




DANCE EXPERIENCE IN TEACHER EDUCATION

EXPERIÊNCIA EM DANÇA NA FORMAÇÃO DE PROFESSORES

EXPERIENCIA EN DANZA EN LA FORMACIÓN DE PROFESORES

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ABSTRACT

The work is part of the field of continuing teacher education, with a focus on aesthetic experience, and its object of study is the contributions of experience in dance in teacher education. Starting from inquiries about her training path, the researcher-dancer exchanges letters with professional colleagues who also had their trajectory marked by dance. The research aims to understand the contributions of dance practice to teacher training and reflect on the aesthetic experience as a producer of meanings of being a teacher. The letters exchanged were analyzed based on the inductive paradigm, seeking support in the theoretical framework of Historical-Cultural theory. As axes of analysis, dance stands out as: a form of expression; a creative process; self-perception; and perception of the other. The research points to the urgency of thinking about formative practices based on art, which value contexts, life trajectories and knowledge produced collectively.

KEYWORDS: Dance. Teacher Education. Aesthetic Education.

RESUMO

O trabalho se insere no campo da formação continuada docente, com foco na experiência estética, e tem como objeto de estudo as contribuições da experiência em dança na formação de professores. Partindo de indagações sobre seu percurso formativo, a pesquisadora-dançarina troca cartas com colegas de profissão que também tiveram sua trajetória marcada pela dança. A pesquisa tem como objetivo compreender as contribuições da prática da dança para a formação docente e refletir sobre a experiência estética como produtora de sentidos do ser professora. As cartas trocadas foram analisadas com base no paradigma indiciário, buscando suporte no referencial teórico da teoria Histórico-Cultural. Como eixos de análise, destacam-se a dança como: forma de expressão; processo de criação; percepção de si e do outro. A pesquisa aponta para a urgência de se pensar em práticas formativas pautadas na arte, que valorizem os contextos, as trajetórias de vida e os saberes produzidos coletivamente.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: Dança. Formação de Professores. Educação Estética.

RESUMEN

El trabajo se enmarca en el campo de la formación continua docente, con enfoque en la experiencia estética, y tiene por objeto de estudio las contribuciones de la experiencia en danza en la formación de profesores. Partiendo de indagaciones sobre su trayectoria formativa, la investigadora-bailarina intercambia cartas con compañeros de profesión que también tuvieron su trayectoria marcada por la danza. La investigación tiene como objetivo comprender los aportes de la danza a la formación docente y reflexionar sobre la experiencia estética como productora de sentidos del ser profesora. Las cartas intercambiadas fueron analizadas con base en el paradigma probatorio, buscando soporte en el marco teórico de la teoría Histórico-Cultural. Como ejes de análisis, la danza se destaca como: forma de expresión; proceso de creación; percepción de sí y del otro. La investigación apunta a la urgencia de pensar prácticas formativas pautadas en el arte, que valoren los contextos, las trayectorias de vida y los saberes producidos colectivamente.

PALABRAS CLAVE: Baile. Formación de profesores. Educación Estética.

DANCE EXPERIENCE IN TEACHER EDUCATION

Do you know what I really want? To never lose the sensitivity, even if sometimes it scratches my soul a little. Because without it I couldn't feel myself. (Clarice Lispector)

At a time when national public policies question the legitimacy of the school space and show interest in ways of replicating content on a large scale, detailing the ways of appropriating knowledge and other dimensions of learning, defending education as ethical coexistence, aesthetic experience, exercise of sharing and creation is a way of supporting and giving a voice to other educators who insist on resisting such proposals. We say this because we understand, above all, that the act of educating represents a commitment to the humanization of individuals and to the community life. We value the school as a training space that benefits from diversity and the encounter of cultures, histories and memories and we believe that, as Paulo Freire (1996) had already pointed out, even though Education is not the only one responsible for social change, it is from the educational experiences lived in this place that the perception of reality is broadened and one is aware of the need to act critically in the world. From this perspective, discussing teacher education is even more necessary, especially when we propose to think about sensitive and reflective strategies for professional development.

