

# QUALITATIVE EVALUATION EXERCISES WITH RHYTHM, BODY EXPRESSION AND DANCE IN PHYSICAL EDUCATION TRAINING

*EXERCÍCIOS QUALITATIVOS DE AVALIAÇÃO COM RITMO, EXPRESSÃO CORPORAL E DANÇA NA FORMAÇÃO EM EDUCAÇÃO FÍSICA*

*EJERCICIOS CUALITATIVOS DE EVALUACIÓN CON RITMO, EXPRESIÓN CORPORAL Y DANZA EN LA FORMACIÓN EN EDUCACIÓN FÍSICA*

**Flávio Soares Alves\***

**Keywords:**  
Expression.  
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(Psychology).

**Abstract:** In the disciplines of “Rhythmic and Expressive Activities” and “Dance”, Physical Education college students experience rhythmic and expressive games as well as exercises in sensibilization, musicalization, and creative practice in dance. This article maps the ways we value those intensive practices when evaluating the disciplines, knowing that such practices do not lend themselves to being easily evaluated by quantitative measures. The exercises included: collective works, tutoring in dance, creative processes, art production and performances. By valuing diaries to record those experiences, our evaluative approach focused on the intensities that cross those practices, thus opening a discussion about the effects of those intensities on academic education.

**Palavras chave:**  
Expressão.  
Criatividade.  
Prática (psicologia).

**Resumo:** Nas disciplinas de Atividades Rítmicas e Expressivas e Dança os alunos dos cursos de Educação Física vivenciam jogos rítmicos e expressivos, exercícios de sensibilização, musicalização e práticas de criação em dança. O objetivo deste estudo foi mapear os modos como valorizamos essas práticas intensivas nas avaliações dessas disciplinas, sabendo que tais práticas não se deixam apreender facilmente por registros quantitativos de avaliação. Dentre os exercícios realizados, demarcamos: trabalhos coletivos, monitorias em dança, processos criativos, montagens e apresentações artísticas. Ao valorizar a produção de diários como meio de registro dessas experiências, o olhar avaliativo se concentrou sobre as intensidades que atravessam essas práticas, abrindo um campo de discussões acerca dos efeitos dessas intensidades no âmbito da formação acadêmica.

**Palabras clave:**  
Expresión.  
Creatividad.  
Práctica  
(Psicología).

**Resumen:** En las disciplinas de “Actividades Rítmicas y Expresivas” y “Danza” los estudiantes de los cursos de Educación Física experimentan juegos rítmicos y expresivos, ejercicios de sensibilización, musicalización y prácticas de creación en danza. El objetivo de este estudio fue trazar las formas en que valoramos estas prácticas intensivas en las evaluaciones de estas disciplinas, sabiendo que estas prácticas no se dejan apoderar fácilmente por registros cuantitativos de evaluación. Entre los ejercicios realizados destacamos: trabajos colectivos, monitores en danza, procesos creativos, montajes y presentaciones artísticas. Al valorizar la producción de diarios como instrumento para registrar estas experiencias, la mirada evaluativa se centró en las intensidades que atraviesan estas prácticas, abriendo un espacio de discusión sobre los efectos de esas intensidades en el ámbito de la formación académica.

\*Paulista State University (UNESP).  
Rio Claro, SP, Brazil.  
E-mail: flavio\_alves@rc.unesp.br.

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## 1 INTRODUCTION

In the first semester of Physical Education at Paulista State University's (UNESP) Institute of Biosciences at Rio Claro, the future teacher takes the course of Rhythmic and Expressive Activities, which includes body sensibilization through music education practices, body percussion, exercises with rhymes, nursery rhymes, rhythm, mimic and expressive games, among other activities that exploit children's universe, underscoring the expressive and creative dimension of the movements produced by students.

In the second semester, undergraduate students attend the discipline of Dance, when they have the opportunity to learn, experience and study different dance languages present in different historical and cultural contexts. With those experiences, the discipline of Dance reinforces their opening to sensibilities and enhancement of creativity and body language started in the discipline of Rhythmic and Expressive Activities. Therefore, it provides future teachers with a chance to undergo intensive (playful) experience in training in Physical Education, in a context that is different from that of sports, in which intensity is usually due to competitive game.

