Mediations and Citizen Competencies in youth *

Mediaciones y Competencias ciudadanas en la juventud *

Mediações e Competências Cidadãs na Juventude *

Blanca Mery Rolón **
Luisa Stella Paz Montes***
Mawency Vergel Ortega****

Institución Educativa Calasanz - Colombia
Universidad Francisco de Paula Santander - Colombia

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Abstract

The purpose of this research is to understand the discourses that teachers show in their pedagogical practice for the development of citizenship competences in primary school students of the Calasanz School, as the field of research where it is observed in breaks, that the Aggressiveness manifests itself in the students' routine discussions, evidencing the lack of emotional control on the part of children and young people who react with violence to any situation that threatens their interests. The research adopts a qualitative character, centered on a hermeneutical methodology, which allows to ask about the behavior of students in the face of certain problematic situations and of coexistence within the educational institution. The following categories were taken: Citizen Competencies standards formulated by the Ministry of National Education: Coexistence and Peace; Participation and democratic responsibility and plurality, identity and assessment of differences.

Keywords: educational models, Skills, Pedagogical Practice, Social Representations, Common life, peace, citizenship.

Resumen

Esta investigación tiene como objeto comprender los discursos que los docentes evidencian en su práctica pedagógica para el desarrollo de las
competencias ciudadanas en los estudiantes de la educación básica primaria, como el campo de la investigación donde se observa en los descansos, que la agresividad se manifiesta en las discusiones rutinarias de los estudiantes, poniendo en evidencia la falta de control de emociones por parte de niños y jóvenes que reaccionan con violencia ante cualquier situación que les signifique amenaza de sus intereses. La investigación adopta un carácter cualitativo, centrada en una metodología hermenéutica, que permite preguntar por los comportamientos de los estudiantes frente a determinadas situaciones problemáticas y de convivencia al interior de la institución educativa. Se tomó como categorías los ámbitos de los estándares de Competencias Ciudadanas formulados por el Ministerio de Educación Nacional: Convivencia y paz; Participación y responsabilidad democrática y Pluralidad, identidad y valoración de las diferencias.

**Palabras clave:** Modelo educacional, Competencias, Práctica Pedagógica, Representaciones Sociales, Convivencia, paz, ciudadanía.

**Abstrato**

Esta pesquisa tem como objetivo compreender os discursos que os professores demonstram na sua prática de ensino para o desenvolvimento de competências de cidadania nos alunos da educação básica primária Calasanz College, como o campo de pesquisa que mostra durante os intervalos, o A agressividade se manifesta nas discussões cotidianas dos estudantes, evidenciando a falta de controle emocional por parte de crianças e jovens que reagem com violência a qualquer situação que ameace seus interesses. Pesquisa adota uma qualitativa, com foco em uma metodologia hermenêutica que permite perguntar sobre comportamentos estudantis contra certas problemáticas e convivência dentro das situações escolares. As seguintes categorias foram adotadas: Padrões de Competências Cidadãs formuladas pelo Ministério da Educação Nacional: Coexistência e Paz; Participação e responsabilidade democrática e pluralidade, identidade e avaliação das diferenças.

**Palavras-chave:** Modelo educacional, Competências, Prática Pedagógica, Representações Sociais, Coexistência, paz, cidadania.

**Introduction**

The history of Colombia has been affected by different situations of violence derived from circumstances, which mark the social and political development of the country. The need to implement strategies to eradicate the phenomena of violence within educational institutions in Colombia, generated reforms in educational policy, such as the promulgation of standards and the launch of special projects and programs to solve these behavioral situations and attitudes, and thus achieve a transformation in the practices of interrelation of the country’s children and youth. One of these actions is the promulgation of the basic standards of citizenship competencies, and recently the law of school coexistence and its regulatory decree.

Citizen competencies are seen as a discourse that points to the diversity and ethical construction of a citizen within the classroom. That is to say, the appearance of citizen competencies as a discourse calls for the end of the split between school and social life; between the school that takes place inside and the life that takes place outside, it brings with it enough tensions in whose center is the teacher of elementary school, basic school, middle school and at the other end the teacher of higher education.

In the nineties UNESCO presents a projection of the educational system for the 21st century, which proposes the strategy of training students in skills
that overcome traditional education, thus allowing the competences achieved in relation to what surrounds the person to be recognized by the education system as part of the integral formation, thus expanding the relationship between education and the individual’s social and work development. (PAHO-WHO, 2001).

