



revista
brasileira
de estudos
em
dança



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MICHELLEPIS, Dafne Sense. THE WATER CYCLE IN THE BODY: a didactic dance sequence. **Revista Brasileira de Estudos em Dança**, v. 2, n. 3, p. 214-245, 2023.

ABSTRACT

This article presents an example of a didactic Dance sequence, designed to establish interdisciplinary connections with Science content, carried out in the 3rd year of Elementary Education at a private school in São Paulo. Exploring the series axis, the sequence aimed to stimulate student authorship in the choreographic process. The description of this sequence was part of the master's dissertation entitled "Dance for Children in Education: rhythm, play, and imagination," supervised by Prof. Dr. Lilian Freitas Vilela, defended at IA of UNESP. The author grounded her professional practice in the Orff-Schulwerk approach and her experience as a dancer at Balangandança Cia.

KEYWORDS dance in school; education; didactic sequence; interdisciplinary; choreographic process.

THE WATER CYCLE IN THE BODY: a didactic dance sequence¹

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Pedagogical relationships in dance didactics

The purpose of this article is to share a didactic dance sequence that promoted the art of movement as a field of knowledge in formal school. The sequence outlined below is part of the third chapter of the master's thesis entitled "Dance for children in education: rhythm, play and imagination", which discusses some pedagogical principles that are particularly relevant to the dance in formal education, based on my experience as a teacher in a private school³ in the city of São Paulo.

Teaching dance at school presupposes operating with some didactics. Didactics addresses teaching methodologies and techniques, emphasizing lesson planning, preparing the materials to be taught and evaluating the students' learning process.

With regard to school education, Libâneo (2013) examines several crucial aspects. These include the concept of intentionality in the content that is intended to be taught, the forms of teaching capable of establishing a relationship between school knowledge and social practices, and the relevance of preliminary organization, that is, planning. Libâneo (2013) says that while didactics approaches the general theory of teaching, specific methodologies focus on the contents and methods of each subject in relation to the educational objectives of the institution.

Among the mandatory subjects in Elementary Education are Portuguese Language, Mathematics, Natural Sciences, History, Geography and Physical Education, for which general didactics and specific methodologies are well referenced at school, however, within the also mandatory Arts component, the didactics and specific methodologies of Dance are still poorly established.

Currently, the guidelines of the National Common Curriculum Base, the BNCC⁴, focus on the development of

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⁴ The BNCC is a normative document for education networks and their public and private institutions that helps in the development of school curricula and pedagogical proposals for childhood education, elementary education and high school in Brazil.

competencies that encompass cognitive, socioemotional, ethical and practical aspects, and guide the construction of curricula in Brazilian schools, taking into account the formation of knowledge, skills, attitudes and values. But how can teachers be helped to plan lessons with didactic sequences that take into account the competences and skills of dance in the school context?

Amidst the general⁵ competencies to be developed in all areas of basic education, some, such as creative thinking, cultural repertoire, communication, self-knowledge, self-care, empathy and cooperation, can be directly related to dance skills. As for the specific competences of Art for Elementary Education, the fourth and eighth items of the BNCC provide guidelines that were included in the didactic sequence of this paper: the one that suggests experiencing playfulness, perception, expressiveness, and imagination to give new meaning to school spaces, and the one that suggests developing autonomy, criticism, authorship, and collective and collaborative work in the arts (BNCC, 2020, 198).

Throughout the BNCC documents, the numerical format of the skills follows a coded pattern made of three parts: year/stage, curricular component and skill number. In the tables that present the thematic units, the objects of knowledge and the skills defined for each year or block of years, there are alphanumeric codes whose composition is as follows: in the example (EF15AR08), the first pair of letters indicates the Elementary Education stage; the first pair of numbers indicates the block of years, so 15 means that the skill is applicable from the 1st to the 5th year; the second pair of letters indicates the curricular component, AR means Art; and the last pair of numbers indicates the position of the skill in the sequential numbering of the year or block of years.

At the time, the didactic sequence "The water cycle in the body" was implemented, the BNCC was not yet a strong reference in the planning of the school in question, however, afterward, the document contributed to a more systematic analysis of what had been done in the dance work developed in the first semester of 2016.

⁵ The BNCC presents 10 general competences and 9 competences for the Arts.

In the school's regulations, the Arts department was composed of teachers with degrees in Visual Arts, Performing Arts and Music. The Body area was integrated by teachers with a degree in Physical Education, and only me with a degree in Dance.

In order to organize the central thinking of the Body area in our curricula through common coefficients, we agreed in pedagogical meetings to work on the motor aspect in a way that is relevant to the student, considering him or her to be an active subject of learning, while at the same time agreeing to approach the contents of each component according to their meanings and contexts. Based on these agreements, we also tried to ensure regularity between proposing classes with conceptual, procedural and attitudinal content, cultivating the student's relationship with their body and with different bodies, and addressing the grade axis in the practices and reflections of body classes.

During my master's exams qualification, six years after this experience, the board of examiners integrated by Prof. Dr. Márcia Strazzacappa, Prof. Dr. Carolina Romano de Andrade and my advisor Prof. Dr. Lilian Vilela highlighted the relevance of this didactic sequence for the author's professional career and how it could collaborate with the performance of other teachers who are thinking on working with dance at school. In conversations with the GEMA Study Group⁶ colleagues also pointed out that it would be interesting to move forward with research and pedagogical practices in the Performing Arts with a focus on Dance, since, historically, arts instruction in formal education has been more referenced in pedagogies focused on the Visual Arts. It also provoked questions about how a musical teaching approach such as Orff-Schulwerk, in which I received my certificate in 2018, could contribute to dance classes.