In rhythmic and expressive practices and in dance practices there is also "something at play" as Huizinga notes about games (2005, p. 4). That "something at play" is that intensive element which is able to fascinate, excite and engage. Through it, we ascend to artistic experience and the playful exercise of creation and spontaneity, which, in turn, feed rhythmic and expressive interplays and production in dance.

How can we be aware of this intensive element in the evaluations of those disciplines when we know that it does not allow easy understanding by quantitative evaluations? This question gains strength when we consider the context for those disciplines in academic education. Discussions on banking and technicist trends in educational training are not recent. Freire (1975, 1979, 1996) already denounced them in his studies, and the same trends can be felt in the disciplines of Rhythmic and Expressive Activities and Dance when we need to quantify students' performances, often having to follow strict evaluative guidelines that do not focus on processes, since they are only interested in results in their most formal and objective surface.

Nevertheless, rhythmic and expressive games and dance classes are beyond the limits of objectivity as they propose exercising sensitivity, creativity and body expression in the context of artistic production. Such proposals can certainly be systematized, but they remain open because they demand relationships that only happen in practice as processes. And there is no process without student involvement! Thus, the proposals of those disciplines are always extra-propositional because they come as previously proposed structures, waiting for what is to come with body responses created by students in the actual experience of the proposal.

This directly interferes with the evaluation of students' performance in those disciplines. Given the profile of these assumptions, this work aims at mapping the evaluative devices produced in the disciplines of Dance and Rhythmic and Expressive Activities at the Physical Education courses of Paulista State University's (UNESP) Institute of Biosciences at Rio Claro, in the second half of 2013 and the first half of 2014 respectively. We describe the ways in which teachers and students looked at the creative and expressive experience and the recording of those intensive experiences during those courses.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> These disciplines have 60 class/hours each and are offered to 60 students every semester, divided into two groups of 30 students in undergraduate courses in Physical Education at the institution above, for Teachers' and Bachelor Courses.

The first step was to recognize that, in order to enhance the intensive experience and consider a possibility of apprehending it, it was necessary to link the evaluation exercise to the process, that is, to the movement effectively produced during classes throughout the semester. Therefore, we choose process-based evaluation rather than specific records that restrict the evaluation exercise to conceptual apprehensions of the knowledge that was taught.<sup>2</sup> Thus, following the processes, we valued creative and expressive actions forged by students from propositions presented by teachers.

This preference for the process did not go unnoticed by students. One of them said:

[...] I was interested in the evaluation used by the teacher, breaking the taboo that there must be a written test [...] carrying out projects and works, all content of the course is really absorbed by those who attend it. (Diary fragment – student 5).

This text is a sample of what we wanted to achieve by focusing on the process because, rather than conceptual and objective apprehension, we were interested in transforming concepts and implementing projects and works throughout the semester. Therefore, we needed to guarantee different experiences to students, which triggered their learning about rhythm, creativity, dance and expression.

In order to organize that learning and perceive its effects on evaluation, we distinguished the workings of four devices during the disciplines considered here: 1. Self-writing Exercises; 2. Collective Works; 3. Tutoring in Dance; 4. Creative Process, production and artistic presentation.

Collective works, Dance tutoring and the creative process were the strategies where students found elements to develop self-writing. That writing, in turn, recorded classes that allowed written expression of the learning they experienced. We told students to write their diaries (self-writing) at the end of each class, so that, with the experience still “fresh” in memory, their writing would be driven not only by descriptive and ordinal recording of everything that happened, but also by their impression of feelings and senses experienced with practice (ALVES; CARVALHO; DIAS, 2011).

