 2016 and 2023, whose data was according to the Academic Affairs Secretariat of the campus:

**Table 1** – Entrance of indigenous students in a FIHE's Pedagogy course, based on the number of enrollments applied out from the Law of Social Quotas/2012:

Entrance year of study	Total number of students enrolled into Pedagogy course	Total number of indigenous students enrolled into Pedagogy course
2016	35	0
2017	35	0
2018	35	4
(continues)		
(continuing)		
2019	35	6
2020	35	0
2021	35	0
2022	35	1
2023	35	1

Source: Prepared by the research authors.

Observing the data of these table's data, is possible to realize that the ethnic-racial diversity of the target audience was building up after the first two years of course's existence, in parallel line to the political and social context in which Brazil lived since the impeachment of Dilma Rousseff's government in 2016, the rise of Michel Temer as Brazilian President and then Jair Messias Bolsonaro's election in 2018.

At the time a concept became fundamental: civil disobedience (Saviani, 2017) as an action of respect for the democratic order when governments attack the Brazilians and native people social rights of life and education governed by 1988's Federal Constitution which ensures the exercise of indigenous cultural rights, as well as the recognition of indigenous peoples in which their social organization, customs, languages, beliefs and traditions are involved (Brazil, 1988).

Originally, the Xokleng people occupied the coastal areas and the Catarinense plateau but with the European immigration process in the state of Santa Catarina, they were victims of exodus by fleeing from mass murder. Currently, they inhabit the region between the cities of Ibirama and José Boiteux, Vitor Meireles and Itaiópolis, officially recognized as Indigenous Lands in 1965 (Santa Catarina, 2018).

More specifically, the history of Laklãnõ/Xokleng in the state of Santa Catarina has as record three decisive moments that resulted in death, decrease and weakening of this community and today makes them a resistant people: the violent arrival of German and Italian



immigrants since the nineteenth century; the pacification movement between non-indigenous and indigenous Laklãnõ/Xokleng with the help of Kaingang people from the state of Paraná in the early twentieth century; and the construction of the North Dam of the Itajaí River in the early 1970s, inside the indigenous protection area in José Boiteux (Bento; Theis; Oliveira, 2018). All these moments were permeated by violence and silencing of those native communities.

Bento, Theis and Oliveira (2018, p. 2) explain that the German colonization in the interior of the state was guided by the liberation of lands occupied by indigenous people in the form of their extermination by the 'bugreiros' – bugres' hunters is pejorative term related to the indigenous at the time – as men hired by the colonizers to murder the natives. For the authors, "[...]. This occupation transformed the territory into private property and confined the indigenous to increasingly reduced spaces. Their circulation freedom in the region and their cultural practices were reduced by the justification that it was necessary to civilize them" (Bento; Theis; Oliveira, 2018, p. 2 – free translation by the authors).

It should be remembered that the pacification sense understood as religious conversion and exodus from the original areas are identified as the unique possibilities for the natives being alive for the settlers (Cappellari, 2022). Thus, these conflicts were camouflaged under the truce of pacification, initiated in 1914 by the Indian Protection Service, which confined the indigenous people in demarcated places and allowed the territorial and cultural expansion by the colonizers, concomitant to the estrangement of these native people in their own territory.

Then, confined around the cities of Ibirama, Laklãnõ/Xokleng people went to the clash in 1970 again in face of the construction of the North Dam of the Hercílio River that flows into the Itajaí-Açu River and whose region is constantly taken by the rains and flooding, beyond the opening of public roads within the indigenous reserve. Due to the dam, more than 900 hectares of arable land were flooded and because of the roads it increased illegal logging in remaining areas and the conflicts over the area legal ownership (Santa Catarina, 2018).

Since this landmark in this indigenous community history, there is a constant need to clash with local farmers. Specifically, 2023 was a year of an intense dispute for the Xokleng permanence in their lands when the Government of the State of Santa Catarina requested the Xokleng inhabited lands by judicial procedure in second instance within the Supreme Court. The result was the basis for the Law Project number 2903/2023, popularly known as the Marco Temporal, regarding the recognition, demarcation, use and management of indigenous lands in the Limit of national lands. The legal thesis of the Marco Temporal - which affirmed the right of the indigenous Brazilians to remain exclusively in occupied and/or disputed lands until October 5, 1988, Date of the current Federal Constitution' promulgation - was overturned by nine votes against two among the Senate Ministers on

September 21, in addition to an intense backstage of indigenous protests around the country (Federal Senate, 2023).