The term Orff-Schulwerk is represented by the union of the surname of musician and composer Carl Orff⁷ (1895-1982) with the

⁶ In 2022, Ana Claudia Oliveira, Ana Lara Henriques de Sousa, Carolina Romano, Carolina Rocha, Clara Gouvêa do Prado, Bruno Canabarro, Gabriel Küster, Giovanna Borges Nogueira, Júlia Matias, Renata Fernandes and Lilian Freitas Vilela (leader of the GEMA research group) took part in the discussions.

⁷ Carl Orff was born in Munich, the capital of the state of Bavaria, and was a leading German composer of the 20th century.

word *Schulwerk*, which in German means homework. However, the philosophical principles embedded in Orff-Schulwerk should not be reduced to the direct translation "Carl Orff's homework", nor should they be credited solely to the composer, but also to Gunild Keetman. When searching for Orff-Schulwerk definitions, one is likely to encounter the term "musical method," which represents a misconception.

Orff-Schulwerk is not a method, but an educational approach that considers fundamental to mobilize several resources and strategies to promote the child's familiarization with music and movement, creating an intimate relationship between them.

O Orff-Schulwerk é um **campo interdisciplinar**, ou melhor, pré-disciplinar, porque se refere a um **estado de ser**, onde a expressão se dá **com todo o nosso ser**, não em meios adquiridos separadamente. Em nosso sistema escolar passamos por esse estado rápido demais para chegar à especialização o mais rápido possível. No âmbito do Orff-Schulwerk, música, dança, dramatização ou poesia estão conectadas em sua essência. (HASELBACH, 2012, p. 329, negrito da autora)⁸

Included in the founding principles of the Orff-Schulwerk approach that converged with the needs of a dance teacher, we can highlight the fact that the child is considered to be at the center of the artistic development process; not music, or in this case, dance, but the elemental human being, the person in constant formation. Another principle of the Orff-Schulwerk approach stages practice as a starting point, i.e. the children experiences first the concepts and elements of the language in their bodies, and then analyze them.

This perspective proposes an inverse path to the one provided for the progression of learning in most areas. In Bloom's Taxonomy⁹, for example, the act of creating is at the top of the pyramid at the end of the process. For Carl Orff (ORFF, 1987), the

⁸ The Orff-Schulwerk is an **interdisciplinary field**, or rather a pre-disciplinary one, because it refers to a **state of being**, where expression takes place **with our whole being**, not in separately acquired means. In our school system, we pass through this state too quickly in order to reach specialization as quickly as possible. Within the Orff-Schulwerk, music, dance, dramatization or poetry are connected in their **essence**⁸. (HASELBACH, 2012, p. 329, author's bold) *Our translation*.

⁹ In Bloom's Original Taxonomy, the hierarchical order of thinking is: knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis and evaluation. In Bloom's Revised Taxonomy, the hierarchical order of thinking is: remembering, understanding, applying, analyzing and creating.

thought of creating music and dance starts at the bottom, in the thinking and acting body simultaneously.

Returning to the context of the school I was at in 2016, during pedagogical and planning meetings, teachers and coordinators designed activities to develop skills in order to make it easier for students to learn. It's common to see teachers from other departments talking about the exercises they planned to do from the blackboard to the notebook, the pages of the books, the homework and the schedule of tests and class council, but rarely did they talk about mechanisms that dialogue with dance practices and thinking processes.

I wanted, in some manner, to feel more integrated with the other teachers and with these didactic procedures to try to help the students relate dance to the other content presented in the school routine. I wanted them to feel more involved with their own knowledge and with the knowledge passed on by the body.

At the first teaching meeting of the year, before starting the first 2016 semester with the students, I proposed an experiment to the coordinator and my fellow teachers in the grade: to develop a new Dance didactic sequence that had elements connected with the contents of the Science didactic sequence, observing in particular the children's engagement with the proposal throughout the lessons.

Indirectly, I also wanted to stimulate creative skills in Music, Portuguese Language and Geography, in order to link the subject and the school through knowledge of the sensitive body.

Integrated content for integral children

It's important to emphasize that this school began its history as an Arts Workshop¹⁰, so there was implicit institutional support that favored testing new pedagogical and artistic practices, after all, in the conception of its founders, artistic expressions were just as

¹⁰ *Atelier: Arte Expressão* was created in 1974, became *Escola Viva - Early Childhood Education* in 1978, welcomed its first Elementary Education class in 1996 and its first high school class in 2010.

important as any other school content. Dance was not a function of the other areas, but rather sought, between other proposals, to transform the topics studied in the other areas into integral knowledge.

It was part of the Science program to encourage children to think about the processes of cleaning up rivers and springs, among other matters.¹¹ Despite the urgency of the topic for global health, I often saw students uninterested, especially when the topic was presented in the conventional classroom. As part of the teaching staff in my role as a dance teacher, I wondered how best to make most students feel engaged with this content. I didn't want "to studentize" anyone (LARROSA, 2014); on the contrary, I wanted to avoid causing the children to distance themselves from the symbolic place of water.

*Water is the softest and most flexible thing, but it can wear down rocks and move mountains*¹² (WILHELM, 2000, p. 25). In the ancient Chinese text of the I Ching, the *Book of Changes*, water is presented as the symbolic element that teaches us about the ability to adapt to change, suggesting that we learn to flow with the circumstances of life, with the context in which we are inserted, a very pertinent attitude for dancing and improvising in a group.

One of my objectives was the idea of cultivating dance in the students beyond forms or styles. Using didactic approaches to support my actions, but without talking about them with the children, I wanted to propose dance not as just another rigid school syllabus, but as the language of changes, an area of knowledge in constant transformation. Symbolizing shapes and fluency was part of an integral approach to dance for children in education.

