

Contributions to the process of (re)signification of school Physical Education: dimensions of popular games, dance, body language and gymnastics

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Abstract: This paper presents didactic and pedagogical reflections on physical education based on the core "movement in expression and rhythm", proposed by Oliveira (2004). These reflections involve conceptual aspects, field of knowledge and methodological guidelines to treat the following knowledges: popular games, dance, body language and gymnastics. The purpose of this theoretical approach is to propose motions that can support the teacher's work, urging him to dialogue with his rhythmic-expressive knowledge and, consequently, with its materialization in every day life at school.

Keywords: Elementary Education. Knowledge. Physical Education. Games and toys.

1 INTRODUÇÃO

Eu vi o menino correndo, eu vi o tempo
'I saw the boy running, I saw the time'
Brincando ao redor do caminho daquele
menino [...]
'Playing around the path of that boy [...]'
Caetano Veloso

(Re)signify physical education does not necessarily mean to make it new, as if the old and current ways did not

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have their merits and their intervening characteristics. It means to bring attention to knowledges that are still relegated to the margins of the school system, which are popular games, dance, body language, gymnastics, among other manifestations of culture. It is in this sense that physical education needs to be constantly thought in the school context, in a dynamics that will translate into changes and professional commitment to the area.

As a way of contributing with a dimension of a knowledge sometimes overlooked by an almost overbearing power of cognitive rationality, the study seeks to bring clarifications in the production in physical education, in the access to systematized knowledge, in the aesthetic-expressive cultural practices to be discussed and in the very knowledge of the core "the movement in expression and rhythm"¹. The intention is to establish a dialogue with the teacher that operates in a school, so that he develops a knowledge of the culture that can go beyond the practice of sport, giving another meaning/significance to the student's life.

Because the rhythmic and expressive manifestations are many, the text in question focuses on just a few of them so as to facilitate reflection. We chose to treat popular games, dance, body language and gymnastics because these are a more direct part of our investigative incursions and professional activities. This knowledge will be addressed in what is considered a priority in teaching practice, such as history, aesthetic-expressive and rhythmic abilities, the relationship of knowledge with a single/multiple, dialogical man. Such considerations about the cultural manifestations are not isolated, but relate to one another continuously, and are marked by thin dividing lines. It is this characteristic that leads us to a simultaneous approach of these, sometimes interdependent, contents.

¹ The core "movement in expression and rhythm" is linked to the proposal developed by Oliveira (2004) for school physical education, and will be explained along the text.

Far from being ready, the study contains analyses that are open to other communication processes. It is the result of our professional experiences as well as of research and extension projects in schools. We thus expect that these incursions may promote reflections, concerns and instigate change. Let new challenges be brought daily to the teacher's pedagogical action, as liveliness is required to be wary of the bleeding obvious, to seek the unusual and to build a distinguished practice in school physical education.

2 PRODUCTION AND ACCESS TO SYSTEMATIZED KNOWLEDGE IN SCHOOL PHYSICAL EDUCATION

The production of knowledge in physical education is a historical complex phenomenon, that has an intimate relationship with the political and social contexts. Its construction reflects the knowledge gained by the action of man in the world by means of appropriating and relating to it. Having as a starting point the assimilation and reworking of knowledge, instruments of action are built for the concrete social practice. The need of socialization of institutionalized knowledge and its reappropriation by the society that produced it leads individuals to recover its scientific core, its objectivity and universality in order to build a social reality desirable and better for everyone.

The acquisition of knowledge considered necessary for humanity (of universal meaning)², in its institutionalized form, has its place in the classic school. Nevertheless, it is essential that the reworking of knowledge promotes human emancipation, which in fact does not always happen. This is because the choice and treatment of different backgrounds can happen in antagonistic forms, reflecting the epistemological

² Conhecimento universal é aquele transmitido nas escolas e em outros espaços de intervenção de maneira institucionalizada, entendendo que existem outros conhecimentos que são passados de gerações em gerações, assistematicamente, sendo consagrados por diferentes culturas.

direction of pedagogical practice. A brief example is from physical education, when the teacher sees in human movement just a simple and automated mechanical gesture, or when he perceives it as an artistic expression, free, creative, sensitive and subjective.