Currently, there are 878 families in the common areas of Laklãnõ/ Xokleng, more than 2 thousand people in a space of 14 thousand hectares. Within the area, there are two basic education schools, whose teachers are hired by the State of Santa Catarina Secretariat of Education (Santa Catarina, 2018).

With this historical information in mind, when receiving these students in their classroom, in the pre-Pandemic context, the teacher was preoccupied about the curriculum to be developed with these students. After all, the related fields to education, such as anthropology, philosophy, history, psychology and sociology, as well as teaching methodologies scopes prioritize, mostly, the discussion of European authors. Institutionally, there is no prerogative for indigenous students to be invited to think about their study curriculum.

Resulting from this the professor's concern about a teaching procedure that had not caused, via official and hidden curriculum, once again in their lives, an imposition of Eurocentric thinking in the teaching practice in development and even an ideological inculcation in relation to the elaborate knowledge levels that as social individuals they have the right to learn.

The next topic deals specifically with the pedagogical relationship developed by the indigenous professor from the characterization of these students and their formative processes.

### **TRAINING INDIGENOUS TEACHERS: A DEMOCRATIC PEDAGOGICAL PRACTICE IN CONSTRUCTION**

From a diagnostic conversation, the professor understood that the motivations of these students with the Pedagogy course were the pedagogical and teacher qualification for the work in schools within the indigenous communities and also to the promotion of indigenous cultures centers. Therefore, they needed a formation that articulates ancestral and academic knowledge.

The university curriculum is standardized according to the same summary for all students. So, the professor tried to articulate the professional objectives of these indigenous academics from topics related to their contexts, acting from the pedagogical freedom that presupposes teachers work especially in their personal summary.

According to Melià (1999, p. 13 – free translation by the authors), the basis of pedagogical action in indigenous schools' communities is characterized by the relationship between

language, economy and kinship. From these, “[...] the language is the most extensive and complex. The way of living this system of relations defines each one of the indigenous communities. The way the language is transmitted to their members, especially to the youngest ones, that is what defines the pedagogical action”. In non-indigenous spaces, these elements can be limited to common sense and folklore knowledge if not intentional deepened, as well as if they are not effectively presented as fields of critical resistance construction articulated in the community and for the community.

In the same sense, Silva and Costa (2018) point out that the idealized indigenous person is often present in school life under an effect that is not what the Law number 11.645/2008 (Brazil, 2008b) proposes as a goal the study of indigenous and afro-Brazilian histories and cultures in all the Brazilian basics education schools. In short, the real indigenous person is still portrayed to the non-indigenous as someone from the past, acculturated, fetishized and hidden in the contemporary citizen life.

Knowing that sometimes the teachers work is individualized, the alternative found was to invite community leaders for conversation with the whole class within the Sociology of Work and Art Teaching Methodologies disciplines taught by the professor and also study indigenous authors willing to write their educational and anthropological narratives, as well as to find theoretical references inside the scientific research in Brazilians post-graduations departments linked to indigenous communities, in a way to enable the conversation inside the classroom about social, cultural and political variety, as well as historical-economic variety, as a way of diversify the social relations built in this traditional schools space and culturally Europeanized once being inserted in the Upper Valley of Itajaí.

This pedagogical practice was an observation result of economically minority voices valorization that are being rising in Brazilian society in order to understand the real national history and society and, in particular, provide learning about their stories in their own narratives. Ribeiro (2017) contributes to deconstructing the ‘Place of Speech’ that hierarchizes power pertaining to inequality, poverty, racism and sexism, as examples, and proposes the multiplicity of voices as a driving force the driving force of deregulation of the European’s authorized and unique discourse as a universal idea.

Gonzalez (1988) explains that the colonization of Brazil had as theoretical reference the racial classifications of positivist evolutionism and the justification of the Aryan model’ superiority in relation to the native peoples exoticism and savagery, reinforced in the western academic production until recently even though “[...] in the face of the resistance of the colonized, the violence assume new contours, more sophisticated: sometimes reaching not to appear violence, but ‘true superiority’” (Gonzalez, 1988, p. 71 – free translation by the authors).