Seeking to answer what the contributions of the dance experience in teacher education are, the research¹ presented here has as its theme teacher education, with a focus on aesthetic experience, and aims to understand the contributions of dance practice to teacher education and to reflect on the aesthetic experience as a producer of meanings of being a teacher. The writing option is narrative, which is also characterized, among other elements, by first-person writing. As this text, written by four hands, is the result of situations experienced by Vitória (under the guidance of Luciana), we chose to write in the first person singular, in the passages in which the research narration goes back to her experiences.

Introduction, or “an invitation to dance”

Since the beginning of my graduation in Pedagogy, my gaze turned to dance in dialogue with teaching. At 14 years old, I joined a dance school in my city, where I began my studies in classical and contemporary dance. I participated in several competitions around the country

¹ All ethical criteria for research with human beings were met, following the Research Ethics Committee and the National Research Ethics Commission (CEP/CONEP) resolutions. The project was approved under no. 26361019.8.0000.8142.

and abroad, constituting myself as a dancer. Upon entering the Pedagogy course, in the midst of so many reflections and experiences, I also became a pedagogue.

Whenever I'm in the classroom, since my internships, my annoyances are usually related to how the children's bodies are involved with the school space. I also feel the same restlessness when I go back to my own school experiences as a student. Why are children always sitting? Do they have space for bodily expression? How do they relate to dance and spatiality? What are the sensitivities and subtleties they bring? I noticed that my gaze at the school was through dancing lenses. It is worth noting that the dance experience influenced my way of understanding spaces and relationships, but that does not mean that I understood every initiative related to dance as naturally positive: I was also intrigued by how forced exposure in performances and festivals seemed traumatic for some children, as well as the way in which some practices – that of ballet itself, for example – were still marked, in school spaces, by gender stereotypes, which made me uneasy.

Assuming the aesthetic experience as a principle for the formation of the subject, I realized that being an artist, being a dancer, constituted me as a person and, consequently, as a teacher. The choice of researching the contributions of dance in teacher education was made not only because of my proximity to the topic, but because I realized that there is relevance in understanding teacher education with regard to Aesthetic Education, and my experience and contact with other teachers who dance put me in a privileged position with potential to develop this study.

This research is based on the premise that teacher education goes beyond the didactic transposition, hence the importance of immersing in discussions about the sensitive knowledge of the teacher, such as dance and other forms of expression, to understand how the formation of sensitivity can constitute the teaching action.

Researchers such as Imbernón, Fortunato and Shigunov Neto (2019), Gatti et al. (2019), Cunha (2020) and Ferreira, Cunha and Prado (2021) have defended the importance of empowering teachers so that they see themselves not as mere command executors thought by those who do not know their reality, or as consumers of ready-made solutions, but rather as producers of knowledge, professionals responsible for the entire process of designing, carrying out and reflecting on their work. Therefore, the process of becoming a teacher must be understood in a much broader way, and professional training must also go through the aesthetic development and expansion of the perception of the world.

Brief theoretical outline, or “who I dance with”



This research allows for a dialogue with studies that articulate the field of Teacher Education with Aesthetic Education, such as those by Duarte Jr. (2001), Antunes (2011), Affonso (2019), Schmidlin and Lampert (2019), Ferreira and Guedes (2020), Braga (2019) and other research by our own authorship, such as Ferreira (2011, 2020). It presents novelty to the academic community by proposing that the experience in dance can be configured as a *transformative* one.

Supported by the Historical-Cultural Theory, we use the conceptual elaborations of L. S. Vygotsky and his interlocutors, which are vast and complex, thus, for the understanding of the subject studied here, we focus especially on the understanding of development, culture, sense and meaning.

Vygotsky (1995) states that human psychological development occurs through the relationship with the other and the relationship with the environment in which one lives. He understands the subject always in a social, cultural and historically contextualized way, based on the marks of time and space in which they are inserted and the interactions established through contact with others. That is, the subject is constituted from mediated activities and culturally produced practices.

To him, development is a complex process of appropriating cultural elements. As we interact with others, we establish relationships and appropriate knowledge historically elaborated by humanity, mobilizing our cognitive and sensitive aspects in order to develop higher psychological functions. In this process, culture has a decisive position. Vygotsky (2001) presents it as the result of human work, which is constituted from an intentional act of transformation of the environment and the creation of symbolic systems. It can be understood as marks of humanity, which are printed in signs and instruments that enable us to interact and understand the other. However, at the same time that we are constituted by the cultural environment, we also re-elaborate it based on our interactions. We create new symbology, and different perceptions about the world.

