

Mapuce Linguistic and Cultural Revitalization in the Kom pu lof ñi kimeltuwe school, Araucanía, Chile

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Ini gen ta iñciñ: A Brief History of the School

The school *Kom pu lof ñi kimeltuwe* no. 312 is located in Llaguepulli (JaqePvjv), Araucanía, Chile, a geographical area bordering a lake, which in turn, is surrounded by the coastal mountain range located near the Pacific Ocean. In this territory, which was ancestrally Mapuce Bafkehce (name given to the Mapuce - also known as Mapuche - who live by the shore), a school was originally installed. From 1975 to 2005, the school was controlled by the Catholic Church and a private educational institution whose motto today is “Educate and evangelize”, with the clear

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intention of evangelizing Mapuce children and families of the territory, both in Catholicism and in the Western-Chilean culture by adopting the official school curriculum.

However, the school was built on lands owned by one of the Mapuce authorities called *papay* (wise elder woman), who together with other authorities of the territory (known as *logko* or *kimce*), initiated in 2005 a process of recovery of their lands. One of the main struggles was the recovery of the territory where the school is located. This was achieved in 2006, under Resolution No. 1586 of July 13 (Educational Project 2016-2020).

After the recovery of the territory where the school is

located, the Mapuce authorities, together with other *lof* (communities), decided to create a Mapuce education program as an alternative to the Bilingual Intercultural Education Program (Programa de Educación Intercultural Bilingüe, PEIB) implemented by the Chilean State. These communities reject the PEIB because they consider it to be a mechanism of assimilation imposed by the State. They have developed an alternative education program that allows them to maintain and promote their culture and language, while also interacting with Western culture, but from the perspective of the indigenous communities themselves.

In this context, the Mapuce community, based on the 1960 Decree 40 of the Ministry of Education (Mineduc), which grants educational institutions the possibility of creating their own curricula and programs, invited a team of researchers to provide technical support in the preparation of their own curricular proposal.

The official Chilean school curriculum applies to the entire national territory. Its structure is based on different education subjects, such as: Language and Communication, Mathematics, History, Geography and Social Sciences, Visual Arts, Music, Physical Education and Health, Personal Development, Technology, Natural Sciences and Religion. There is a Curricular Program for each subject and a Curricular Study Plan for each level. These programs “contain the definitions of the competencies and their skills; the approaches that are the frameworks that provide the theoretical and methodological elements that guide the teaching and learning processes; the link between skills; the learning standards that are the levels of progression of the competencies and the skills described from grade to grade. Likewise, the transversal competencies to the curricular areas are presented with guidelines for their development.” (See <https://www.edugestores.pe/docs/curriculo-nacional-de-la-educacion-basica/>)

In this sense, the initiative of a Mapuce Curricular Study Plan is introduced in the State’s curricular structure proposed by the Chilean Ministry of Education.

After almost a decade of work, in 2018, this Mapuce educational community and the team of researchers that supports them obtained the approval by the Chilean State for the programs of the first basic cycle (first and second year) of their Mapuce curriculum. As a result, the school now has its own study programs, which gather the knowledge of the Mapuce culture and language in order to slowly consolidate it as an educational program based on the paradigm of *kimvn ka rakizuam ma-puce bafkence* - Mapuce coastal zone knowledge and wisdom. (Calfuqueo et al. 2018).

Identity traits of the *SER* (CE) *Mapuce Bafkehce*

The *SER Mapuce Bafkehce*, is a territorial identity of the Mapuce people that unites visible spaces (sea and land) and invisible spaces (spirituality). Its essential expression is to live in harmony and balance with nature. This unity includes men and women, who by themselves are not self-sufficient. In the real world there are always spiritual beings that are present and that accompany us. The Mapuce do not consider themselves as the owners of something but as part of a whole. In order to act, it is necessary to communicate with these spiritual beings, all the other elements and beings of the *Ixofij mogen*, in a specific time and space.