The commitment to education, from the academy is to contribute to the study of these phenomena in light of the curricular guidelines proposed by the educational policy of the moment. The reflection revolves around, if the stipulated by the norm helps in the training of the citizen that Colombia needs, or, if the teachers have understood the conceptual referents and intentions of the standards of citizen competence and visualized in the pedagogical practice inside the school.

To contrast the above, it is appropriate to use qualitative research. Every time you have put your interest in education with meaning and social meaning.

In this order of ideas, Denzin and Lincoln (cited by Fernández, 2010), define qualitative research as “multimethodic in focus, implies an interpretive, naturalistic approach to its object of study” (p.34). That is to say, the researcher studies reality from within, in its natural environment, pretends to interpret phenomena as they are implied by the actors involved.

Attending to this theory, the present investigation is based on the hermeneutic method, ideal tool for the understanding of the meanings given in a historical moment.

In the present investigation, the areas of the Citizenship Competencies standards formulated by the Ministry of National Education were categorized: 1) Coexistence and peace, 2) Participation and democratic responsibility and 3) Plurality, identity and assessment of differences. We will confront them through the interpretation of the pedagogical practice and the social representations that the subjects have constructed in the communicative didactic act in each of the levels of schooling.

The instruments applied to the researched population, allowed to obtain the necessary information for the establishment of the strategies used as social representations in the practices of the teachers.

I. Citizens’ competences

In this environment, Chaux, Lleras and Velásquez (2004) after theoretically supporting the components of the citizenship project and emphasizing the need to start this educational project, they decided to organize them into three large groups. In such a way that from the State they were focused as the need for coexistence and peace; the group participation and democratic responsibility; and a third element: plurality, identity and assessment of differences (p.18).

Chaux, et.al. (2004) argued their decision to propose this organization of citizenship competencies in Colombia because they consider that “living in society and especially in a society that seeks to be democratic, peaceful, equitable and inclusive represents diverse challenges” (p.18).

The authors of this proposal note: “on the one hand there is the challenge of coexisting peacefully and constructively with others who frequently have interests that conflict with ours”. They also add: “there is the challenge of collectively building agreements and consensus on norms and decisions that govern us all and that should favor the common good”. Moreover, they complement that “the exercise of citizenship involves the challenge of building society from difference, that is, despite the fact that although we share the same human nature; we are different in many ways” (p.18)
When taking into account the official understanding of ‘participation’ understanding as official, that of the Colombian State, the concept must be framed in that:

Participation and democratic responsibility are oriented towards decision-making in different contexts, bearing in mind that such decisions must respect both the fundamental rights of individuals, as well as the agreements, norms, laws and the Constitution that govern life in community (Primer MEN, 2004, p.12).

Chaux et al. (2004) reinforce this position when they express that “a society that wants to be truly democratic requires the active and critical participation of all”. In their reference to the subject, they add: “this implies that all its members must be able to be involved in the construction of agreements and in decision-making at both the macro and micro levels” (p.19).

In his theoretical approach Chaux et al., They specify that:

In fact, we consider that a competent citizen should be able to contribute to curbing abuse, discrimination and violations of human rights, even if those abuses are part of practices accepted as normal by a social or cultural group. For example, children should know from an early age that no child abuse is justifiable, although this may conflict with what some social group may consider an acceptable educational practice (p.20).

The exercise of a responsible citizenship, in accordance with the purposes of the nation-state as the Colombian, which advocates for a social state of law, implies in reality, the application of dimensions that are what allow the individual to develop a real, efficient and effective practice of citizen competencies. Of course, it is insisted that the Educational Establishment is the one that stimulates, promotes and develops these skills.