Here, too, a brief explanation of what we call meaning and sense is needed. Based on the words of Oliveira (1997) about the Historical-Cultural theory, meaning is a fundamental attribute of words, which performs the function of social exchange and generalizing thought. The first concerns the understanding that the cultural group shares, and the second is when we talk about a word or concept, such as cell phone and everyone who hears or reads that word knows what it refers to, without necessarily having a cell phone or even seen one, because knowing the meaning of a word involves the internalization of what it represents, serving for mental operations on that general concept. Whereas, when we talk about the sense of a word, it changes according to the context in which it is used, acquiring different affective nuances in

relation to who utters it, due to the distinct experiences that enunciators have with the element in question.

The Historical-Cultural theory brings forward the idea that the system of signs that the subject uses to mediate his/her psychological functions with the world is the appropriation of a system that already exists and is shared by the cultural group in which he/she is immersed. Through culture, the subject finds these signs already elaborated and, through experiences with others who have been immersed in this culture for a longer time, the individual creates connections and gives sense to such signs. To Vygotsky (1995), from the internalization of the most significant social relationships, the necessary elements for psychological mediation are constituted.

Therefore, the formation of concepts goes first through the social sphere, and then becomes individual. I understand that from what the senses capture, from cultural relations, we internalize concepts to guide our actions and thoughts and, thus, we appropriate the world and give sense to it.

Experience and Aesthetic Education

Customarily, we find in our everyday dialogues the word experience being used as a synonym for accumulated time or experience – moments in which something is lived, in which many things happen, but which do not necessarily impact the person's historical context. In line with the Historical-Cultural perspective, which considers individuals as social, I choose to talk about this process as an activity that occurs and produces change, questioning and reflection, which makes it possible to significantly broaden the understanding of the world.

Vygotsky (2010), concerned with signaling the power of lived processes, which mobilize our historicity and enable the expansion of awareness in/of/with the world, points out that when a given situation mobilizes affection, perception and corporeality, culminating in the apprehension of reality through sensitivity and enabling self-change, of the relationship with the environment and with others, this occurs not because of exceptionality, but because of the interpretation that the subject makes of this situation.

In his production, Vygotsky (2010) uses the word *perejivanie* to represent the knowledge of oneself and his/her condition in the world, a complex understanding of the relationships we establish and their consequences, also drawing our attention to subjectivity and the social and cultural dimension present in this relationship. Even though the literal translation of the word into English is “experience”, we understand that the meaning expressed in Vygotsky's

thought when defining *perejivanie* distances himself from what researchers linked to teacher education defend as such, because in English, experience can refer to daily tasks with little meaning, which are performed mechanically and which do not necessarily provide opportunities for the development and expansion of consciousness.

Perejivanie is the unity of the environment with the individual's uniqueness, that is, to live a situation deeply, allowing oneself to be permeated by it. It also means a remarkable process of life, a profound event that characterizes our unique existence and that of all humanity, synchronically. "They delimit our relationship with the world from birth, expressing the 'mutant relationships' of individual psychic processes and the social environment of which they are a part." (TOASSA; SOUZA, 2010, p. 766, our translation).

Such analysis, however, is not produced in a simple way, as understanding *perejivanie* requires the understanding that a situation, lived intensely, modifies the individual and his/her ways of thinking, acting and feeling, which necessarily entails changes in the relationships that he/she establishes with reality and interferes with it. It is considered, then, how each one relates to the events and how this guides and re-orientes the senses that are produced about the world that constitutes him/her and that he/she is constituted by.

Perejivânie is a unit in which, on the one hand, in an indivisible way, the environment, what one experiences is represented – it always connects to what is located outside the person – and, on the other hand, it is represented as I experience it, or that is, all the particularities of the personality and all the particulars of the environment are presented [...]. Thus, in *perejivânie*, we always deal with the indivisible union of the particularities of the personality and the particularities of the situation represented. (VYGOTSKY, 2010, p. 686, our translation).