Thus, the need emerged to use the theme of water as inspiration for impulses that would reveal how we are (or how we could be) better integrated with our context, implying that as well as being part of it, we are the environment itself.

¹¹ The science content included studies on soil formation, air pollution and humidity, the greenhouse effect in global warming and urban sealing in big cities.

¹² "A água é a coisa mais suave e flexível, mas pode desgastar rochas e mover montanhas".

Formation in Formation: a profile of a dance teacher in education

Although dance is part of Physical Education at the referred school, the approach to the body that underpins my practice has always been artistic, as this was my initial formation.

One of the questions asked during my qualification exams was: What ideas of the body and the child supported your journey towards achieving the goal of getting students to learn to choreograph dances as a group? I realized that I didn't have a prepared answer, I couldn't identify exactly which ideas of the body and the child were the most iconic. However, I could see how the ability to adapt to change and the creative flexibility capable of mixing reality with fantasy, among other relevant skills, were at the heart of my understanding of dance.

Regarding the concept of skill related to creativity and thought of specifically for the language of dance, back in the past century, Mary Wigman's quote positioned the process as follows:

A **habilidade criativa** pertence ao campo da realidade tanto quanto ao reino da fantasia. E sempre há duas correntes, dois círculos de tensão, que se atraem magneticamente, brilham e oscilam juntos até que, completamente sintonizados, penetram-se mutuamente: por um lado, a **prontidão criativa** que evoca a imagem; por outro lado, a **vontade de agir (...)**, aquela que toma posse da imagem e transforma sua matéria ainda fugaz em uma substância trabalhável e maleável para dar-lhe sua forma final na provação da moldagem. (WIGMAN, 1974, p.12, 106, tradução e negrito da autora).¹³

For artists, teachers and students alike, the ability to deal abortively with the terrain between reality and the imagination can be better developed to the extent that forms and movements are allowed to happen in this "in-between" space. This exercise in creative body development can contribute artistically to the

¹³ **Creative ability** belongs to the sphere of reality as much as to the realm of fantasy. And there are always two currents, two circles of tension, which magnetically attract one another, flash up and oscillate together until, completely attuned, they penetrate one another: on the one hand, the **creative readiness** which evokes the image; on the other hand, the **will to act** whipped up to a point of obsession, that will which takes possession of the image and transforms its yet fleeting matter into malleable working substance in order to give it its final form in the crucible of molding. (WIGMAN, 1974, p.12, 106, author's bold). *Our translation.*

development of other competences and skills mentioned more briefly by the BNCC.

Andréia Fraga da Silva and Patrícia Prado's thoughts on corporeality also made sense in the questions about dance in education being debated during the master's process:

Nas crianças, a corporalidade faz-se em constante movimento, com a imaginação e nas relações com os espaços, os tempos, e outras corporalidades, construindo suas experiências de/no mundo. Os entendimentos e as ações das crianças estão totalmente atrelados/as às experiências corporais pelos sentidos, gestos e percepções. Portanto, é também nesse território do corpo que se dá a experiência no sentido descrito por Larrosa (2014), em sua qualidade subjetiva, contextual, provisória, sensível e partindo da lógica do acontecimento. (PRADO; SILVA, 2020, p. 99)¹⁴

School can be a fertile ground for working with dance, but which dance am I talking about? Definitely not the kind that only meets a technique or aesthetic, but the kind that is born out of a wide variety of explorations, experiences and experiments, making it possible to create collaborative spaces of knowledge through bodies and their relationships.

At school, I used my artistic experience with Balangandança Cia.¹⁵, in which the imagery and movement of each performer is the raw material for creating shows and performances. Because of this authorial process, I have never represented a character or a reality on stage that is detached from my experiences. The authorial and collective processes of dance creation that I experienced with my colleagues in this company gave new meanings to my childhood universe. This attitude fed my teaching practice.

Even though I had a bachelor's degree in Body Arts and a degree in Pedagogy, my professional training in education actually took place at school, where through a state of presence full of memories of my childhood, I taught as if I were taking my inner child

¹⁴ In children, corporeality is in constant movement, with the imagination and in relationships with spaces, times and other corporealities, building their experiences of/in the world. Children's understandings and actions are totally linked to their bodily experiences through their senses, gestures and perceptions. Therefore, it is also in this territory of the body that experience takes place in the sense described by Larrosa (2014), in its subjective, contextual, provisional, sensitive quality and based on the logic of the event¹⁴. (PRADO; SILVA, 2020, p. 99) *Our translation.*

¹⁵ Directed by Georgia Lengos, the contemporary dance company for children has been circulating shows and organizing forums, among other artistic and educational activities, since 1997. More information at: <<http://balangandanca.com.br/>>. Accessed on: 27 May 2023.

to meet the children/students, to play and do contemporary dance at school, as Uxa Xavier called it:

Fico me perguntando, diante desse novo contexto, por que não Dança contemporânea para crianças e adolescentes, se também temos Ballet, Dança moderna, Jazz e Sapateado para crianças e adolescentes? Estou citando só alguns exemplos. São estilos, são opções artísticas, são identidades. Afinal, eu não saberia dar uma aula de sapateado, como também um professor de sapateado não saberia dar uma aula de dança contemporânea. Isso, entretanto, não quer dizer que um dançarino contemporâneo não deva sapatear. Se ele souber, ótimo, mais um instrumento de investigação para seu trabalho. (XAVIER, 2007, p. 63)¹⁶

School can also be a space to investigate and reflect on the mystery and secrets of the body and knowledge. That's why, when I started the semester in 2016, I hoped that the meetings would be permeated by the events' *logic* (PRADO; SILVA, 2020), and that presenting the contents of contemporary dance through the body, rather than talking about them, could optimize the artistic educational work with the children.