Since the university is historically grounded by these European erudite and universal knowledge and the teaching role may imply in the perpetuation of this ideology, the choice of the debate about non-European but national and local perspectives concerns the necessity to deconstruct this place taken by shadows of a bloody past.

A pedagogical alternative was to propose the adaptation of extraclass works, in order to instigate the data collection related to the indigenous community reality and suggest to them pedagogical reflections around citizenship and education in their spaces. It must be noted that, for many times, the works delivered by some indigenous students and received by the professor were elaborated in a semi-literate Portuguese written on brown paper sheets by pencil.

About this, some reflections. The first concern was about the maintenance of language as a living organism that concerns the forms of communication of a people in their relationship with the environment. In the native's languages contexts of the Brazilian territory, Seki (2000, p. 234-235 – free translation by the authors) explains that

[...] indigenous languages are organized according to common general principles and constitute manifestations of the human capacity for language. Each one constitutes a complex system, with a specific set of sounds, categories and structuring rules, being perfectly suited to fulfill the functions of communication, expression and transmission.

For example, the Tupi language was popular around the national territory by the time of the first Portuguese people arrived and this language was the most widespread until the 16th century, when the Portuguese language was officially established by the Crown in 1757 (Dunck-Cintra, Barretos, Nazário, 2016). Due to the process of isolation of the Laklãnõ/Xokleng communities, throughout the settlers' raids, the Xokleng maintained the language Xokleng nowadays linguistically dated by family Jê and by trunk Macro Jê. In the classroom, therefore, because of their own linguistic interactions and Portuguese be their second language, there was a pedagogical concern against the language weakening historical context of exclusion that they constantly went through because of their differences<sup>4</sup>.

In this sense, the professor constantly reflected on what was pedagogically more important between the work technically formatting based on the Brazilian National Standards Organization rules and, inside of it, the refined Portuguese wrote or on the text content once, as Dunck-Cintra, Barretos and Nazário (2016, p. 135 – free translation by the authors) says “[...] the governments and the Brazilian elite in formation have reproduced the ideal of a nation with a European language in our lands, to the detriment of Brazilian linguistic

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<sup>4</sup> On August 1, 2023, the city of José Boiteux signed the Decree number 106, which reiterated the Portuguese language as official and exclusive of the public municipality divisions, whose majority of the population is indigenous. At the request of the Federal Prosecution Service, this decree was revoked 22 days later.

diversity". Thinking about it, the professor focused on the texts content elements presented by these indigenous students' papers and guided herself by the teaching responsibility in front of their deepening reflexive, whose criticism should be present in the written structure, even despite being truncated by the languages.

About this, must be emphasized that the interdisciplinary work could enhance the pedagogical objectives including the norm and the critical sense, at the same time of the rigor attention if divided between the disciplines, however this work was not done because each professor took the students training process based on their own conceptions about what and for what the teacher training.

Discussions about interdisciplinarity are often individual negotiations articulated inside the teacher-student relationship at the traditional university yet. With the exception of intercultural courses that, present in some FIHE, build their curriculums forecast by interculturality, interdisciplinarity and interrelation of indigenous, quilombolas and riverside communities. Such courses are at the tip of an important state policy, but recent in effective actions, since the interculturality focus requires flexibility in official curriculum based on a time and space imported from Europe, as explain Buffa and Almeida Pinto (2016).

As noted in Table 1, the indigenous student's entrance at the FIHE's Pedagogy course reached a high point in 2019. However, in the same year, the most part of these students gave up to participate the classes. The justifications were listed to the difficulty of transport between the community and the institution, the difficulties in the scope of extraclass activities, access to Digital Information and Communication Technologies (DICTs) commonly required and the lack of social relationships with other academics and a belonging feeling.

Then, in 2020, the Covid-19 pandemic was decreed by the World Health Organization and the remote classes turned to happen as an emergency measure for the progression continuity of the academic year, especially by DICTs.

Without forgetting all the fragilities of that moment so harmful to everybody's mental health although, however, are not the focus of this paper, the next topic report philosophical reflections about the specificity pedagogical practice post-pandemic with these students as a manner to strengthen the democratic conception of public higher education for all.