When we chose this approach, our concern was in not deplete the knowledge, given that this would perpetuate social inequalities and lead to a lack of knowledge of the man proper. It is essential to avoid the inertia of knowledge, and lead the student to acquire a position in which he can make knowledge meaningful to himself and to society. "That is the reason for some to claim that education be considered as a dialectical relationship between the student and the environment"³ (Kelly, 1981, p. 71).

The educational process, sustained by the transmission of ready knowledge, disconnected from the reality of the student, becomes limited, offering no possibility of significant changes, preventing severance with an inhumane civilizing process. Access to accumulated universal knowledge is necessary for students to take ownership of it and to establish a relationship with their individual and collective existence.

Education, in an emancipatory perspective, may allow moments in which the student recognizes values, experiences responsibility, cooperation, respect, solidarity, among other things, helping him to participate in the social organization in which he lives, starting with the acquisition of knowledge that prioritizes a better life within his social nucleus. Knowledge developed within a pedagogical practice, in most cases, must be linked to the students' social and concrete reality, so that it is meaningful to them, so that there is conscious assimilation. They should also be a classic knowledge that does not object to what is most modern, that follow the advance of technology and science, both nationally and internationally (Soares et al., 1992).

³ "É essa a razão de ser das reivindicações no sentido de que a educação seja considerada como um relacionamento dialético entre o aluno e o ambiente"

Even though we knew it would be impossible to provide all the knowledge related to the culture of movement in school physical education, we understand that some of them need to be developed and, preferably, in a transversal, spiraled way. As Cortella (2000) contends, although we work with the specificities of an area (which can not be reduced owing to its sheer size), other dimensions (aesthetic, ethical, religious, emotional) are present in the student's everyday life, especially in the knowledge to be treated.

Like any area of knowledge, physical education has specificities and welcomes the production of movement culture, which translates into knowledge and, more specifically, into content organized in a pedagogical way in the school. Among the classic manifestations of the culture of movement that make up the roll of knowledge of school Physical Education are the popular games, dance, gymnastics and body language, which can lead to valuable body experiences, as long as its inclusion in the school favors the view that these practices have cultural significance and that new forms of experimentation, in comparison with the traditional ones, will enable the student to give his own meaning to his gestural field and perceive himself as an agent in the world.

The fragmented knowledge, unrelated to other areas, should be replaced by a manner capable of grasping the complexity, a set that effect the school environment. In this context, so that the teacher may act satisfactorily to uncover the real contradictions in educational practice, it is necessary that his knowledge have a critical theoretical referencial. It is necessary that the teachers have technical expertise combined with political commitment and that the educational process be not a previous time, but the very engagement. It is not enough that the students just cognize an act or event, it is necessary to analyze it, criticize it, assign it an updated meaning.

Ultimately, we believe that the act of teaching can be both enriching and repressing; it depends on the position that the teacher assumes in his treatment of knowledge. Therefore,

we must break with authoritarian relations and move towards a pedagogical practice that allows our students to develop autonomy, that make them concious of their critical capacity, that help them to study, research and know what to do with the knowledge they acquire.

In addition to its educational role, warns Pepper (2002), knowledge can lead the student to a contextualized action, as long as this knowledge is related to their daily lives. The student will then (re)signify it and at the same time be (re)signified by it. The teacher's role is to provide opportunities for analysis so that the student understand the historical, social and cultural contexts and understand himself as a social worker. Hence the importance of choosing well the knowledge to be treated in school physical education. One must take responsibility to ensure students access to different knowledges, including the aesthetic-expressive ones, so as to cause a change that lead to (re)signification in school physical education.

3 PHYSICAL EDUCATION AND CULTURAL PRACTICES

Much of the knowledge brought about by physical education is directly linked to playful, revelrous, dancing, expressive and gymnic cultural manifestations that arise as ways of understanding the man and as a means of education. Such understanding is based on a physical education committed to human development, based on dialogic actions, in which the elements of the culture of the movement are valued as knowledge of the school routine.