Next, we describe each of those devices, trying to present students’ readings on those devices and discussions generated from texts studied in class.<sup>3</sup>

## 2 SELF-WRITINGS

Today we had our first practical lesson led by a teacher and I confess that it surprised me. At the beginning we were all shy, stuck, and some exercises improved our affectivity, we relaxed a little more, freeing our inner self and letting it speak for itself and expressing itself through our movements. Even with all the difficulty, the class gave

<sup>2</sup> In order to give theoretical, methodological and conceptual support to this evaluative mode, we resorted to Freire’s studies (1975, 1979, 1996). According to that educator, in order to escape from banking and technicist trends in education, we need to discuss knowledge production, leading students to build it critically, creatively and autonomously. Therefore, it is necessary to review, among other pedagogical issues, the evaluation process guided by a reproductivist model. But how can we review that process when education insists in validating quantitative parameters to evaluate learning? It is within this discussion, which seeks creative possibilities to question knowledge in Freire’s way, that we situate our notion of evaluation, giving us strength to build the reflections contained in this article.

<sup>3</sup> As noted throughout this article, we seek to conduct discussions that take into account students’ written records. For ethical reasons, we should inform that the procedure is supported by the research project entitled “Body Practices and Self-invention in Training in Physical Education”. The protocol of that research was approved by the Ethics Committee of Paulista State University’s (UNESP) Institute of Biosciences at Rio Claro, in December 2013. We chose not to disclose the names of authors of written fragments in this article. The 38 participants were numbered (1-38) and written fragments used here can be identified within those numbers. It is important to note that the 60 students involved in the disciplines wrote diaries. However, for this study we considered only the writings of 38 students (20 females and 18 males) who signed the Informed Consent Form (ICF). This term was introduced to students after the end of the disciplines in question to prevent them from seeing participation as a major factor for their evaluation. Finally, it should be informed that the fragments actually recorded in this text were chosen based on their adjustments to discussions generated here. Not all fragments considered were reported here in view the format of this article; however, as much as possible, we tried to use the entire sample by selecting random points in the writings where such “intensity” was evident in the text in question. Such intensity was experienced collectively, therefore much more than “who” wrote it, we were concerned about “how” this intensity was forged in the writing experience.

us joy [...]. That can be an effective way to keep students interested and participating. More than teaching us, the class provoked us! (Diary fragment – Student 9)

The description above was made by a student trying to express in her own words what she felt from the experience lived in class. Note that the writing is related to intensities felt in practice, therefore, it is writing in movement that is not only about a regular record of what happened, but which also allowed itself to be affected by the sensations and meanings experienced in that practice.

In order to compose her writing, the student had to regain what Brikman (1989, p. 14) would call “psychosomatic unity”. According to that author, “psychosomatic unity” puts “movement at the core of the body development process”. Therefore, in movement, the student experiences herself immersed in a field of involvements with her own body experience and, from the center of that immersion, she sees possibilities of relaxing and freeing herself from the prerogatives that prevent her sensitive experience.

In the case of the account above, we noticed that the experience of movement was the element that triggered that release. It also mobilized understanding; writing, in turn, was the strategy with which understanding gave voice to learning.

To support that writing, we resorted to Michel Foucault’s ideas about self-writing. According to him, it is constituted as expressive movement in that it stimulates the “movement of thought” (FOUCAULT, 2006, p. 145).

Self-writings demand following the movements of sensible experience – real experience of involvement with something – allowing oneself to soak in the forces that circulate there. How to proceed when recording self-writings? Following the traces of what affects you and invites you to explore and rediscover yourself, with writing as an expressive vehicle, we return to the account of the student above. Note that her writing is drawn as a map that follows the movements of her experience, so that in-movement understanding was gradually constituted while regulating the focus of the evaluation, attentive to intensities in body experience (ALVES; OAK; DIAS, 2011).

The practice of self-writing allowed us to record other evaluative devices of the discipline. It should be noted that this writing exercise awoke different feelings in students. While some saw that exercise more easily as a space for expression that broadened lived body experience, others saw it as uncomfortable provocation that often prevented them from writing. That did not go unnoticed by students. One of them wrote:

I loved this self-writing evaluation method; some people have trouble writing their own name and since they don’t practice, they are accommodated to sloppiness in writing and that provoked them [...]. (Diary fragment – Student 13)

To encourage writing and avoid blockages, we explained to students that that feeling of discomfort and provocation could also be material to develop written expressions. It was important to accept the challenge of leaving the comfortable position of listeners – which placed students as passive recipients of the learning they experienced – and take over the very process of organizing their learning.