For this reason, “the Ministry has been emphatic in stating that knowledge alone, although necessary, is not enough to contribute to the formation that defines our Constitution and the purposes of education established by law”: According to the perspective official:

Knowledge is important to develop citizenship competencies, but they are not enough, since having them does not imply acting in a consistent way with them. Therefore, it is important to contribute to the development of competencies that can help children and young people to manage the complexity of life in society and to continue to develop them -for we do not forget that human beings are always developing these competences-, given that they they allow them to express themselves, understand each other, and skillfully negotiate with others (communicative), which help them to reflect critically on reality and to decentralize, that is, to leave their perspective and be able to look at others', to include them in their own life (cognitive), they allow us to identify, express and manage our own emotions and those of others (emotional) and that allow us to integrate this knowledge and skills when acting in personal and public daily life (integrating) (Idem :
The Ministry also estimates that “in real life we use several types of skills and it is difficult to separate them because we are emotion, thought, gesture, word, work and much more ... all gathered together! ... The same happens with the three groups of standards” (Primer MEN, 2004, p.13).

These theoretical references are complemented by the study by Chaux et al. (2004) when they write that “citizenship competences are the knowledge and skills that allow citizens to act constructively in a democratic society” (page 21).

Moreover, they add: like all competition, citizen competencies are evidenced in practice, in what people do. Citizen action (exercised autonomously and not by imposition by others) is the fundamental objective of citizen education. However, to carry out a citizen action it is important to have control over certain knowledge, have developed certain basic skills and be in an environment that favors the implementation of these skills. Citizen competencies can be differentiated into different types: knowledge, basic cognitive skills, emotional, communicative and integrative skills. (p.21).

II The pedagogical practices

The investigation of the pedagogical practice is justified because it produces theoretical-practical knowledge that has several purposes: among them: to guide the educators in the field of practices from deciphering the meanings that the teacher gives him and the meanings that the different actors that participate in the educational action and elaborate explanations that involve subjects, relationships and scenarios that critically account for these practices, which means a certain exercise of theorization of them using categories derived from disciplinary, transdisciplinary knowledge or "socio-cultural " knowledge.

Such investigative processes can be done from a qualitative methodology that allows to systematize the teaching practice itself with the aim of improving the teaching and learning processes in the classroom, or beyond it, even to study and understand it.

The quality of pedagogical practice is given in terms of the way in which educators assume their own teaching work, appropriating it as a way of life that goes beyond simple instruction. The pedagogical practice involves an inevitable interaction and inter-involvement between the interior of a community associated with a practical environment. This makes the moral reflection about the goods produced go beyond the logical limits of the practice itself.

By focusing on the case of pedagogical knowledge, Martínez (2010) emphasizes that "such objects would be constituted by: the school, the instruction, by the subject or the subjects, the child, the knowledge, the ways of teaching, the teaching methods , the ways in which the sciences relate to teaching and teaching basically a set of knowledge that is not necessarily scientific "(p.5).

In this sense, Zuluaga (cited by Martínez, 2010) explains that:

Knowledge allows us to explore from the relationships of pedagogical practice with education, the daily life of the school and the sociocultural environment that surrounds it, through the relationships with political practice, to the relationship between pedagogy and didactics , its field of application and articulation with the knowledge...
taught; with the education sciences; with the history of education and pedagogy that the historians of ideas take as history of their progress; and with the theories or disciplines that historically have served as a support model for its conformation.

With the adoption of the term knowledge for pedagogy, the aim is to highlight the mobility that the researcher offers to move from the more systematized regions to the more open spaces that are in permanent exchange with the human sciences and other disciplines and practices "(p.5):

Defined these elements is viable from the perspective of Martínez Boom (2010) assume "pedagogical practice as a methodological category." This researcher describes it as:

A conceptual object and also as a strategic notion as a knowledge practice that articulates three fundamental methodological elements: an institution, the school; a supportive subject of that practice, the teacher; and a knowledge, pedagogical knowledge. Elements that establish a complex relationship that is not static or stable but very on the contrary, dynamic and changing (p.6).

Martínez Boom proposes to analyze the case of the teacher as a first element, to which he points fundamentally as the subject of that practice. From this position, it is valid to review the approach of Barragán (2012) when he says: "How much is a teacher worth? It is the question that one would like to face in the face of the new tensions and demands of quality management systems in education "(p.20).

Antunes (quoted by Barragan, 2012) argues that such a question "leads to reflect on the role that teachers must play, to the dynamism—not always ethical and moral— of today’s society" (p.20). Barragán explains that in the "text emerges an understanding of the teacher in which the qualities of the subjects are highlighted in relation to their pedagogical practices; good teachers are always good people, their success lies in it "(p.20).