It is not just any moment lived, like episodes or tasks that are repeated and demand expected answers, on which we do not focus significantly. According to Prestes (2010), it refers to a broader perception, in order to deepen the relationship between awareness and the activity performed by the individual, thus taking awareness as a process: organic, synchronous and directly connected with social relationships.

We then deal with a relevant dimension of teacher training, which in Portuguese, approaches the understanding of experience. Paulo Freire (1996), when defending the teacher's profession, talked about how attention to experiences and the search for *boniteza* (a word he invented to refer to the beauty that arises from the coherence of an ethical and aesthetic existence, of a conscious experience and oriented towards the collective) strengthens us in the struggle for more humane and fair working and living conditions. As well as utopia and dialogue, the experience of teachers and their students, center of Freire's thinking, points to the need to understand ourselves as unfinished and relational beings, capable of developing

our practices at the same time as we learn with/about them. It is the learning that arises from the experience that beckons as a possibility of reinventing everyday life and of resistance to measures that aim to anesthetize the senses, stimulate the body's passivity and immobilize critical thinking.

Starting from this premise, I understand the aesthetic experience as a possibility of reflection and expansion of what is understood from reality. As João Francisco Duarte Jr. in an interview points out, I believe that "all and any symbolic learning, any and all reflection about life and the world, must start from the lived experience. From what the body captured from a given situation through the senses, that is, from our human sensibility" (ANTUNES, 2011, p. 13, our translation)

When talking about aesthetics, we are referring to a way of apprehending reality based on sensory knowledge, by the body, by the senses, of what is experienced. The subject through the aesthetic experience comes into contact with reality through its wholeness, which encompasses the sensitive, the intellectual and the affective. Thus, we understand that the aesthetic experience presents itself as a vivid possibility in art, as it allows the expression of the sensitive, of multiple languages, making room for what has shared meaning in the world to gain new senses, as Vaz (2021, p. 357, our translation) states, it is "through sensitive knowledge, [that] art has the potential to educate sensibilities". Vygotsky (2001) states that through art the subject relates to the other, in a dialectical relationship, allowing contact with other ways of understanding the surrounding context, in a process of reality resignification.

In this sense, talking about an aesthetic education is to understand an education built from sensitivity, attentive to the nuances of the senses, which articulates thinking and feeling. "Since sensitivity is a way of being in the world, it can also be shared, since it is always social and historical" (PESAVENTO, 2005, p. 128, our translation). In other words, it is talking about an education that favors experience, that provokes and mobilizes affections and emotions, a trans-forming education.

Research methodology, or "how I choreographed this dance"

In this research, the choice is based on the narrative methodology, based on the perspective that Clandinin and Connelly (2011) bring when thinking about the possibility of sharing experiences, in its power as a training strategy, as an aesthetic gesture and as a way of remembering and showing awareness of lived experiences. Taking the narrative as a way of producing knowledge is to admit that the researcher is immersed in the studied context and, therefore, the research does not admit false neutrality. Thus, using this methodology is a way

of breaking with the conventional way of producing knowledge, as it does not aim to find an absolute truth, but to seek new senses for knowledge.

Such an approach presupposes narrative thinking, that is, research is designed according to the chain of events and not the other way around, where events are proposed in order to serve the research. Thinking narratively requires a logical ordering, choice of words, selection of parts of the story, an organization of what will be told. Narrating presupposes the other, the choice of what is narrated and the words that are used to tell the story. In this sense, I realize that narrating is an aesthetic gesture, because from doing so it is possible to experience oneself, feel and learn the world in a unique way, enabling new constructions of meanings.

The narrative makes it possible to look at everyday life in a new way, making room for new perceptions of the world. Process that is enriched when the narratives are shared, because from there it is possible to tell others about the personal formative processes, recalling what was felt intensely, what remained as a perspective of reality. When narrating, we also speak of previous experiences, necessary for the construction of identity and life contexts when we narrate. Narrating becomes more than an exercise of talking of oneself, to symbolize a gesture of sharing socially produced knowledge, a record of practices and reflections that go from the collective to the personal analysis, returning to the collective in a redesigned way.