This provocative dimension of writing generated an uncomfortable feeling even to the teacher. Students often saw that exercise as an opportunity to criticize the teacher and his methods in class. We found evidence of that critique in the following records:

The content of these disciplines is somewhat contrary to my liberal and conservative view and I think it contributes to skew students' education, so I don't like this work method adopted by the teacher. (Diary fragment – student 15)

Another student said:

The classes were very repetitive. It was always the same thing: the teacher gave us a proposal and some time [to] build upon that, and then we presented it and discussed it. It even looked like the teacher didn't want to teach! Wasted time! (Diary fragment – student 19)

With the excerpts above we have an idea of the difficulty of reading students' written expressions. It is indeed not easy to see oneself as a target of students' expressions of discomfort; on the other hand, such expressions also favor their expressive development because in one way or another, they are expressions and as such, they record what they feel. In order not to succumb to the tension imprinted on writing, the teacher must assume an attitude of both detachment and attention, which takes into account the context of writing and students' legitimate struggles to express their feelings. Moreover, one cannot but consider that such expressions may be signs of needs unmet by the class and thus they force teachers to diversify their teaching strategies. After all, a dance class should not only work with creativity; it needs to provide elements to stimulate creative work and those elements can also result from a work that is closer to body principles of movement and such attention implies a more specific laboratory exercise.

Therefore, self-writing affects not only students but also teachers by also placing them as apprentices who affect but also let themselves to be affected by all that surrounds them in the educational context, being forced to reinvent themselves according to the purposes they choose, the discipline's objectives, and also the transgressions that drive propositions, forcing them to their limits.

### 3 COLLECTIVE WORK

This working device involved students' ability to remain receptive under the unpredictability of the meetings, that is, the need to respond creatively and collectively to proposals launched. The device was developed especially in the discipline of Rhythmic and Expressive Activities.<sup>4</sup>

As noted above, proposals for working with rhythm and expression are open, given that their direction depends on creative paths forged in teamwork. An example of that openness to creation can be seen in the "Bodies-letter-words" activity, used in one of the classes on research and exploration of body movements. In that activity, students were divided into groups and they were proposed a challenge: to use their own bodies to represent letters that together should form a word. The proposition generated the collective creation work.

How can we represent the letter "P", for example? Which spatial plan is to be used? Does it take more than one person to compose that letter? Who stands up? Who holds it?

<sup>4</sup> To explain the concept of "collective work", we seek support in the studies of Ayoub (2003) and Souza (1997), as part of General Gymnastics and Damiani's (2008) studies on Education. However, much more than demarcating specifics that define how each of those readings faces the notion of "collective work", we seek the common understanding that crosses them, revealing some sort of general rule on this didactic and pedagogical strategy for teaching and learning. Such understanding is related to the creative and experimental character of collective work, which leads to the composition of a space for exchanges made collaboratively between participants of the work in question, who act on behalf of a common purpose. That experimental and creative character keeps focused on knowledge construction, thus reiterating the constructivist vocation of this working strategy.

Where should I put my foot? Therefore, from one question to another, in a process of gradual involvement in the proposal launched, the solution took its course. Creativity gradually defined it, between ideas added and the experience of effectively carrying out the proposed idea in the relationship between the bodies.

When everything seemed to be heading to its outcome, another task was added to that: the group should “act out” the creation of that word made of bodies, that is, to create a presentation that went beyond the mere placement of students in postures invented to represent the word. With that, so many other challenges forced the group to think of possible solutions for the proposal.

Therefore, being involved in the task, students found themselves caught up in the experience of learning from each other.

A student recorded this exercise of collective learning as follows:

It's interesting because you try to avoid those you don't like much or you end up having to touch people you barely talk to. That creates new friendship ties ... it breaks some prejudices. I learned something I always practice: I try to pair with people with difficulty for free creation in order to encourage them. (Diary fragment – Student 23)

This view helps to think that while a definite proposal was at stake – representing words with bodies – the intensities generated with this proposition went far beyond words and solutions engendered. The experience of being with others and creating with them promoted collective sensibilization that allowed establishing other relational levels distinct from those where prejudices and conventions prevail. Amid the tasks, the group got involved, and in that field of involvement, some prejudices were broken by promoting what was engendered in the relationship, as a creating force.