We understand cultural practices as manifestations that have historically been conceived as part of the production of men in society, revealing of their knowledge and forms of communication. In physical education, these cultural practices take shape by the gestuality manifested in games, sports, dance, gymnastics, wrestling and playing, which is what best characterizes our professional field.

Addressing the popular games, dance, body language and gymnastics does not only bear on their technical aspects but also on their interrelationship with the various fields of knowledge. The focus of these demonstrations by historical, sociological, anthropological, philosophical and biological bias, among other things, is necessary not as a means of linking to these areas, but, above all, because we believe that they give the necessary contribution to an educational practice perceived in its complexity.

Although we depart from the understanding that the object is always more than the concept, since any definition does not encompass all what it really means, attempts are made in order to guide the pedagogical action. The approach is thus dynamic, flexible and temporally situated, necessary to clarify what we call singing games, dance, body language and gymnastics. Sometimes the concepts draw near each other, considering we're talking about events related to the rhythmic and expressive field.

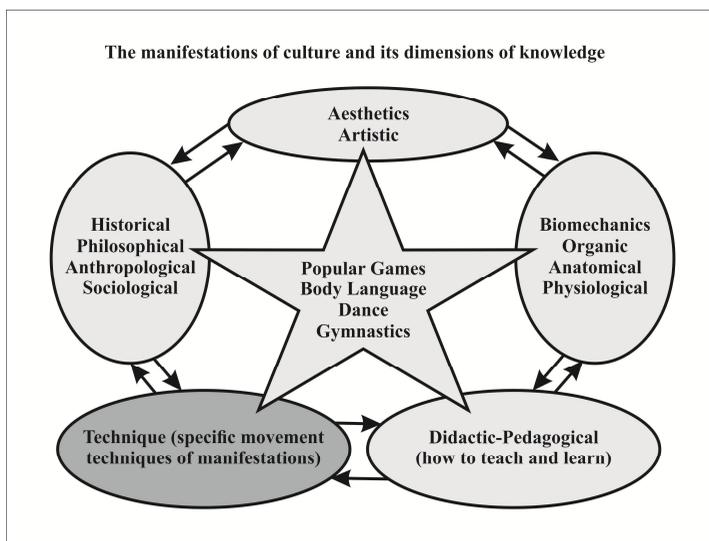


Figure 1. The manifestations of culture and its dimensions of knowledge

The popular games, as we understand, are playful forms of expression of different cultures, largely characterized by the presence of singing, gesture, circle games, rhythm, competition, vertigo, luck and/or mime. Transmitted across generations, they show popular wisdom, beliefs, collective imagination, are not directly linked to the dictates of the culture industry.

To recognize in popular culture manifestations a way of circumventing the advances of the cultural industry is a possibility of an educational action committed to the person being formed. As Zuin (1999, p. 1) noted,

the essence of the concept of cultural industries not only remains current, as is also relevant, especially to investigate the psychological mechanisms determined by social relationships that require the universalization of semi-formation, and why not say, of our damaged education.⁴

The work in the school with games like cat and mouse, hopscotch, “lenço atrás” (handkerchief behind), “ciranda”, slaves of Job, “balança caixão” (swing coffin), “pula carniça” (jump carrion), among other games, is a way of valuing human cultural diversity, of highlighting its gestural, musical, rhythmic, historical, social, creative and expressive aspects. This popular collection contributes to the expansion of the students’ corporeal techniques, promotes group learning experiences, cooperation and coexistence with the other, respect and learning of the culture in which they are inserted.

Many ways to play with the body have something of dance, gymnastics, capoeira. Hence the established interconnections, in which a manifestation is paramount to the embodiment of the other. As with other terms of culture, to define dance is complex. We can understand it as a

⁴ a essência do conceito de indústria cultural não só permanece atual, como também é relevante, sobretudo para a investigação dos mecanismos psicológicos determinados pelas relações sociais que exigem a universalização da semiformação e, por que não dizer, da nossa educação danificada.

manifestation of culture that turns to poetry of movement and its relation with technique, form and content, whose foundation is the aesthetic-expressive, historical-cultural and educational knowledge.