In line with Paulo Freire's thinking (FREIRE, 1967, 2018), I believe that when teachers include themselves horizontally in the processes of creating lessons, placing themselves as facilitators, witnesses, and accomplices in the students' experiences, since both are constantly crossed by their experiences and issues related to identity, the construction of knowledge can be deeper and more meaningful.

I feel constituted and close in terms of formative baggage, to what Prof. Dr. Lilian Vilela, a dance researcher, who was part of the first cast¹⁷ of Balangandança Cia. says:

Estas características de expansão e acolhimento (...) permitem que esta comunicação seja pautada no tempo-espço de minha experiência, com o trânsito e a porosidade imanentes aos sistemas, através de minha formação e estudos realizados no hemisfério sul, no calor do clima tropical, com água e afetos corporais em abundância durante todo o processo, elementos constituintes e estruturantes de meu aprendizado somático." (VILELA, 2022, p. 86-87).¹⁸

¹⁶ I wonder, given this new context, why not Contemporary Dance for children and teenagers, if we also have Ballet, Modern Dance, Jazz and Tap for children and teenagers? I'm just mentioning a few examples. They are styles, they are artistic options, they are identities. After all, I wouldn't know how to teach a tap class, just as a tap teacher wouldn't know how to teach a contemporary dance class. However, this doesn't mean that a contemporary dancer shouldn't tap dance. If they do, great, another research tool for their work¹⁶. (XAVIER, 2007, p. 63) *Our translation.*

¹⁷ Anderson do Lago Leite, Cristian Duarte, Lilian Vilela and the author were the first performers to create Balangandança Cia.

¹⁸ These characteristics of expansion and acceptance (...) allow this communication to be based on the time-space of my experience, with the

In my early years as a dance teacher at the school, there was sometimes a big gap between what I could plan for the classes and what actually happened. The focus of the classes was easily lost because my planning was vague. However, as a student of Prof. Dr. Isabel Marques, I learned that proposing good dance lesson plans at school shouldn't be seen as a utopia, it was a commitment.

A distância que existe entre aquilo que é proposto e aquilo que efetivamente é praticado nas escolas tem por muitas décadas caracterizado a história da educação brasileira. Mesmo assim, uma proposta que oficialmente assume a importância da arte (e da dança) na educação não deve ser tomada como uma proposta utópica, mas sim como um movimento importante na direção da formação de uma nova mentalidade e, portanto, de práticas futuras (MARQUES, 2003, p.67).¹⁹

It's important to note that over the years as a teacher, I've made countless mistakes in my strategies and planning. As the popular saying goes, *No one makes it through life mistake-free*. However, these mistakes, whether slight or serious, ended up working as allies in the development of more consistent pedagogical proposals. So, what I desire to share is the result of experiences in the fields of pedagogy and the arts.

The water cycle in the body: 3rd grade dance project in 2016

The didactic dance sequence "The Water Cycle in the Body" took place in the first semester of 2016. The project involved 11 lessons, offered once a week, of one hour duration, to five third grade classes, three in the morning and two in the afternoon, involving a total of 95 students with ages around eight.

transit and porousness immanent to systems, through my training and studies carried out in the Southern Hemisphere, in the warmth of the tropical climate, with water and bodily affections in abundance throughout the process, constituent and structuring elements of my somatic learning.¹⁸ (VILELA, 2022, p. 86-87). *Our translation.*

¹⁹ The gap between what is proposed and what is actually practiced in schools has characterized the history of Brazilian education for many decades. Even so, a proposal that officially assumes the importance of art (and dance) in education should not be taken as a utopian proposal, but rather as an important movement towards the formation of a new mentality and, therefore, future practices¹⁹ (MARQUES, 2003, p.67). *Our translation.*

Living with water was the theme of the third year of Elementary Education, for which dance was a mandatory curricular component. The theme's general questions were: Where does water come from? What are the transformations of rivers in São Paulo? What is the relationship between rivers and riverside cultures?

From this axis, I tried to come up with new questions focusing on dance skills: Does water have a defined shape? What shapes can a stone have? What do you think fluidity means? Is it possible to move similarly to the states of water?

The questions were asked during the lessons to encourage the students to elaborate new questions related to movement qualities.

Water was a device for working on dance content in two central areas: in the area of body shapes, i.e. the study of the parts of the body involved in remaining in a certain position without shifting in space; and in the area of the movement flow factor, present in the transitions from one shape to another in space. The aim was to teach about form and flow in the time and space of the classes, in order to use this knowledge to create a short sequence of movements, which we called choreographic cells.

In order to develop the didactic sequence "The water cycle in the body", I tried to fulfill a few stages, such as: (1) varied activities carried out in the multipurpose teacher's room, (2) dance class routine procedures, (3) sensitization activities for the creation of dances, and (4) reflection on dance class practice.

Activities carried out in the multipurpose teacher's room (1):

Between 2013 and 2017, the space reserved for dance classes was a multipurpose shed. The shed served as a place for all the students to gather when they arrived and left school, as a free area during recess, as well as being the venue for weekly pedagogical meetings, among other purposes. For a long time, I found it difficult to focus the children's attention on the dance class in this space.

As a strategy to optimize class time, I opted, whenever possible, to start the dance lesson in the conventional classroom, i.e. in the multipurpose teacher's class.