## **RECOGNIZING INDIGENOUS PEOPLE AND TRAINING THEM AS TEACHERS FOR BRAZIL POST-PANDEMIC**

With the pandemic, the academic activities of 2020 and part of 2021 were taught virtually by DICTs, but was observed exponential leave of absence students in all the institutional courses. Then, with the normalization of face-to-face activities in 2023, most students

reopened their enrollment and tried back to their university life. However, concerning the indigenous students, only one from the Class of 2019 returned to the program and another single one joint the first year of the Pedagogy course.

From this period on, the professor thinks about the FIHE space as a resistance one in two perspectives: resistance as a meaning for the difficulty in including what is different and that bothers, therefore reflected in its architecture, in its ideology and in the subjectivity produced for a specific socioeconomic group who attend there and, on the other hand, in resistance as the practice of economic minorities' people in permanently occupying it, despite the difficulties, to transforming it into a place that recognizes and respect all the diverse cultures that characterize the heterogeneity of Brazilian peoples.

As endorsed by Silva and Costa (2018), the native peoples are involuntarily inserted in the political-economic process of globalization, they are forced to absorb elements of the material and immaterial culture of other peoples, and they transform themselves without this discharacterizing them as indigenous people. For the authors, more important than asking about 'what to do with indigenous students' is focus on to strengthen the thinking of these people about what they are able to do with everything that comes from the non-indigenous people contact for their lives and for the existence of their community.

Understanding art as an intrinsic human manifestation – that emerges from socialized material and immaterial work – the professor believes that art is the core of the training process in universities courses, especially inside the Pedagogy course. For her art is a pedagogical and aesthetical principle that leads creative and reflective potentialities to provide the construction of a plural and egalitarian society in conditions of access to cultural and artistic goods and free from the domination of capital within its disciplines. Not art as a language or methodology, but as work and human labor itself.

Thus, to improve the educational process, the indigenous cultural and artistic manifestations study was the path followed by the professor with the help of the Movement of Artists Huni Kuin (Figure 1) work of arts, besides the ones of Daiara Tukano, Jaider Esbell and Bu'ú Kennedy artists into her disciplines.



**Figure 1** – Painting Yube Inu Yube Shanu [Myth of the birth of the sacred drink Nixe Pae – ayahuasca's origin myth], *The Huni Kuin Artists Movement (MAHKU)*, 2020



Source: The São Paulo Museum of Art (MASP, 2023).

Through the artwork image above, is possible to observe scenes from the daily life of the Huni Kuin representations, which, in the classroom, provoked an intense debate about the figures, especially those that represent interactions with animals and other modes of relationship with nature. In regard to it, the teacher could observe with more criticism attention the social relations established between non-indigenous and indigenous students, as well as between teachers and students, mediated by the contemporary works of art.

It affirms the teaching role importance for the 'students' worldviews expansion' – as a Paulo Freire's philosophy's conception – and then, when in a deep human relationship, the teachers allowed themselves to expand their visions with these students it shows that in complex or popular, rigorous or poetics worldviews, the world reading process precedes the erudite word spread by the university classroom and "[...] the act of studying, as a curious act of the subject before the world, is an expression of the way that human beings are being, as social, historical, making, transforming beings, who not only know but know that they know" (Freire, 1989, p. 34 – free translation by the authors).

The professor began an individual educational monitoring with the indigenous student from class of 2019, which the following topic reports.

### BEING INDIGENOUS AT UNIVERSITY: OCCUPYING AND RESISTING

In the year 2023, the professor followed the path of the single indigenous student from the Class of 2019, his expectations, his frustrations and his difficulties, which are reported in this topic because it demonstrates a historical picture about what they go through when they are occupying and resisting within the traditional university and its power relations.



This student left his community to live in the city, near the campus, in the meantime he worked in a private school as an internship for two years – maximum time allowed by the FIHE for internship. After this time, he needed material aid to maintain himself living in the city but he couldn't get into the Student Aid Program, one that the Federal Government support the federal educational institutes, because the registration in this program requires authenticated signature of the indigenous leadership attesting the student is part of the community. The distance and lack of transport between the city and the indigenous community were obstacles to access this document.