In the Mapuce identity there are certain guiding principles to become the model of *SER Mapuce*; among these are: To become a *kim-ce* (a person with wisdom); a *nor-ce* (a righteous person); a *kume-ce* (person with a good heart); a *newen-ce* (a healthy, strong person w); a *shakin-ce* (a sensitive and joyful person), *kvlfvn-ce* (an agile person). These principles guide the curricular development of the school, which in turn takes into account structural components to address the *kimvn* (knowledge) for a Mapuce education, including:



MAPUCHE HOUSE IN ARAUCANÍA, CHILE. PHOTO: ÑAMKU CALFUQUEO

- *Pu Picike Ce*: Children on the Path to Integral Growth
- *Pu Lamgen*: Horizontal Relationships Between Women and Men
- *Kimeltucefe*: Person Who Shares Knowledge, Wisdom, Teachings, and Experiences
- *Kimeltuwn*: Process of Acquiring, Teaching and Learning
- *Kimkantun*: Learning by Doing
- *Ashgejutun*: Learning by Playing
- *Kimkonvn*: Already Acquired Learning
- *Shijkatun*: Literacy
- *Shijkatufe*: Person Who Teaches Literacy
- *Kim kon kvley*: The Person is Learning
- *Kim Kon Puay*: The Person Will Learn It
- *Kim Ajkvtuael*: Learning to Listen
- *Kim Nentual Ñi Rakizuam*: Knowing How to Express One's Thoughts
- *Kim Ñi Azvmuael*: Learning to Make Decisions

Curricular Program

The curriculum for the first cycle of this school was approved on February 1 2018, by the Regional Ministerial Secretariat of Education of the Araucanía Region (Mineduc). This proposal consists of six study programs covering a total of 16 hours per week. The approved programs are: *aukantun ayekan*, *wenxu kvzaw ka zomo kvzaw*, *az mogen wajontu mapu mew*, *rakizvam ka mapuzugun*, *amulepe taiñ mogen*, and *ixofij mogen*. The purpose of each is briefly presented below.

These study programs aim for Mapuche children to gain knowledge as an integrated whole, because knowledge is conceived in a holistic way. This knowledge (*kimvn*) responds to: a) the need to understand the natural environment, its ecology and geography, and the importance of preserving it for the continuity of community life, and b) to know the main foundation of Mapuzugun as a language which seeks knowledge in dialogue with nature and all the beings who inhabit it.

The pedagogy that underlies these study programs is based on four learning principles: a) the unity of theory and practice, b) a holistic vision of knowledge/thought, c) harmony, balance with and respect for biodiversity, and d) the search and respect for community and territorial spirituality (Pinto, et al. 2011).

1. AUKANTUN AYEKAN (Sports and community games)

Aukantun Ayekan is the study of recreational and leisure activities that are developed in the school's educational community, which for the students is an important component for developing an identity of belonging with the territory, in this case, to the Budi Lake (*leufu budi*) and the Mapuce Bafkehce culture.

In the first basic cycle of study of *Aukantun Ayekan*, the main purpose is to introduce students to different recreational activities that, through constant practice of exercises, will develop the children's motor skills. It will also reinforce their knowledge of Mapuzungun as they take part in the exercises and activities.

During this cycle students are expected to learn about different games that are, or were, practiced in the *lof*, hence the importance of exploring local knowledge of the Mapuce Bafkehce culture, and emphasizing those games, sports, and dances in connection with the social situations in which they are practiced, allowing for children to recognize the importance of recreational activities in facilitating social relations between different people and groups.

2. WENXU KVZAW KA ZOMO KVZAW (handicrafts)

The study of *kuzaw wenxu ka zomo kuzaw* allows students to understand the ancestral knowledge regarding the crafts and cultural productive activities that exist in the community as well as the cosmovision that sustains such knowledge and practices.

Children will be able to recognize that all the elements used for making handicrafts are part of the Mapuce Bafkehce universe and, as such, are important for maintaining these traditions that are

specific to the ancestral culture to which they belong. Children should understand the harmonious and balanced relationships with all the elements used in the making of artworks, and respect for the crafters who produce them with a lot of hard work and skill.