In the educational context, it is essential to think of dance from the links it establishes and the social transformations that originated it. Characterized by new relationships between people, dispelling prejudices and taboos about the body, the twentieth century revealed the diversity of cultural expressions that we know (street dance, jazz, ballet, modern and contemporary dance, ballroom dance, African-Brazilian popular/folk dance, among other dances). And thus were created other forms of manifestations known as dance, the result of the transformation of old corporeal practices or resulting from the contemporary needs of a new man.

These various existing languages do not come without problems. Garaudy (1980, p. 179) adds that, in this society, human movement is exploited by economic and political forces in that it is integrated into the competition, the profit and the violence of the system. In this gear, dance could not play any role, nor receive encouragement. "If it does not agree to be fun, a consumable pleasure, not only will it become marginalized but also a suspect because it proposes a different model of human development, a promise of other possibilities which question this lifestyle in its entirety."⁵ It is that dance that is not subject to marketing issues nor becomes pure fun that we prioritize in the educational environment.

The development of dance is not disconnected from the body language. Although not synonymous, since each manifestation has its specificities, they complement each other and sometimes, they (con)fuse spontaneously and systematically. Conceptually, we understand the body

⁵ "Se não aceita ser um divertimento, um prazer consumível, não apenas será marginalizada como se torna suspeita porque propõe um outro modelo de desenvolvimento humano, uma promessa de outros possíveis que põem em questão esse estilo de vida em sua totalidade"

language as an area that enhances the communicative gestures of individuals through literacy of the body, revealing feelings, desires, thoughts, and that raises awareness of actions, postures and gestures.

Body language reveals epochs. In each historical period man expressed himself differently, extolling or rejecting his body and his feelings. As a field with its own knowledge and systematized technique, body language is the result of contemporary society, and contributes to criticize alienating ways of gesture reproduction in various areas of knowledge. "Body language appears as a way of questioning the ideology and methods of physical education. Of opening a dimension capable of counteracting the primacy of competition"⁶ (PUJADE-RENAUD, 1990, p. 79).

Although there is body language in all our actions – in religion, work, social life – we focus, more specifically, on the intentional expression, crafted in many forms of dance, theater, gymnastics, or materialized as a field of knowledge in itself, that is, as the content of school physical education, undergraduate, graduate and extension courses subject, among others. This body language seeks to transform a simple gesture into an artistic form, with communicative power, valued in the interaction with others, even if in a non-linear and abstract language. It highlights what would go unnoticed and gives life to scenes that in everyday life would be common. Based on the need to break away from being banal, repetitious, empty of meaning/significance, the body language becomes a priority in various educational and cultural events.

Thinking of the endless possibilities of using the body in its expressive form we turn to gymnastics. Historically, we can say that the gymnastics (gymnic methods) and the modern school were born practically together, with characteristics typical of the bourgeois and the European society of the

⁶ "A expressão corporal aparece como um meio de questionar a ideologia e os métodos da educação física. De abrir uma dimensão suscetível de contrabalançar a primazia da competição."

eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The education of the body starts to happen in the bourgeois society through gymnastics, systematized between the years 1800 and 1900. According to Ayoub (2003, p. 32) there begins

the configuration of a gesture inherent to the gymnastics, the gymnastic gesture, whose meanings are supported in science and technology, as well as in the principles of order and discipline dictated by the bourgeoisie.⁷

The gymnastic methods, which appeared in Europe, were implanted in Brazil in a similar manner. Their insertion in the different educational institutions took place with the same scientific linkages of their origin, strongly influenced by physical and biological sciences, which are the predominant content in the Brazilian school until the fortieth of the last century.

Gymnastics, which is a classical and a contemporary knowledge, understood as a cultural manifestation that combines technical and expressive elements in the art of experimenting with the body, has been given many meanings throughout history, and in our days, is characterized by various gymnastic manifestations - competitiveness, physical conditioning, physical therapy, body awareness and demonstration (SOUZA, 1997). These are present in various sectors of society and have different purposes according to their many facets. Thus, access to gymnastics is the right of every citizen because, in conjunction with other areas, it can help students to participate in building a positive reality for themselves and for all.