When I was teaching the first class of the day, I would observe the movement of the students when they arrived at the space and group them together for a first collective stretch. When the dance class took up the time slot following another class, I would try to make connections with what I had found written on the blackboard from the previous class, in order to try to articulate the "fresh" topics seen by the students with the knowledge of dance.

With a playful attitude to activate the children's imagination, I used to "fish out" concepts or words related to the axis of the series to work on exploring different rhythms.

Considering the principles of Body-Mind Centering® (BMC²⁰) in relation to the developmental patterns of human movement, I often used my hands connected to my gaze and voice to make gestures situating body parts and spatial directions.

Eventually, these procedures were mixed with songs associated with clapping games with traditional music and/or lyrics that I created to adapt the game to the theme in question, a resource that came from my experiences in Orff-Schulwerk.

²⁰ BMC® is a somatic approach developed by Bonnie Bainbridge Cohen, from the United States, which works through the education and re-education of movement. Available at: <https://bmcnobraasil.com.br/o-body-mind-centering/>. Accessed on: March 7, 2023.

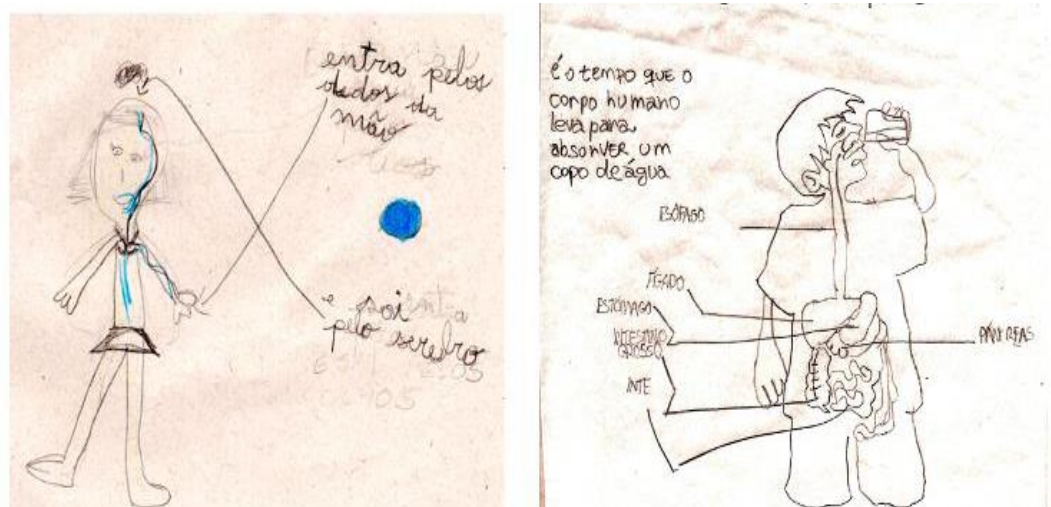
Figure 1 - Working with your hands in the multipurpose teacher's room.



Source: Personal archive.

Generally, homework requests and timetable reports took place in the classroom. At the start of the semester, for example, each student was asked to draw a picture showing how they imagined the path of water inside the body. This lesson was linked to an activity in the Science teaching sequence, in which a maintenance worker showed the children the pathways of water in the school.

Figure 2 - Homework: Drawing the path of water through the body.



Source: Personal archive.

Procedures that are repeated in the routine (2):

The change of space from the multipurpose teacher's room to the shed, where the most kinetic part of the dance class took place, was done with another collective and rhythmic game, the train. The aim was to provide the students with concrete references to the concepts of the language and the specific procedures of the dance classes, which would be taken into account in the assessment instruments in the final semester grade²¹.

One of the instruments was a self-assessment based on the following questions: Do you participate attentively during the lesson explanation in class? Do you control your body, cooperating with the rules for the proper execution of the train? Do you make an effort to overcome your difficulties? Do you collaborate with the group when creating dances in the shed? Do you concentrate on the circle and the end-of-class activities?

In the activities repeated in the routine, it was possible to see the evolution of each student's collaborative posture in the sense of helping or not helping to maintain the fluency of the group during the lessons, regardless of where they sat in the class, their position in the circle or their position on the train.

The train circuit, mentioned in the second item of the self-assessment, included corridors, stairs and the shed. The last seats on the train were the ones that required the greatest commitment from the group, as the class was expected to complete the journey without anyone letting go of the hands of the person in front. The positions were not fixed, but rotated each week, except for those who didn't feel safe occupying the last positions. The rotation of the train provided an opportunity to subvert the positional logic in which "the best come first" and make the environment less competitive.

Through this game, it was possible to explore concepts related to collective intelligence (LÉVY, 1999), which emphasizes

²¹ This article will not cover the topic of evaluation in detail. For a more in-depth analysis, we recommend consulting the master's thesis entitled "Dance for children in education: rhythm, play and imagination". (2022) Available at: <https://repositorio.unesp.br/handle/11449/237169>. Accessed on: Aug. 17, 2023.

collaboration and diversity of skills rather than competition and hierarchy.

Devemos colocar a criança, desde os primeiros anos de escola, em situações complexas de cooperação, de organização de informações, de negociação de significados, de tomada de decisão, de construção de projetos e de pesquisas, tanto no plano cognitivo quanto social. De modo geral, o que se chama de "trabalho intelectual" deve ser revisto e reorganizado em função das possibilidades oferecidas pela rede mundial de computadores. (LÉVY, 1999, p.239)²²

This approach considers the use of computers and has a liberal tone in the sense of preparing subjects for the job market, which didn't correspond directly to my interests in working with dance in education. I was clear that the work I was doing was not aimed, for example, at the professional training of digital dancers or dancers with computer skills. However, Lévy's quote was mentioned because it suggests that the success of a collective is associated with a capacity that must be developed in the social sphere: that of its members being able to act together effectively by understanding the situation as a whole. This is like teaching the body to decondition itself from acting automatically, with a non-critical, obedient or prejudiced attitude towards the hierarchical position of the individuals in a group.