This Student Aid Program support would contribute to his educational expenses and his stay in the institution. He is a member of the FIHE' Indigenous Collective and affirms that this is one of the issues discussed by the group when it comes to the indigenous people entrance and permanence in the public university.

One of the biggest adversities for him is the little interaction with his family since he moved to the city. Being unable to exercising daily habits and cultural activities in his community since the language practice to the tea's ceremonies considered important for immunity and disease treatments, makes his everyday life far from his identity and belonging' sense. As a resistance protagonist in a still small space occupied by them inside the university, he wants to be the first Laklãnõ individual to graduate in Pedagogy in a FIHE.

His dilemmas involve stigmatized social relations with his classmates, what he calls the misunderstanding about his origins and worldviews. His professional motivation, however, is to be able the teach and preserve his Laklãnõ language and culture in his community school which, according to the Development Index of Basic Education, resulted in the lowest score inside the state of Santa Catarina reaching 3.7 points on a scale between 0-10 (INEP, 2022).

As his professor, the concern was to guide him in specific activities about his community with the aim of exercising criticism about the city and indigenous community relationship and about the ideologies that permeate school education. Still, it is recognized that the moments of loneliness and exclusion affect his motivation to continue the course with dedication. By this, she encouraged him to build his journey while he strengthened his ancestry revisited by the university knowledge available to him, aiming at his teaching or political educational work' promising future.

In general, it was evident to the professor that intercultural work is important as a way of expanding worldviews and favoring distinct social relations. However, collective actions may be qualitatively superior to individualized pedagogical works if oriented to cooperate with the elaborate erudition but also historical, artistic and cultural local knowledge inside the training courses, in order to broaden the world perception and the community life, for then

achieve the strengthening of democracy and the plural university knowledge space as a macro result.

Indeed, this practice is still under construction, so it is important to keep the historical knowledge past revealed out in pedagogical intentions that aim at the economic minorities entrance and permanence in places they have the right to occupy being social or power places.

May not be limited to the civil act of resistance, but as a constitutional right of being Brazilian in a democratic society that for forty years is strengthened by social groups action anchored in freedom and appreciation of popular knowledge, cultural and traditional and by opening educational institutional spaces so that, in accordance with academic knowledge, be possible promote the new generations formation in mutual and common respect for all national peoples.

May the Brazilian democracy can celebrate more years of existence and that, based on civil values, the FIHE's and other public institutions for material and spiritual life promotion be increasingly accessible and pluralistic in their debate, formation and strengthening of the indigenous peoples.

## CONCLUSIONS

This paper presented particular pedagogical relations within a FIHE which is part of the public Brazilian universities list that protect democracy, civility and respect values from ethnic, social, cultural and political differences. However, it is important to note that even in these public institutions, the social rights effectiveness is a constant struggle, as well as the democracy guarantee which, in turn, finds support in these safeguard educational and social rights institutions but also in everyday social relationships established inside the dialectical and contradictory social tissue complex that defends the material and spiritual society strengthening as one capable and possible to all.

If there is a place for critical thinking in the university classroom, is because there is the support of democracy built into the collective, even if this space is permeated by hindrances and still is traditionally Eurocentric. In addition, it becomes democratic through the economic minorities' presence as the indigenous in their act of resistance motivated by the work qualification that resembles the indigenous work of art that are occupying traditional art and culture institutions. Both demonstrate that, in civil disobedience, spaces must be opened to the strengthening of peoples and voices that are part of the nation. Thus, the impact of individual actions has little effectiveness when thinking about civil rights, but its registration is important as a memory in a space that can be modified when occupied by the working class and by minority economic peoples.

Finally, it ends with the understanding that pedagogical work strengthens stories, ways of being and traditions when turned into fieldwork, scientific research and teaching materials that contribute to the native peoples and indigenous specificities preservation and consolidation. While, aligned in educational dynamics with non-indigenous students is expected to create a learning space about the history of violence, discrimination and decimation of native peoples – which still occurs today – but also about the plurality and maintenance of life that Brazilian indigenous cultural diversity protects. And, in general, it is expected to enhance the space occupied by them in the classroom at all the FIHE, creation of large material and immaterial collection about their knowledge and also empowerment on their intercultural social relations.

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