The cultural practices exemplified above will be discussed in their pedagogical character in physical education, and will be thought of in their theoretical articulation by means of the core "movement in expression and rhythm".

⁷ a configuração de uma gestualidade própria da ginástica, o *gesto gímnico*, cujos significados estão apoiados na ciência e na técnica, assim como nos princípios de ordem e disciplina ditados pela burguesia.

4 MOVEMENT IN EXPRESSION AND RHYTHM IN SCHOOL PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Understanding popular games, dance, body language and gymnastics as manifestations of human culture production, we seeked paths that lead us to treat them, especially in school physical education. Based on the characteristics of the body literacy, consciousness and sensibility awakening, creation, aesthetic- expressive potential, diversity of body techniques and rhythmic work, we can organize them into a core, taking as an example the classification proposed by Oliveira (2004).

The author, aiming to contribute to school physical education, suggests four organizational cores of knowledge: a) movement under construction and structuring; b) movement in the recreational and sporting events; c) movement and health; d) movement in expression and rhythm. It is precisely in this last core that popular games, dance, gymnastics and body language are inserted.

In general, we can understand the core "movement in expression and rhythm" as one that aims to awaken the student's access to expressive-aesthetic knowledge through awareness of his own body, causing him to experience various physical techniques of different modalities, and as the social-historical dimension, which leads him to realize how these practices are part of human cultural production. In a society marked by the exacerbation of cognitive and technical-instrumental rationality, by the mechanization of life, this core has a role in the context of physical education, especially because it is a way of breaking the existing social patterns, causing the individual to perceive himself as an integrated whole.

To identify ways to address the knowledge in this core, we make some suggestions on how it can be thought of and systematized in school. They are guidelines that try to help the teacher in his planning. It is important to highlight the fact that

that these ways of thinking of physical education are only possible ways, not the only ones. It is up to the teacher to envision the possible ways to treat the knowledge, to expand his theoretical basis and substantiate his pedagogical practice in order to manage his work with physical education, in the best possible way, using the reality that surrounds him.

Having as reference a study by Barbosa Rinaldi (2004), whose knowledge of gymnastics was achieved through research with higher education faculty who possess gymnastic knowledge, we will make some notes on the treatment on this knowledge on various cultural manifestations. Because the research is about a rhythmical and expressive practice, such approach can be applied to other manifestations of culture, such as popular games, dance and body language. Some guidelines shown in Table 1 also result from suggestions given by Lara (2003) about the core "movement in expression and rhythm."

Popular games, dance, body language and gymnastics in school: treating this knowledge
1. Overview of how cultural manifestations are today (what they consists of).
2. Historical, cultural and social knowledge of the manifestations.
3. Understanding the cultural manifestations in the epistemological context of education and physical education.
4. Concepts of the various cultural manifestations.
5. Knowledge about the body (cultural, anato-mo-physiological, social, biomechanical).
6. Basic gestural forms that characterize the different basic techniques of bodily manifestations.
7. Methodological possibilities of treating cultural manifestations.
8. Techniques of movement associated with manifestations with respect to time and space.
9. Knowledge about the processes of sensibilization, trial and creation for the development of cultural manifestations.
10. Knowledge of rhythmic foundations and their relationships with different musical styles.
11. Possibilities for intervention in the education sector on behalf of cultural manifestations.
12. Educational, artistic and scientific aspects of the cultural manifestations.
13. The dialogicity between the various manifestations of culture.

Table 1. Rhythmic-expressive knowledges for school Physical Education.

Popular games, dance, body language and gymnastics can be treated jointly during lectures, or treated individually. With respect to popular games, it is relevant that teacher and students collectively construct them, that they think about what these games are, why they are called “popular”, and try to map those that fully belong to the core “movement in expression and rhythm”.