In addition, Ken Bain (cited by Barragán, 2012) indicates that "he found that the individuals in his study are cataloged as good teachers, mainly because they behave like humans with the students; without for that reason, renounce rigor and demand "(p.20). "But additionally, they assume their own teaching work as a lifestyle that goes beyond mere professionalization or simple instruction" (p.20).

This researcher when raising the question about "what is it that we should do the masters indisputably well?" Responds:

What we do reveals who we are. (…) If what defines a teacher is knowledge, then anyone who knows something can be it; but if they are their methodologies, then whoever applies them can come to practice teaching. Thus, if the good architect is judged by his beautiful and functional buildings, the engineer by his resistant bridge, the painter for his excellent paintings and the sculptor for his magnificent sculpture, then (…) the answer is: our pedagogical practice; from there we are judged as good or bad teachers (p.25).

Barragán also affirms that “the most intimate of a teacher is his pedagogical practice, which should not be understood only as simple techniques to teach, but as the intentions of the teaching exercise that range from possible to concrete
actions that involve ethics, moral and politics "(p.25).

However, Martinez Boom (2010) emphasizes that in pedagogical practice other subjects also participate: "those who supervise education, who regulate it, in addition to the child, but note that the child participates in that relationship not only as a subject, but also as an object of knowledge and at the same time the institution also becomes the object of it ". Consequently, “the pedagogical practice is thus constituted in a practice of knowing where reflections are produced on various objects and in this way the relations between the elements that make up it are permanently recomposed, overcoming the image of something static and perfectly defined” (p. 6).

III Social representations

On the representations of the teacher, it is important to consider:

(…) the process by which the individual - consciously or not - logically structures elaborations that are expressed in ordered conceptions or images of a specific social context. In its configuration and result, this process assumes previous stages that allow the subject to formally or substantively model their daily life. The representations are determined by the conceptions and these in turn by the space, the time and the interactions of the subject with itself, with the others and with the social reality in which it develops, configuring a reality of meaning, according to the interest that as person or group has "(Franco and others, 2000, p.20).

Social representations constitute, then, a subjective reality that is generated from the interests, trajectories and personal and cultural experiences of each educational agent, which is part of the population taken for this study, such as students and teachers of the primary section.

Seen in this way the development of social skills, can be understood both in students and teachers as the actions that are part of a training in values and principles, with an education that aims to train people critical of social change and above all, that they are aware of their attitudes and their own formation.

Methodology

The paradigm of the research work is Qualitative, without underestimating the enormous help that quantitative research provides. It is qualitative because, according to Martinez (2009), "it is basically a question of identifying the profound nature of realities, their dynamic structure, the one that gives full reason for their behavior and manifestations” (p.66).

In coherence with the selected paradigm to assume the investigative challenge (Vergel, Gallardo, Martinez, 2014) , the reason for using the hermeneutic method as a method is pointed out, since it "aims to facilitate the interpretation of the reality that is studied from its different areas and versions" (Martinez 2006).

The qualitative paradigm emphasizes the vision of the actors and the contextual analysis in which it develops (Reyes and Castaneda, 2012), focusing on the meaning of social relationships.

In this sense Fernandez (2010) adds that “the notion of a paradigm that subscribes, differentiates one scientific community from another, since they share by consensus, theories
and methods that are considered legitimate, as well as the criteria for judging the validity of the solutions proposals "(page 56).

The research was carried out in a population made up of primary school students and teachers who guide the process of the same section. Likewise, two teachers, two managers and three students for the application of the individual interview were taken as a sample. As a focus group, six students classified in the following manner were used in the sample: two second-grade students, one third-grade student, two fourth-grade students and one fifth-grade student; for the same study in question, the focus group of teachers and management was made up of five participants.

The non-participant observation was applied to four teachers who participated in the focus group, to verify the information obtained in the interview and thus give an appreciation of it.

Results and Discussion

As a basis for the research, the categorization of the findings was carried out in order to know the arguments and perceptions of the research actors about citizenship competences and pedagogical practices (Contreras, 2013), which subsequently served as the basis for the hiring of the information provided by students and teachers (Vivas, 2013).

In this way, an introductory question is then asked to each of the participating teachers and teaching directors, who for their identification were coded as follows: name of (EMI1) Interviewee Teacher Reporter one and a Focus Group Teacher 2 (EGFM2).