In this sense, it is also expected that children understand that work, art, and crafts have physical, spiritual, and social dimensions. These dimensions transcend the work itself, with each artisan that works the clay, silver, wicker or native wood, the wool, or any other material embodying a human activity with spiritual support, hence the need to preserve and reproduce it, through comprehensive and theoretical-practical learning by Mapuce children. In this way, the physical-productive, socio-cultural and spiritual dimensions of manual work and the community environment are recognized.

3. AZ MOGEN WAJONTU MAPU MEW (Mapuce time and space worldview)

The study of *az mogen wajontu mapu mew* is relevant in the education of Mapuce students, given that it allows them to build an image of the world in which they inhabit, situates them in time and space, and provides them with tools to understand the social environment in which they live. They are encouraged to develop skills and abilities to better understand how the reality of the present has been constituted, in order to discern their options and make plans for the future.

The knowledge provided by *Kimvñ Mapuce* (Mapuce knowledge) in this curricular component is essential for personal, social, historical, spiritual, and cultural development to prepare students to be aware of Mapuce culture. *Kimvñ Mapuce* is understood to be a constant connection between past and present and between one space and another. The learning of this knowledge seeks to generate a solid foundation in the *az mogen wajontu mapu mew* (Mapuce time and space worldview), so that students can make informed and responsible

decisions and understand the rapid changes in our daily lives, in society, and in the world.

4. RAKIZVAM KA MAPUZUGUN (Thought and Language)

The study of *rakizuan ka mapuzungun* (thought and language) allows for the development of Mapuzungun as a first language, which serves to reaffirm identity, and also allows the construction of a conceptual foundation with their own knowledge, practices and values which contribute to the formation of the cultural reality of the MAPUCE BAFKEHCE territory.

The knowledge gathered from Mapuce thought and the various discursive practices constitute the basis for the development of orality in different contexts, both in Mapuce culture and in Western culture, and also to represent the thought of their territory through the family, through their *lof* (community) and territorial space. All this wisdom comes from the interaction between humanity and nature and how the Mapuce throughout their history have interpreted the world in connection with their own philosophy as a culture.

The aim is for the students to acquire the communicative skills that will allow them to express themselves in today's world without forgetting their origin, the communication with the biodiversity of the territory they inhabit, the knowledge emanating from it, and the values implicit in their communicative practices that have made Mapuzungun a language characterized by mutual respect between speakers and nature, which *itself speaks to us*.

5. AMULEPE TAIÑ MOGEN (History and Culture)

The study of the *amulepe taiñ mogen* (history and culture) allows for the construction of knowledge and an attitude of respect towards the socio-cultural, spiritual, and natural world in which the students live, making them part of the territory they inhabit and the people who surround them.



PHOTO: ÑAMKU CALFUQUEO

Knowledge about the beings that coexist in these spaces, such as animals, birds, trees, bushes, as well as the landforms that are present, such as mountains, lakes and natural phenomena like the climate, in addition to spiritual beings, constitutes the conceptual basis that allows Mapuce children to develop attitudes of respect for, care, and belonging to their territory.



OUR ELDERS. PHOTO: ÑAMKU CALFUQUEO

The aim is that from an experiential learning of their coexistence with the people around them, the Mapuce Bafkehce children develop skills to relate to them, preserving and respecting the societal structure and the authority figures who play necessary roles for the harmonious and balanced functioning of the *lof*, which constitutes their social, natural, and spiritual environment as a people with their own identity.

6. IXOFIJ MOGEN (Biodiversity)

The study of the *ixofij mogen* (biodiversity) locates the diversity of living beings and the Bafkehce territory as part of the environment in which the students develop. The detailed knowledge of the particular characteristics of the various animals, plants and marine species, of the territorial topography, and of the natural and spiritual phenomena, constitute the conceptual basis that will allow the Mapuce children to develop attitudes of respect, care, and preservation of their biodiversity.

The aim is that the personal, social, spiritual, and cultural development of Mapuce Bafkehce children, not only makes them more aware of their culture, but also enables them to understand and care for the biodiversity of their territory.

The attitudes and skills the children develop through the practice of learning-by-doing (*ixofij mogen*) make them active biodiversity participants in their relationships with their families, community, and territory.

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