In a list of games like “lenço atrás”, cat and mouse, “ciranda” and “caranguejo” (crab), it is possible to identify those that respond more directly to a rhythmic and expressive work, and those that aim at other aspects such as competitiveness, vertigo or chance, within the classification proposed by Caillois (1986). “Lenço atrás” and cat and mouse, for example, are popular games that prioritize competition, but also work rhythm and fantasy. However, in games like ciranda and “caranguejo”, the simulacrum is the most obvious aspect, not competition. Mimicry (simulation, fantasy) is their focus. Games like “pirulito que bate-bate” (lollipop that hits-hits), “ponte da vinhaça” (bridge of vinasse), “Terezinha de Jesus” (Therese of Jesus), “a linda rosa juvenil” (the beautiful, young rose), “pombinha branca” (white dove), “mocinhas da Europa” (girls of Europe), follow the same logic.

What is interesting about working with popular games is the development of the research with the students. We start with what they know and what they can learn through books, magazines, internet, friends, family etc. With respect to the core “movement in expression and rhythm” we prioritize the games that focus on simulacrum, rhythm and expression, and let the students distinguish the goals of a game from another. Moreover, reinventing a game by running it in different ways using their own creative ability is crucial in the educational activity, regardless of the fact that the modification lie on the organization, melody, rhythm, history, or another aspect.

In terms of knowledge of dance, it is necessary to discuss with students what the term means, what dance is,

what types of dance exist, how they appeared historically, why people dance, what their purposes and characteristics are, what the meaning/significance of these expressions is for different civilizations, among other things. Such reflections help us organize an overview of how dance is organized, which facilitates the critical analysis of this cultural manifestation in its many nuances, and how it becomes a possible field of action for physical education teachers.

When we think of dance, we cannot ignore the processes of sensibilization, trial and creation related to the preparation of the body for the plurality of the existing manifestations. We have to raise awareness of the student's body's own rhythm as well as raise their awareness of the rhythm of things, of nature, of society (cars, appliances, natural sounds and culturally produced sounds, percussion instruments, among other things). It is necessary to raise awareness of the breath, of the body's senses (sight, smell, hearing, touch, taste) and the various existing rhythms (strong and weak beats, fast and slow paced music, tempo). Thus, while one is sensitized, one gains awareness of the bodily possibilities through experimentation of different feelings and gestures, with one's own body, with another's body, with or without objects (cans, plates bottles, tambourines). Zotovici's (1999) studies contribute to the understanding of these processes in dance.

The exploration of movement, having as a starting point time, space, weight and fluency, according to Laban's (1990) studies, as well as the actions of pressing, floating, twisting up, slaping, slipping, cutting the air, among others, is a way of preparing the body for its creative and non-reproductive potential. Then, the ability of the student to design and construct a choreography is awakened by the many possible combinations, and he can choose a different sound to break away from standards set by the media, which only accentuate the impoverishment of music.

The indiscriminate use of dance in physical education is discussed by Sborquia and Gallardo (2002), who call attention to the fact that not all manifestations should be worked with. They establish ethical and moral criteria that can guide this selection, and suggested the following classification: representative dancing (portray the mythic-religious aspect and customs of a social group), sensory dances (linked to musical interpretation, which transmit sensations and feelings through gesture), sensual dances (subtly represent, by the look and the body posture, a search for partners), sexual dances (a search for a sex partner, in a direct way, while disguising the gesture corresponding to the act), erotic dances (represent the explicit will of copulation, showing feelings of love or passion) and pornographic dances (which mimic the sexual act, either with a partner or an object, for commercial purposes, causing excitement and enhancing sexual desire). The authors understand that erotic and pornographic dances are inconsistent with the educational environment, but it is the teacher's role to explain these dances to the students.

Although that classification does not adequately group all the dances in the categories they established, especially because the classification depends rather on how to dance than on the dance itself, it is one more element that can be taken into consideration when we think about the formation process. It is thus the teacher's task to elucidate this selection, making the student recognize why to prioritize certain cultural dances. Dances shown in the media, whose educational character is impoverished, should be discussed, thus sharpening the students' perception and their ability to critically analyze them.

Even if a selection of dances for the school environment is complex, given that it is more important how each manifestation will be treated educationally than the selection itself, we understand that popular/folk dances, ballroom dances, modern/ contemporary dance, street dance, among other dances, are interesting means of working because of their aesthetic-expressive dimension. This is because, depending on how they are treated, these dances favor the

expansion of the students' gestural and cultural possibilities and encourage reflections and critiques about these manifestations in contemporary society.