Teachers believe that learning should be built from the difference of the other, allowing a participant and mediated training so that they generate strategies for peaceful solution to these conflicting situations that arise. It was observed in the observations made that the teacher, by allowing reflection spaces and listening to his students, allowed a pleasant climate to be achieved in order to continue with his pedagogical practice.

Participation and democratic responsibility being the second category in these findings has the concept of the Colombian State to understand that as social subjects of rights, children and youth of the country can and must participate politically by democratic means to generate social transformations. (Primer MEN 2004; Roncancio, 2010).

Knowing how to listen to students is also an institutionalized guideline, and mediation is a strategy that is used as part of training in consensus decision-making. The student knows this mechanism, which is put into practice in many situations of their school life.

The Primer MEN indicates about assertive communication as it should be and explains; the ability to listen attentively to the arguments of others and to understand them, despite not sharing them or the ability to be able to express assertively, that is, clearly, firmly and without aggression, their own points of view "(page 13).

The student recognizes that there are spaces in the school that allow him or her to participate democratically, from participation in class groups, committees, sports, school government elections. Teachers consider participation as an opportunity to generate respect, responsibility and commitment.

The teachers affirm that as teaching can be established for a healthy coexistence, the need to generate spaces for prevention and promotion of situations at all times of their school process and to take the students to reflect on their actions so that they commit themselves to change. In the same way (Garcia, 2010; Huertas, et.al., 2014; Laverde, 2014), recognizing that through
awareness and reflection at different times that are provided as classroom strategies, they lead the students to review their actions and repair their attitudes. For this, the institutions are supported by conflict resolution projects, guidelines and strategies that allow the achievement of this objective.

In the same way, the students know that if some cases of discrimination are presented, but they are approached opportunistically by the teachers, making the necessary and opportune accompaniment. Likewise, they recognize the norms that guarantee their rights and make them aware of their duties, allowing them to reflect on situations of exclusion among peers and also leading them to consensual solutions.

**Conclusions**

In the research carried out with the purpose of analyzing the ways in which citizen competencies are applied in the educational institutions of Norte de Santander, specifically in the city of Cúcuta, aspects inherent to the management of conflicts, coexistence, democratic participation and valuation to the difference.

To this extent in the context of the present investigation, it is concluded as follows:

According to the first objective on the identification of the social representations of teachers and students about citizenship competences in the primary basic section, it was observed that the set of actors that make up the educational institutions identify this type of competences in which they observe a unique opportunity to promote coexistence in students with the aim of providing innumerable benefits to society.

On the other hand, from the pedagogical practices the teachers have clarity of the institutional guidelines established in norms and methodological strategies as guarantors of the formative process in the development of social skills through harmonic and constructive relationships; what implies the experience of values, principles and norms that make possible the encounter, the construction of interpersonal relations of diverse nature and the suitable handling of the conflicts.

By identifying the second objective based on the description of pedagogical practices of educational actors for the development of citizenship competencies at primary education levels, it was found that these practices were implemented with the objective that the student interpret, analyze and deduce the content to give knowledge about citizenship competences and can be developed both in the educational and social fields.

With respect to the last objective that deals with contrasting the representations with the pedagogical practices of the educational actors in relation to the development of citizenship competences in the levels of primary basic education, it is observed that it is pertinent and important that each member of the educational field be the holder of knowledge of pedagogical practices in order to implement in young people values and principles that make them a better person and in turn can make great contributions to society.

This is how pedagogical practices for the development of citizenship competences are significant advances in the education of minors, in which this population is encouraged to develop interest and benefit of the different citizen participation mechanisms that are executed at a later age, to achieve changes that transform the community and favor society.

With respect to the comparison of the representations with the pedagogical practices of the educational actors in relation to the development of citizenship competences in the levels of primary basic education, it is observed...
that it is pertinent and important that each member of the educational field is a possessor of the knowledge of the pedagogical practices with the purpose of implementing in the young values and principles that make them better person and at the same time they can make great contributions to the society.

On the other hand, teachers and students recognize that school conflicts are inevitable due to differences in the way of thinking and feeling, but they must also be addressed in such a way that all those involved in these situations feel their rights recognized, while at the same time assuming an attitude of change that allows them to enhance social skills, acquired through the social representations that were experienced within pedagogical practices in the school process.

References