In his work *Difference and Repetition* (2006), Gilles Deleuze launches an idea of learning that is very close to this learning exercise forged among these involvement centers. He says:

We learn nothing from those who say: do it as I do. Our only teachers are those who tell us ‘do with me’ and that instead of proposing gestures to be reproduced, are able to emit signs to be developed in heterogeneity (DELEUZE, 2006, p. 48).

By reading Deleuze it is possible to understand learning as a space to encounter the powers that act on words and gestures – signs – intertwining the subjects who are involved in that encounter to raise them to the plan of actual movements where only in-relation forces transit (Deleuze, 2006, p. 48-49).

Collective experience in creative proposals was the space for encounter where the plan of actual movements was established. We could not touch that plan without resorting to the practice of a “learning with”, which puts learners side by side in the exercise of learning.

The activity known as “Tin drum” provides another example of collective work and the power of that device in the constitution of learnings.

It is a percussive melody consisting of clapping hands and sequenced manipulations of a can on a support.<sup>5</sup> The initial idea of this activity in the discipline of Dance was to recover some learnings constituted in the discipline of Rhythmic and Expressive Activities and perceive possibilities for working with dance by developing that rhythmic activity.

<sup>5</sup> “*Batuque of Latinha*” (Tin beat) was made popular by the children’s musical duo “Palavra cantada” formed by musicians Paul Tatit and Sandra Peres. The duo uses it as a rhythmic base over which they play their song *Fome come*.

The first step was to present some tips and procedures for learning the tin drum. After that, we took some time for students to train together it. This training was developed as a kind of learning lab. It was in that lab that we developed collective work as an evaluative device.

A student thus reported their learning experience in the lab:

At first the experience of the tin drum appeared to be trivial, but it actually taught us a lot, especially about the importance of team work. For example, it took some time for people in our room to figure out a way to train the beat in synch with the speed and rhythm of each person and where we all could keep up with learning, but we eventually managed to establish a reference to dictate a nice rhythm where everyone could practice [...]. (Diary fragment – Student 32)

Another student said:

“What I learned from tin drums was the teamwork spirit, which made me understand that each person has their limitations and their own timing. The activity taught me to listen to others and to know when an idea is better than mine and it will work better in the group”. (Diary fragment – Student 36)

When students see themselves involved in the task of learning the “Tin beat”, they recognized themselves as partners who face the same difficulties and challenges in the quest to learn it. So helping each other in a mutual and reciprocal exchange, learning was improved and that improvement also turned into higher sensitivity to the collective experience of learning that, in turn, favored the exercise of creativity and expression.

#### 4 DANCE TUTORING

This working device has been especially developed in the discipline of Dance and aimed at offering students the opportunity to experience the teacher’s role in tutoring a dance class. Therefore, students had to choose a mode among the various options they experienced along the course and plan and teach a lesson to their classmates.

Along with this work of planning and tutoring in dance, our research work allowed a creative process through which a choreographic production and an artistic performance were established. We will address that creative process and its aesthetic consequences in the next section. For now we are interested in reflecting on tutors’ activities, trying to pay more attention to the ways in which we didactically articulate this evaluative experience from studies and practices conducted in the disciplines in question.

The first step was to offer students as much experience in dance as possible to prepare them for future tutoring. That preparation began at the course of Rhythmic and Expressive Activities where they could experience creativity, musicalization and body sensibilization exercises. These exercises introduced the world of Creative Dance, in which students were able to experience dance beyond the narrow framework of specific dance forms.<sup>6</sup>

Creative Dance was the gateway that allowed certain dissolution of students’ prejudices regarding what they understood about dance. From the support given by that practice, students