²² From the first years of school, we need to put children in complex situations of cooperation, organizing information, negotiating meanings, making decisions, building projects and research, both cognitively and socially. In general, what is known as "intellectual work" must be revised and reorganized in the light of the possibilities offered by the World Wide Web²². (LÉVY, 1999, p. 239) *Our translation.*

Figure 3 - The train game.



Source: Personal archive.

Activities to raise awareness, explore and create dances (3):

In the shed, the focus was on deepening the practice, using as an object of knowledge the skills related to the elements of the language of dance according to the BNCC, mentioned above. Through sensitization, such as the practice of touching the spine to feel the vertebrae, it was possible to establish relationships between the head, trunk and limbs, the relationships of distance and proximity to the body axis, and to feel the body as one entity. This somatic access triggered by the touches on the body (*Hands-on*) gave students body awareness which, in turn, facilitated the exploration of movements in space, with different rhythms, leading to the construction of danced movement²³

By aligning attention to one's own body and the bodies of colleagues, it was possible to develop dance improvisation proposals and explore body forms at different levels and dynamics.

²³ Referring to skills (EF15AR09) and (EF15AR10).

Figure 4 - Awareness-raising practices: touching the spine.



Source: Personal archive.

In the sixth lesson of the didactic sequence²⁴, a week before the classes were due to go on an environmental study trip with the multipurpose teacher and the Science teacher, a lesson was prepared, the focus of which was to take the first step in terms of stimulating their choreographic construction.

When they arrived at the shed, the students found colored bags strategically²⁵ arranged on the floor. There were exactly the same number of bags and children, so each one had to choose one to sit next to, without being able to touch it yet. Once everyone was seated, they were given time to touch an object inside the bag. Inside the bags was a rock, a pretext to relate it to the rocks studied in Science, but the students still didn't know.

Handling it carefully as if it were a very thin skin that shouldn't be torn, they had to imagine what was inside and make a similar shape on their body, with as much detail as possible. Once this was done, they could change places and go to another bag whose color was different from the previous one. They realized that each bag

²⁴ These classes were held in the first week of March 2016.

²⁵ The bags of the same color were kept close to each other, as they contained similar types of stones, namely smooth and rounded stones (waterfall), smooth stones with angles (cut crystals), colored stones, transparent stones, black stones and clusters of building stones (gravel).

contained an object of a different size that required specific manipulations to feel the shape: the large objects required the use of the palm of the hand, and the small objects invited the children's fingertips.

They repeated the procedure of groping and bodily interpreting the object twice more, which totaled 3 different positions in each student's body vocabulary. In the last exchange, the students had to return to the first bag, and finally they could see what was inside to repeat the initial shape, making the necessary adjustments so that their interpretation of the stone was as convincing as possible for themselves.

In all the classes, students recognized on the outside something that already seemed intimate and familiar to them by touch, something that somehow already belonged to them. Feeling the shape, temperature, volume, and texture of the stones gradually gave meaning to the bodily forms imagined and realized by the children during the class process.

Figure 5 - Awareness-raising practices: interpreting form.



Source: Personal archive.

Figure 6 - Awareness-raising practices: moment of discovery.



Source: Personal archive.

Figure 7 - Body shapes on different spatial levels.



Source: Personal archive.

For the following week, the children were asked to do an activity called *Mineral Body*. This title was given for two reasons: one was because the children had already heard about the

importance of a diet rich in minerals²⁶, and the other was to make it interdisciplinary by using basic geology terms²⁷.

With a simple and quick direction, they were asked to draw the outline of a *Mineral Body* with a continuous line, marking its boundary between inside and outside. The outline could be directly or indirectly related to the stones worked in class. It was the children's prerogative.

The exercise in the didactic sequence was to mimic the shape drawn on the body by filling in the outline. This stage would be photographed. Some children used their whole body on the floor. To photograph the children who chose to use the medium or high level, a background of blue and purple TNT²⁸ available at the school was glued to the wall to contrast with their uniform's t-shirt, if they were wearing a white t-shirt²⁹. A photo was taken of each drawing and its author in the position of what they had drawn.

Some children remained attached to the idea of just drawing the outline, others imagined the stone body and represented the human figure in their drawings. The next task was to cut out the background of the photos and blend the two images together, as shown in figure 8.

²⁶ Calcium, Iron, Zinc, Magnesium, Phosphorus and Potassium are some of the essential minerals that perform physiological functions.

²⁷ Minerals are the "substances" that form stones, and stones are grouped together to form rocks, an important element in the water cycle.

²⁸ TNT stands for "non-woven fabric", a light and inexpensive material that you can buy in stationery or party supply stores.

²⁹ Orange or green shirts were part of the uniform, but in general most of the children wore white shirts.

Figure 8 – Montage with drawings and photographs of the *Mineral Body* activity.



Source: Personal archive.

Composition practices: How to move from one form to another?

The aim of the scenic exercise in this lesson of the didactic sequence was to collectively practice fluency in the movements to compose the choreographic cell based on the theme of Shapes, using the repertoire from the exploration worked in previous weeks.

Four groups per class were organized in alphabetical order³⁰. In these sub-groups, each student had the task of being a

³⁰ The groups represented in the following table by G1 to G4 were divided in alphabetical order, but could vary according to the names of the children in the class, in an attempt to keep the number of participants per group similar.

teacher and teaching the other members how to make a body shape that they liked, preferably inspired by the imaginary stone from the *Mineral Body* lesson. Once everyone knew their colleagues' shapes, they had to create ways of moving from one shape to the next fluently, dancing.

