

# Education in *Pajelança*: Ancestral Knowledge and Decolonial Pedagogy in the Amazon

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## ABSTRACT

The author discusses *pajelança* as an ancestral educational practice that goes beyond the simple transmission of information, incorporating spiritual, ecological, and community aspects. This practice aligns with the assumptions of decolonial pedagogy, as it challenges the logic of colonial thinking that often excludes Indigenous worldviews. The article also highlights the challenges posed by the marginalization of Indigenous peoples, especially in the Brazilian educational context, which often ignores or mischaracterizes the contributions of these peoples to the formation of sustainable knowledge.

**Descriptors:** *Pajelança*; Educational practice; Decolonial pedagogy.

## *Educação na Pajelança: Saberes Ancestrais e Pedagogia Decolonial na Amazônia*

## RESUMO

O autor discute a *pajelança* como uma prática educativa ancestral que vai além da simples transmissão de informações, incorporando aspectos espirituais, ecológicos e comunitários. Essa prática se alinha aos pressupostos da pedagogia decolonial, ao desafiar a lógica do pensamento colonial que frequentemente exclui as cosmovisões indígenas. O artigo também evidencia os desafios impostos pela marginalização dos povos originários, especialmente no contexto educacional brasileiro, que muitas vezes ignora ou descaracteriza as contribuições desses povos para a formação de saberes sustentáveis.

**Descritores:** *Pajelança*; Prática educativa; Pedagogia decolonial.

## INTRODUCTION

The article “Education in *pajelança*: ancestral knowledge and decolonial pedagogy in the Amazon”<sup>1</sup> proposes an in-depth reflection on the inclusion of Indigenous knowledge, especially that related to the practice of *pajelança*, as a central element for a decolonial pedagogy. *Pajelança* is presented as a way of transmitting ancestral knowledge that questions the Eurocentric monopoly on educational processes and offers sustainable alternatives connected to the Amazonian reality. By articulating pedagogy and ancestry, the authors challenge the current educational model and point the way to a more inclusive education that values epistemological and cultural diversity.

Among the main points highlighted are:

- *Pajelança* as ancestral pedagogy: an educational system that encompasses healing, spirituality, ecology, and ethics, transmitted through orality and direct experience;
- Epistemological challenges: the fight against Eurocentric hegemony in the educational system, which disqualifies Indigenous knowledge as “non-scientific;”
- Education and environmental preservation: the close relationship between ancestral knowledge and environmental sustainability, which is fundamental for preserving the Amazon and its natural resources.

## CRITICAL ANALYSIS

The article presents a rich and thought-provoking argument that connects education, culture, and resistance. A key strength of the text is its emphasis on the relevance of practices such as *pajelança*, which synthesize an integrated and holistically ecological worldview. *Pajelança* transcends the utilitarian nature often associated with Western education and positions learning as a spiritual, ethical, and community process.

## STRENGTH OF ARGUMENT

The relationship established between education and cultural resistance is the central point of the article. At a time when the Amazon and its people are under constant threat, valuing *pajelança* as an educational practice is a gesture of political and cultural resistance. The authors make a significant contribution to deconstructing colonial narratives, offering a transformative perspective on the role of education in valuing cultural diversity and building fairer societies.

## LIMITATIONS AND OPPORTUNITIES

Despite its relevance, the article has limitations when it comes to the practical application of the ideas proposed. The absence of concrete examples of the implementation of *pajelança* in formal educational environments weakens the argument. How can ancestral practices be linked to the current school curriculum? What are the practical challenges faced by Indigenous communities when trying to integrate their knowledge into the education system? These questions could have been explored further.

Furthermore, the analysis of the impact of public policies on the recognition and valorization of Indigenous epistemologies deserves greater emphasis. The tensions between governmental and economic interests and the needs of Indigenous communities are crucial elements in understanding the challenges of decolonial pedagogy in the Amazon.

## DIALOGUE WITH OTHER AUTHORS

The article's proposal dialogues with thinkers such as Paulo Freire<sup>2</sup>, whose pedagogy of the oppressed reinforces the need to recognize and value popular knowledge. It also resonates with Aníbal Quijano<sup>3</sup> and Walter D. Mignolo<sup>4</sup>, who approach decoloniality as an alternative to colonial thinking that invisibilizes Indigenous peoples. In bringing up these references, the authors align themselves with an academic tradition that values epistemological plurality, but they could broaden the discussion by addressing the intersection between decolonial pedagogy and global ecological practices, such as those advocated by Vandana Shiva.<sup>5</sup>

## PAJELANÇA AND CARE FOR SERIOUS ILLNESSES

Another relevant aspect would be the relationship between *pajelança* and the care of serious illnesses that can lead to organ transplants. The traditional practice includes herbal knowledge and rituals that seek to strengthen the body as a whole, preventing or alleviating chronic diseases that affect vital organs such as the kidneys, liver, and heart. Understanding and respecting this knowledge can enrich health approaches, especially in areas where access to modern medicine is limited, highlighting the importance of integrative health practices.

## CURRENT RELEVANCE

In the context of climate change, socio-environmental, crises, and global health challenges, valuing Indigenous knowledge becomes even more urgent. *Pajelança*, as a pedagogical and therapeutic practice, offers local and sustainable solutions that dialogue with global challenges. The article reinforces the need for a reconfiguration of the education and health system, seeing Indigenous peoples as protagonists in the struggle to preserve the planet and promote life.

## CONCLUSION

The article "Education in *pajelança*: Ancestral Knowledge and Decolonial Pedagogy in the Amazon" is an important contribution to the debates on education, cultural diversity, and integrative health. It challenges dominant thinking and claims a central place for ancestral knowledge in the educational process and health care. Despite some shortcomings, such as the absence of practical

examples and a more detailed analysis of public policies, the text opens up ways of thinking about education and health as spaces of resistance and transformation.

The main message is clear: recognizing Indigenous knowledge is not just a gesture of historical justice but an urgent necessity for building a sustainable, inclusive, and healthy future. *Pajelança* has emerged as a profoundly relevant educational and therapeutic practice that can inspire pedagogical and health models that are more connected to local realities and global needs.

## CONFLICT OF INTEREST

There is no conflict of interest.

## DATA AVAILABILITY STATEMENT

All data sets were generated or analyzed in the current study.

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Not applicable.

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