<sup>6</sup> According to Marques (2012a, 2012b), Creative Dance is also called Body Expression or Expressive Dance. When it is guided by Labanian references, it can also be called Laban Dance and Laban method. In addition to the specifics of each nomenclature, Creative Dance enables students to create their own dances with their bodies and emotions. It allows and encourages them to experiment, explore and expand their own expressiveness. Therefore, Creative Dance classes develop as a lab space for research and exploration of movement possibilities. The notion of movement research introduced in the context of Creative Dance brought dance closer to Physical Education, drawing the attention of researchers in the area to the importance of the practice for psychomotor development and therefore as a key content in Early Childhood Education (MARQUES, 2012a, 2012b).

could understand that dancing is more than performing steps from ballet, jazz, tap dance, among other specific and culturally defined techniques: dancing also means exploring the possibilities of movement, giving full vent to creativity and body language.<sup>7</sup> To provide concrete (physical) support to that work, students were encouraged to seek the body principles for the exercise of creativity and expression in their own life experiences. Therefore, we resorted to childhood games, sports gestures learned in youth, among other experiences lived by each person in his or her life story. Therefore, students moved on to travel in the universe of dance without prejudice to block their experiment.

That block was imminent and was often expressed by students. One of them recorded the following in his diary:

I dreaded the idea of having to dance. I've never done that! I've always been a sportsman, I'm a gym rat, and I know I'll never work with dance, but I gradually saw that the discipline was interesting and I had a lot to learn from it as a teacher. (Diary fragment – Student 2)

The way we found to dissolve that block was to value creative and experimental exercise typical of dance practices and attempt some more specific experiences such as classes of Break Dance, Circle Dances, Aerobic Dance, principles of Classical Dance, Folkloric Dance, Popular Dances, among others.

Backed by these experiences and didactic principles studied throughout the discipline, students developed their tutoring based on collective work to divide the tasks and organize the intervention. At first, even those who are more used to dance had difficulties in putting themselves in the teacher's shoes and rehearse their conducting and teaching skills in that didactic activity. Regarding those difficulties, a student wrote:

At the end of the semester we had to do dance tutoring for our class. That experience made me feel very uncomfortable, because even though I dance, at that time I was in the position of a student but rather of a teacher, and having to express ideas and explain procedures requires one's constant attention that often leaves us in awe, scared ... I felt the weight of the difficulty but I was gradually feeling comfortable with the situation and did my best. [...] I believe that experience led us to rethink our behavior as students, since it warned us that we will be future teachers, so we needed to value those experiences for they will bring maturity to act as real teachers [...] (Diary fragment – Student 11).

It is important to stress that tutoring was intended to create a lab space properly supported by the teacher in charge. However, much more than the study of didactics in dance teaching, what was at stake was the creative and expressive work interconnected to studies and practice experienced throughout the course, which, in turn, claimed previous experiences from childhood and youth, thus encouraging work with dance.

When students see themselves tutoring an activity involving dance along with their classmates, a space is formed for exchange on technical, linguistic, pedagogical and didactic issues. We knew that such exercise was still superficial and incipient, considering that the students had not even completed one year in their undergraduate studies. However, that practical experience served to alert them about the importance of didactic experiences involving dance, so they will be motivated and confident to work with that particular content when they

<sup>7</sup> Particularly in the disciplines in question, the notion of research on the possibilities of movement was conceptually and theoretically based on the studies of Laban (1978). From that reference, we understand and experience the notion of body research based on experimentation of the qualities that make up effort – strength/weight, time, space and fluency – thus allowing a study focused on movement and its expressive context.



graduate, having their life experiences and what they learned in those disciplines as support for their work with dance.

Such intention did not go unnoticed by students. One of them wrote:

Tutoring in dance was extremely important for our training, because we could experience and reflect on the practice of dance teaching. Doing that as a group was even better because we had the opportunity to discuss pedagogical issues as a group, to see the need for adjustments according to different publics and spaces available. We cannot forget that as undergraduate students we have to get used to the teacher role and practice the stances to be adopted with various students and situations that we'll have to face. And doing this training with tutoring in dance is even better because many of us have never danced, including me, but today I find myself motivated to teach dance thanks to those experiences. (Diary fragment – Student 38)

It is no secret that many professionals who graduated in Physical Education do not work with dance because they do not feel able or motivated to teach that content. That begins to be reaffirmed even before they enter PE school, when they cannot view the wide range of possibilities for their work. Therefore, armed by their experiences in childhood and youth (often reduced to competitive sports practices), students often reserve superficial study for all that escapes such context, for example, work with rhythm, expression and dance.