The narratives produced in this study were analyzed using the Indiciary Paradigm, which is based on the idea that reality is plural and dynamic, thus, the senses given to reality can go beyond what is apparent. For Ginzburg (2009), the idea of the paradigm is to show and enable, through a careful look, attentive to evidence and details, the construction of new perspectives on reality. As a detective who, in order to understand a crime, seeks details and secondary elements to trace back the story he is investigating, or a hunter who searches for clues such as pawprints or droppings and fur, creating from the tracks a coherent narrative to find the animal, Ginzburg (2009) proposes an interpretive methodology of the research context. For this, it is necessary to create coherent links between the elements found through a micro-analysis, in which the scale of observation is reduced and the details of the researched material are studied, not seeking a generalization of the individual elements, but highlighting the contingent particularities in these elements. Generating a narrative that connects all the facts and thus enables a deeper understanding of reality.

In this sense, we delved deeper into the experience of dance in teacher education based on the evidence found in the narratives, in order to enhance new perspectives on teacher education (AGUIAR; FERREIRA, 2021).

Analysis from the exchange of letters, or “dancers’ encounter”

During 2017, I produced a logbook about my experience with dance and reflections on my constitution as a teacher. This material is composed of 10 records that are not dated, but started in August 2017. Excerpts from these records were used as data for the research. Subsequently, the reflections on teacher training and the marks and readings made possible by my experience in dance are accentuated by the exchange of letters I had with other colleagues, also pedagogues and dancers. In these letters, which were used for analysis, they told me about their experiences with dance and how they related this to the teaching profession.

I also produced two narratives about my professional experience, directing my gaze to teacher education, which also comprised the data for this research. In order to look at the material and organize the information obtained for analysis, I gathered the productions in an inventory, in order to organize the data and have a dimension of the entire collection. As all texts taken as empirical material were characterized by writing in a narrative genre, in this study we will call all productions *narratives*, as they are all voices that were processes of reflection in the research.

Initially, I read the data briefly. Then, I dedicated myself to it and separated parts that talked about dance and others that talked about teaching. I selected those that somehow related to the research questions. I grouped the excerpts that had the same senses and each one of them related to the theoretical references to which they referred me while reading. After that, I gathered the texts that addressed the same theoretical approaches and, thus, I met the definition of four dimensions that support my analysis in relation to the narrated experiences.

These are: i) form and expression: dance can be a powerful language for expressing feelings; ii) creative process: dance is a form of creative elaboration of reality; iii) self-perception: the one who dances perceives him/herself fully and completely; iv) perception of the other: the dance experience provides an attentive look at the way the other expresses him/herself – and for the teachers, a look at how children can express themselves in the school space.

I present each of the dimensions analyzed, with excerpts from the narratives articulated with theoretical reflections and interpretative proposals.

Form and expression: dance is a powerful language for expressing feelings

The transformation that dance allowed me to live came from a very intimate and delicate place inside me. My insecurities and certainties, such as those that I couldn't express, became more accessible, lighter and more palpable. The

therapeutic function that dance provides me is also a means of communication between what is inside me, which I could not express in words. (Raphaela)

The first excerpt highlighted shows how the experience of dancing can make the subject express his/her feelings and relate to the reality that surrounds him/her, as the development of another form of language – the body – makes it possible to express in new ways what is inside oneself, which runs away from what is put into words, as Raphaela says.

Researchers such as Ferreira and Guedes (2020) point to the important attention that we must give to creation and enjoyment through different artistic forms, understanding that art is an enhancer of aesthetic education. Still, in agreement with Vygotsky (2001), we understand that through art it is possible to experience the world and better perceive one's feelings. In a constant relationship of appropriating and recreating, we express and understand, through the proper signs of these manifestations, what cannot be translated into words. Dance as a language differs from what can be said in words by its subjectivity, producing images, using sounds to compose, and "both the sounds and images and the words communicated by symbolic knowledge are essential for the aesthetic phenomenon through art and culture, be apprehended by people" (VAZ, 2021, p. 347). Through it, ideas, emotions and memories are expressed that, when communicated to others, may not have an objective meaning. As Mariana points out:

I danced my feelings when I could no longer bear them and contain them only inside me. I presented a secret that few people understood, but there was the pain and joy that hardened my chest and feet. (Mariana)

In this excerpt, it is possible to understand how dancing enabled the expression of feelings that could only be raised through this experience and how the understanding by the other remains open. Dance becomes as powerful as a language, as it structures our way of connecting with the other and with reality (FERREIRA, 2020). Still, in the dialogue with the other who also dances, or who appreciates the movement of the moving body, it is open to interpretations and elaborations of senses and meanings. Dancing, in the perspective presented by Mariana in her narrative, mobilizes our emotions and provokes the creation of images that are not literal, whose understandings are diverse, fertile and polysemic. Through dance, individuals experience encounters and reflections that go beyond what is stated.