Challenges of various kinds arose in this task, the first of which occurred in all five third grade classes when they had to share something personal with a group of people they hadn't chosen. This was a recurring problem when it came to matching up pairs for the Festa Junina dance.

I tried to intervene as little as necessary. I mentioned my experiences on the train and realized that the simpler and more objective the proposal, the less chance there was of students getting distracted by parallel questions, which often hindered the rhythm of the lessons. I focused on questions related to dance content, such as how to adapt the body to new positions and how to move from one form to another without losing balance.

The best way to find out was to do it, so they were given 8 minutes to complete the exercise and show it to the other groups in the class. As negotiations took place, the groups produced their short sequences and were soon ready both to share their montages and to watch their peers'.

In the next class, we kept the groups and the proposal to compose a choreographic cell, but instead of working with the idea triggered by the static shape of the stones, the choreographic motifs were replaced by words from the lyrics of the song *Água*³¹, by Paulo Tatit and Arnaldo Antunes.

The song, recorded with a kalimba, reveals some paths, narrating places where water passes, something that indirectly referred to the first homework lesson that asked us to draw the paths of water in the body.

Each group received a verse of the song with 9 to 11 words to create the movement:

³¹ The song *Água* is track 7 on the album *Canções de Brincar*, from the Palavra Cantada Collection.

Figure 9 – Board with groups of students and words from the musical stanzas.

Group 1: Students A to F	Cloud, ground, manhole, pipe, river, waterfall, Waterfall, dam, water tank, tap, filter, glass.
Group 2: Students from G to L	Cup, mouth, bladder, toilet, pipe, river. River, another river, sea, another cloud.
Group 3: Students from M to R	Cloud, ground, manhole, pipe, river, waterfall, Waterfall, dam, water tank, tap, filter, glass.
Group 4: Students from S to Z	Cup, mouth, bladder, toilet, pipe, river. River, another river, sea, another cloud.

Source: Personal archive.

Since the groups had between four and seven participants, and there were words that were repeated in the verse, I asked each student to propose at least one of the movements, as had been done in previous lessons with the shape of the stone.

Each group received a sheet of sulphite with the keywords of the verse written on it. These words worked as if they were the initial score for the dance. They chose where to leave the sheet, the open script guide, since it was possible to change the order of the words according to the dynamics of the gestures and movements, as well as to emphasize or delete words from the verses, if it was agreed by the group. The maximum time to create and test ideas was 10 minutes.

Figure 10 - Groups in the shed during the creation process.



Source: Personal archive.

In order to highlight how the musical part was integrated into the didactic dance sequence, it is worth mentioning the concepts of interdisciplinarity and transdisciplinarity. Interdisciplinarity between two or more disciplines seeks to overcome the fragmented vision in the processes of acquiring and socializing knowledge; transdisciplinarity, on the other hand, considers thinking as integral, beyond the disciplines.

In harmony with these concepts, with the theme of the series and with the dance proposals discussed during class breaks, the morning music teacher instructed the children to sing and sound out the song *Water*, used as a reference for the choreographic creation. The students even used instruments they had made out of plastic bottles, a music content activity also linked to the thematic axis *Living with water*. The afternoon classes chose to dance their choreographies to *Peixinhos do Mar*³², by the Barbatuques group, because it has a more agitated rhythm.

³² Because they work with body percussion, this and other Barbatuques tracks were often used in dance class warm-ups.

Reflection and sharing on classroom practice (4):

At the end of each class, the space for sharing the scenic exercises with the class helped the students to choose, edit and format their creations. By managing the time and space of what would be shown, they felt the challenges of making a choreographic project and became more empathetic to the other groups. Presenting, viewing, listening to and offering constructive criticism on choreographic sharing can exercise democratic exchange between them, but it is a time-consuming process, the result of a long didactic pedagogical dance journey.

Throughout the semester, a series of photos and videos were taken, and after the end of the semester, a final video³³ about the didactic sequence "The water cycle in the body" was edited to show the process and the result to the parents. With a poetic tone, the video shows that in this process the real stone became a drawing of an imaginary stone, which gained rounded, pointed, asymmetrical, elongated bodies, among others without definition, but capable of balancing, using the diagonals and touching the sky. The children's fluency in space can be seen in the audiovisuals.

Figure 11 - Groups in the shed presenting their choreographic cells.



Source: Personal archive.

³³ The Video "Dance for Children in Education: The Water Cycle in the Body" is available at: <<https://youtu.be/lf7fKuACgag>>. Accessed on May 18, 2023.

The video was sent to the families at the end of the semester along with the work report containing the specific dance content and clarifying the criteria for the assessment instruments that made up the final dance grade, including collaboration in this collective creation, the grade for the theory test and the self-assessment. The students' names appear in the final credits as performers-creators, and in fact all the movements presented were the children's own creations.

Figure 12 - Groups in the shed presenting their dances to the class.



Source: Personal archive.

Feedback from parents

Despite all the institutional support, it was part of the school's reality to deal with how Dance, still occupies a less privileged place than the hard subject matters: Math, Portuguese, Science, History and Geography. This school valued art so much that it had *atelier* teachers (FIGUEIREDO, 2015) who worked very closely with the multipurpose teachers in building the curriculum, but the specialist teachers in the Body area, where dance was allocated, did not take part, for example, in parents' meetings.

Thus, between 2010 and 2017, I incorporated the procedure of collecting testimonies³⁴ from the children and compiling audiovisual recordings of lessons that showed the class as a whole in dance activities, as mentioned at the end of the didactic sequence "The water cycle in the body". The compilation was copied onto each student's *pen drive* to be sent to the families along with the portfolio at the end of the semester.