In this sense, we believe that the disciplines of Rhythmic and Expressive Activities and Dance need to break away from that superficial view that prevails in the area, but that cannot be done only conceptually and reflectively, otherwise it is not completed. Students must feel in their skin the relations that link sport with rhythm, creativity, expression and dance, otherwise they will accommodate as passive recipients of information on rhythm, creativity, dance and expression that, precisely for not having to do with their life stories, mean nothing to them at the time of their training.

Therefore, dance tutoring is a strategy to dissolve prejudice and build reflective approaches with more support in practice. As an effect of those movements triggered by tutoring, students feel more encouraged to work with dance, rhythm, creativity and expression, knowing that such work can have an end in itself – leading to art and aesthetics education of their pupils – or serve as a fundamental condition for their development in sports.

This assumption is related to the principles of learning that lead us to think, for example, about the close relationship between rhythm and movement, in which all movement is seen as potentially rhythmic. Therefore, work with rhythm is not exclusive of dance classes as it also relates to any learning process, which justifies the need to work with rhythm as a prerequisite for sports development (CAMARGO, 1994; FITZGERALD; BUNDY, 1978). The very notion of rhythm can be the starting point for thinking about the relationship between rhythm, dance, creativity and expression. Finally, the theoretical and conceptual framework that legitimizes approximations between these practices and sports initiation emerges from those interconnections.

## 5 CREATIVE PROCESS AND CHOREOGRAPHIC PRODUCTION

This evaluation device was developed in the discipline of Dance and, as already noted, was linked to the exercise of tutoring, being an aesthetic projection of those didactic experiences with dance.

The groups formed for tutoring had to choose a theme that would serve as a focus to provide a choreographic production and an artistic performance. Several themes were chosen, among which we highlight: Olympic Games, Domestic Violence, Body Awareness, Brazilian Rock, Rhythm and Movement, Physical Education. Each group chose their subject from their own research interests and there was no interference of the teacher in that choice.

Between thematic choice and choreographic performance there was a long period of nearly three months, when, together with the activities of the discipline (studies and practical experiences), there was research, i. e. a process of intense study, involvement and development of students on the topic chosen. We call this research exercise *creative process* and we address it in this section.

By engaging with this creative process in dance tutoring, we created a laboratory space where students were able to test movements, to appropriate steps, to transgress them, and to reinvent them according to the ways in which each group understood (and felt) the theme chosen, building a version of it in the language of movements. Thus, students were able to collectivize those body experiences and mature their studies about the chosen topic. As an effect of that process, the practice of choreographic production was facilitated as body studies gave directions and directions to their compositions.

Therefore, what was at stake in tutoring was much more than apprehending and conveying coded steps and predefined choreographic structures. It is true that, in order to start operationalizing that device, the students had to choose a specific type of dance, so that they would have a starting point to develop their tutoring and their creative works, but when they got involved with planning lessons and the process of choreographic creation, they saw possibilities of adapting the coded gestures of those modalities in the way established by students themselves in relationships they established with the chosen mode.

However, reaching that understanding about tutoring was not an easy task! We had to strive to guide the work of the groups. For that, we presented a model class that students could use if they felt the need to. In that model, we divided the production class into the following “moments”:

- Moments of preparation and dissolution of everyday perception – work with stretching, breathing, relaxation, massage, concentration exercises, among other strategies that seek to prepare and introduce the body to the practical class;
- Technical and expressive moment – rhythmic work involving the technical universe chosen by the group. Example 1: working with capoeira elements allows exploring movements close to the ground (medium and low level), and working with fight/combat movements (defense that goes towards the attack, traumatizing attacks, etc.; Example 2: work with classical ballet elements: that expressive repertoire allows the exploitation of movement in static balance, “pivots”, “pirouettes”, jumps, etc.);
- Moment of Improvisation Games – playful exercises performed individually, in pairs or in groups, to explore technical work done in the previous technical-expressive moment;
- Choreographic fragments – using the tune chosen for the presentation (or any other tune), teach the class a sequence of steps (which may be the same as the choreography produced for the performance), which should be memorized and performed by participating students;
- Closing – moment for closing the class using stretching and relaxation techniques or other activities devised by the group.