Creation process: dance is a powerful way to understand the world

This time, I chose not to talk about the immeasurable and inexplicable sensations that permeate me when dancing, but to describe a little about what they did to me. Much more than the dance itself, it is these sensations that I am referring to that were able to transform me and, in my opinion, the most special thing about all of this is that they did not touch me at any time, nor in any movement. It is in unique



and memorable moments that they come and fill me, bringing me closer to my purest essence, bringing all the liveliness that is within me and making me understand. Just understand. (Jade)

Jade directs our gaze to what is felt and then understood by the dance experience. Unlike her colleagues, who identify dance as an activity that above all enables sensitive expression, this teacher alerts us to the interpretive characteristic of dance. From her words, we realize the awareness that the sensitive apprehension of reality takes place through the body itself and that, therefore, dancing awakens, exercises and develops an indispensable sensoriality for the understanding of oneself and the environment, synchronously.

Making us return to the idea that reason and feeling are inseparable, we agree with Duarte Jr. when he states that we are endowed with a certain aesthetic rationality, which needs to be intentionally developed (ANTUNES, 2011). As expressed by Jade, her experience of dancing alters her understanding of the world. As pointed out by us in another study, “this means to say that the understanding that one has about the world happens to the extent that reason and emotion are articulated, it is not possible to know and establish a relationship in any other way” (FERREIRA, 2011 p. 14). That is, only through what is felt, experienced, it is possible to know oneself.

Other records also highlight this relationship:

My becoming a teacher took place from a body that reads and relates to space, understanding that much of what we learn crosses us bodily and affectively rather than cognitively. (Maira)

Dance becomes transformative, as it makes us rethink about what we would often not stop to reflect on and creates ways to express ourselves about what is around us, criticizing and positioning ourselves through our body. (My annotations)

The transformations in the senses attributed to everyday relationships and to life itself, through dance, also refer to the understanding, defended by Vygotsky (1995) and reaffirmed by us, that human development takes place in an integral and inseparable way. Doing, thinking and feeling can only be understood in relation to the one who acts, thinks and feels, that is, for the individual to recognize and understand his/her relationship with the environment and with others, it is necessary to recognize the body and the knowledge and affections which, in it, manifest themselves.

Therefore, when discussing the importance of dance for the training of the teachers who narrate here, we also find it pertinent to consider that, although their records express positivity and a certain liberating character, the effect of greater knowledge of their movements and emotions, dance is not always related to this favorable conception of development. If we experience reality through sensoriality, it is undeniable that it is also

through the body, and through dance as one of its expressive possibilities, that we sometimes experience the reaffirmation of a hegemonic culture that oppresses, segregates and eroticizes. As examples, we constantly hear reports of children who were forced to do ballet, even if they did not identify with classical dance; we observe, in the ballrooms, how ballroom dancing maintains a close relationship with patriarchal culture; we recognize, in the exhausting and sometimes violent training sessions at conservatories, the uncreative expression of repetition to exhaustion.

In this sense, by defending dance as powerful for the understanding of the world, we refer to what dancing can mobilize in relation to our human potential, as well as to the aesthetic experiences resulting from the exploration and appropriation carried out by/when dancing.

Self-perception: the one who dances perceives him/herself fully and completely

What we dance and express through different languages makes us one, as we create a relationship with our entire body, mobilizing things that we didn't even know were stored in us and, thus, we are complete. (My annotations)

The reflection highlighted above brings to the debate the possibility that dance offers us, by understanding ourselves as complete beings, as pointed out by Vygotsky (2001), which cannot be divided into parts, such as motor, affective and intellectual. If we have already announced, in the previous topics, the importance of this understanding so that we could contemplate dance as an expressive and sensitive way of apprehending reality, now we emphasize that we are constituted by the senses captured by the body and, also by it, we can relate to the other and with the environment. In this perspective, in agreement with Braga (2019), we understand that the different possibilities of artistic creation and enjoyment, among them theater, performance and dance, enable a broad development of awareness.