Upon receiving, parents or guardians were asked to watch the material together with their children in order to share their impressions of the images in real time, face-to-face: the impressions of the child who experienced the processes from the inside, and those of the parents/plaintiffs watching as an audience. After watching together, the parents or guardians of each child were asked to write a short statement reflecting on the dance that was cultivated at the school.

The vast majority of families gave positive feedback, but the negative feedback was essential to help guide actions for the next school term, as happened at the end of 2015, the year before the didactic sequence "The water cycle in the body" was created.

Among the many positive comments, there were parents who said they had witnessed in their child "effective learning coming from an active body", mentioned that "it is the intentional gesture that brings authorship and autonomy", recognized the relationship "from the inside out in the construction of movement" expressed by the children, among other expressions of satisfaction and congratulations.

However, among the negative feedback, one spoke of a student who "didn't feel comfortable in dance classes". These parents didn't recognize dance as an area of knowledge to be considered in the curriculum and didn't see any connection with the thematic axis. In fact, in 2015 this intention was still not very clear in my proposals. Perhaps it was because of this specific feedback that I started the 2016 school year determined to create the didactic sequence to better connect the contents and procedures of dance with the contents and procedures of the other areas of knowledge.

³⁴ The interviews were usually based on the questions "What does dance mean to you?" and "What did you enjoy most about dance classes?".

Final considerations

Despite the fact that the BNCC includes proposals for dance both in the area of Physical Education and in the Languages of the Arts component, the integral and subtle body of dance as an artistic expression still seems to be out of place in the curricular priorities that school principals and coordinators choose to discuss with the teaching staff. Teachers need to make an extra effort to build a school path for dance and its legitimate field of knowledge that makes sense to them, to the students, to the curriculum of the grade and to the institution's political pedagogical proposal, if there is one.

If the teaching and learning process involves a chained procedure of linked steps or actions, whose approaches focus on hypothesis building, data collection, interpretation, decision-making, socialization, and configurations that privilege both collective and individual work, then a choreographic study can also be practiced as a procedure of steps and actions, in order to make visible a creative process developed through body language. The body develops hypotheses, collects data through the senses, makes decisions in real time, expresses itself and echoes connections with other people.

What body skills is a teacher expected to have in order to promote dance knowledge? A priori, we can think that the teacher should have knowledge of their own body and openness to touch their subjectivities. This way, within different contexts, they will be able to easily see what skills their students already have. From then on, they can help them to broaden their awareness by providing the elements of the language of dance, to encourage them to exercise creation, autonomy and build relationships. In this process, respecting any kind of difference or divergence that may arise between teacher, content, and students is at the heart of the democratic exercise, the political intervention of perception.

By encouraging actions and opening up spaces for children to create their own dances, the process and result depend, in principle, on how we see the child and conceive of dance/art (SILVA, 2015). My reference point comes from academic instruction

and experience as a creative performer in a contemporary dance company for children, but this is not the only way. Multiple body constructions can contribute to forming a dance teacher at school in a continuous process.

To expand the repertoire of body movements, in Practices and Contexts, the BNCC mentions the importance of appreciating and experiencing ways of dancing with sensitivity, imagination, and the ability to attribute symbolic meanings to what is seen and practiced. I interpret this skill as one that, through exercise, can create contexts and understand them better. In the case of the didactic sequence "The water cycle in the body", the aim was to develop students' ability to understand the school context in general, and to explore the concept of form and flow in both an abstract and concrete way. Specifically, the aim was to develop students' ability to recognize the structures of the body, of objects, of lessons, in order to give them fluency and meaning through play.

As mentioned above, the idea was to create strategies for the students to learn to choreograph authorial group dances based on practices that used their imagination and the elements of language. With the movement vocabulary that emerged from the series axis, the children put together their choreographies with unison and improvised parts using body shapes, transitions between shapes, levels, different spatial directions and time variations, making their dances look like games.

Reinforcing the playfulness cultivated in the procedures, the dances presented the content experienced in the 11 lessons of the didactic sequence: the rows of the train, the actions of passing over, under and between colleagues, handstands on the floor, the act of dancing with an emphasis on body parts, among others.

Each of the 20 choreographic cells contained a wealth of material which, according to the movement factors described by Rudolf Laban, could be thoroughly analyzed, but more than developing a descriptive analysis, the didactic sequence aimed to experience movement qualities.

Promoting dance for children in education is a way of encouraging the teaching of this art as an important area of knowledge. It means recognizing the value of body language in

training people through interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary actions and the *interpenetration* (ORFF, 1978) of knowledge, taking into account artistic, pedagogical and educational natures.

The article was intended to share experiences with other teachers, so that they feel encouraged to invest in new didactic sequences in their teaching contexts. Therefore, it did not provide an example to be followed step by step, nor did it show a proposal for closed lessons, not least because the didactic sequence in question was being built during the first semester of 2016, together with the classes involved at the time. It would probably look different today.

Finally, the expectation of the article was to propagate the idea of the body-subject, the one capable of bringing dance as the *pronunciation of the world* (VILELA, 2010), that is, a body-subject that when dancing reveals essential aspects about its interpretations of the world. It seeks to talk to people who are capable of taking risks in order to discover the unpredictable in the creative process; people who are capable of forging a social body-subject, people who are willing to invent ways of not becoming stiff, of not losing the ability to dream and, awake, of contributing to a more favorable picture for education in Brazil. Let's play that we dance until the end.

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Received in May 31, 2023.
Approved in August 22, 2023.

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