Beyond this structure, we reiterated the need for students to adapt and transform these moments according to their interests and specially to ideas about the theme chosen for the choreographic production. With that, we strengthened the intertwining between the didactic exercise of producing tutoring and the lab-based and creative exercise of choreographic production. Still, the difficulty persisted for those who understood the dance class as a space to reproduce coded steps. This difficulty did not go unnoticed by students and one of them wrote:

Class planning, along with the process of choreographic creation, made me understand that dancing is not limited to types of dances and choreographed steps. Teaching a dance class while having to think not only about steps, but also about relations with the theme chosen means having to make room for the resourcefulness, innovation, improvisation, because without that we didn't know how to adapt the steps according to the different situations performed by the group. (Diary fragment – Student 6)

The difficulty in going beyond mere transmission of steps seems to indicate some resistance on the notion of the class as a laboratory space for researching and exploring the possibilities of movement. In effect, the notion of class is far from the notion of process, but ability to adapt, openness to “innovation”, and “improvisation” allowed other understandings of the notion of class and its role in choreographic preparation and production. It was precisely there, in that openness to transgressions arising from relationships of students with their chosen theme that we were able to appreciate the creative process and keep our concern and evaluative look towards the movements constituted in the process.

## 6 ARTISTIC PERFORMANCE AND REFLECTIONS ON TRAINING

By valuing written accounts resulting from collective works, from dance tutoring, from the creative processes and choreographic productions, we caused a shift in the evaluative perspective towards intensive movements experienced in classes of Rhythmic and Expressive Activities and Dance. Thus, studies, surveys and proposals experienced in the disciplines in question worked as devices<sup>8</sup> and as such, they resonated beyond the inevitable trend to quantify students' performances, forcing of specific knowledge in those disciplines to adjust to students' ways to related to those learned skills and ascribed them meanings by getting involved with them in the experiences of creation and expression.

The performances of artistic works (choreographies) derived from that intense involvement with the contents in question are examples of this shift in evaluative perspective suggested here in which mobilizations triggered in performances were at stake, much more than the presentation itself. Such mobilizations were projected beyond stages, revealing much broader scopes that go beyond performance quantification. What were those scopes? To get a sense of them, we turn to students' written records:

The experience on stage was magical! I was very anxious to present the choreography that took us so much effort to produce, but after the performance I felt kind of weird, as if I missed something. Of course I felt some relief and a sense of accomplishment, but also the desire to do different, to change one thing here and there [...] (Diary fragment – Student 17).

<sup>8</sup> The notion of “device” taken here is based on Foucault's (2006) reading on that concept. According to the author, devices are networks of relationships established between heterogeneous elements that play a strategic role. That function resonates beyond the functional framing in which they operate, thus forcing the adjustment of the forces at play according to meanings forged in the relations in question.

Another student said:

I felt naked on stage! It's amazing how we feel exposed up there, everyone's looking at you, well, you can't hide that. The eyes of the audience invade you without any restriction. If you make a mistake in the choreography, there is always someone who sees it and if they don't, you know that it was wrong and that's enough to further increase your anxiety and sense of exposure. [...] This made me think of teachers' roles, because they are also exposed to students [...] and one day we will also be teachers. We will expose ideas in front of students and we need to master the content we teach, but knowing the content is not enough. Teaching also requires courage [...] that was the big learning I learned about being on a stage. (Diary fragment – Student 13).

The excerpts above give an idea of the immeasurable value ascribed to the experience of artistic performance. Of course there was grading involved (0-10), but beyond that dimension that can be measured, the stage moment led students to get involved with the mobilizations triggered by that experience of full exposure and performance. These mobilizations were recorded in diaries as expressive projections, that is, as an effort of invention in the field of writing about learnings experienced in practice. Thus, in addition to disciplinary framing, those written records resonated throughout a broader scope, affecting academic training and ultimately the constitution of subjectivities.

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