As Delari Jr. (2000, p. 135, our translation) points out, in Historical-Cultural theory, “the issue of consciousness is crucial for the definition of what is fundamentally human. But consciousness, in turn, is not something given to the human from within”. Understanding consciousness as a humanization process, it is through different interactions with social meanings that it develops. In this sense, dance brings us closer and connects us with the historical cultural production of humanity, requires creation and adaptation and, therefore, makes us more aware of our condition in the world.

Carla, in her narrative, states that

The concepts of rhythm, melody, motor coordination, space and time that dance gave me are essential for a complete learning, where body and mind act as one. Each gesture builds roles and ways of being and being in the world. (Carla)

We realized, in Carla's words, that despite the teacher trying to express a certain unitary vision made possible by dance, her words still refer to a binary conception between body and mind. This movement, of perception of a wholeness that is felt by the body, but still poorly appropriated by verbal language, reaffirms how much we learn and modify our conceptions through dance, if we are willing to reflect on what these experiences actually mobilize in us.

Perception of the other: the dance experience provides an attentive look at the way the other expresses him/herself – and for the teachers, a look at how children can express themselves in the school space

The way I perceive bodies and spaces dialogues with notions specific to my experiences on stage. My look at the different ways in which children express themselves, as well as how spaces merge, whether inside or outside the classroom, is also seen through a dancing lens. (Jade)

Jade's dancing lenses are the ones that made her see more sensitively as a teacher, lenses acquired from her own experience in dancing. In Raphaela's narrative, we find an excerpt that dialogues with this idea:

Thus, I can say that dance constitutes my formation as an individual and, therefore, contributes in a very positive way to my daily actions. I think that my role as an educator requires me to be – in body and soul – sensitive and attentive to the nuances and subtleties that children bring, so that I can mediate the pedagogical processes with the guarantee that each individual has his/her right to their most broad expression assured. (Raphaela)

Here, the gaze is turned directly to being a teacher. In this sense, the two narratives highlighted here point to how sensitivity should also be part of everyday school life, being revealed in the teaching practice through a more sensitive look at the world, providing opportunities for an aesthetic experience at school. From the analyzed narratives, dance was a possible and facilitating path in this process. A fact also expressed in this short excerpt:

The art of dance, as a space for expression and awareness, brought me a look at the subtleties of each individual. (My annotations)

As already defended by Affonso (2019), we realize that, through the aesthetic experience, being a teacher is also reinterpreted, which directly impacts the way teachers look at students and the school environment, and especially with regard to the other's way of expressing themselves, making sure that affection and cognition are inseparable and, therefore, education must start with experience. A pedagogy of the sensitive is "an education that puts an end to dichotomies such as reason-emotion, body-mind, knowledge-affection, personal-social" (MAGIOLINO, 2015, p. 151).

We then highlight the need to have a more sensitive education in school, which awakens enchantment and provides opportunities for subjects to understand themselves as part of the world. Thus, we understand that the teachers are committed to making these spaces possible. For this, they need to be sensitive and believe in an education that starts with the senses.

Final considerations, or “when the curtains close”

Among the many lessons learned during the research, we highlight here some of the most important. We understand, first of all, the importance of art as a form of language and expression of feelings and, specifically, of dance. As we can see in the analyzed narratives, through dance what was not possible to be verbalized was expressed in another way, artistically.

The second lesson learned was that we are complete beings, in which movement, affection and cognition are inseparable. In this way, through the aesthetic experience, through what touches us, we learn. In this sense, dance is powerful in the training of teachers, since when they experience it, corporeality is worked in all its dimensions. Through it, it is possible to experience oneself, affect oneself, and thus learn.

Finally, what we also learn through this research is that a sensitive education must take into account the trajectory of the subjects involved, the subjectivity of each one, and that art is essential for this process of knowledge. We brought dance as a choice because of my trajectory related to it, but among the lessons learned that resulted from this research, the most relevant concerns the power and need for a subject’s education that is linked to experience with art.

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