The popular/folk dance, which are collectively accepted and are not directly linked to the cultural industry, can be studied by being observed in local cultures, and one must focus on the particularities of each community in the different Brazilian regions and in other places in the world. They represent the understanding of cultural differences among various locations, differences that can be found in festivals, food, legends, music, clothing, enabling other ways of alphabetizing. Thus, to experience the choreographic aspects or the typical gesture of a particular manifestation and its meaning/significance to the community is one of the needs of the educational act.

Unlike the popular/folk dances, which are collective, ballroom dance, characterized by an accurate body technique (higher demand in terms of gestures), is usually danced in pairs. Its constitution, due to the moment of transformation of the court dances, happened gradually, until we get to the rhythms known today - waltz, bolero, tango, merengue, forro, and others. The historical aspects which arise from investigations by Lessa, Cortes (1975) represent contributions to the perception of this historical trajectory. Such dances should not be worked devoid of historicity that permeates them and of the culture representative of each country. That is, how to approach tango without mentioning the Argentine culture? How can we talk of samba and forro and not talk about Brazil? How can we discuss salsa and not approach Cuban culture?

Although the rhythm (music and dance) arise in a specific country, they become globalized when taken to and disseminated in other cultures. In teaching this modality in schools, the most important thing is not the technique itself (even though it is taken into consideration), but situate these manifestations in their cultural diversity. The rhythms to be

worked with depend on the educational objectives, school grades, local reality and the teachers' and students' responsibility in this selection. Such precautions are necessary as a way of avoiding a single approach to mass rhythms and to technique for the sake of technique, which compromise the educational act.

An example of a dance that branched into other countries is street dance. It appeared in American ghettos in the sixtieth decade of the twentieth century, this dance gradually anchored on Brazilian soil. The dance, with strong gesture, intense rhythm and defiant lyrics of struggle and protest, gains strength from joint actions through a cultural movement known as Hip-Hop. Because of its casual, acrobatic, creative and highly rhythmic characteristics, street dance is a manifestation to be developed in physical education. The songs' lyrics focus on injustices, fears, prejudices, marginality, dreams and come from the students' reality and from their needs to experience gestures.

Closely linked to the need to experience gestures that break away from stereotyped patterns of movement, the contemporary dance is treated by some scholars in the school context as "education-dance" (*dança-educação*), educational dance, creative dance, among other denominations. Besides these possibilities of definition, the very understanding of contemporary dance is not consensual, and today it can be seen asonymous with modern dance or treated differently from their historical context.

Regardless of the terms used, the most important thing is to prioritize the work as a corporal manifestation, rich in diversity of movements and themes, with critical and reflective potential, which escapes the banality of the gesture in contemporary times. Among its characteristics are the appropriation of everyday topics, the concern in not denying anything to itself, the lack of cultural and stylistic boundaries, the heterogeneity of the dancing body as well as simultaneous foci (multiple scenes).

These characteristics make this kind of expression one of the richest expressions to be developed in the educational context, inasmuch as it does not discriminate the less skilful, but prioritizes the differences. The songs do not have a mass character and are portrayed by the silence, by body rhythms, by various drums and is not trivial.

It is true that other dancing manifestations can be developed in schools, as classical ballet, jazz, belly dancing, African-Brazilian dance, among others. However, it is important to explain the educational objectives resulting of this work: it's an attempt to ensure not only a diversity of manifestations, but, notably, the quality of the approaches. The teacher does not have to master all the dances, as it is a Homeric task. His role is to act as a mediator so that the student can gain access to knowledge, changing, transforming, intervening and learning what is relevant to his training. It is necessary that the teacher give the student the opportunity to differentiate one dance from another, to know its history and its body techniques. This can be done through a set of actions, like value the dancing experiences of the students, invite professionals who work with different arrangements to go to the school, take students to places where dancing manifestations are held (gyms, theaters, public spaces, etc), encourage research through books, magazines, newspapers and online sources, give them access to movies and documentaries that treat the issue.

Regarding body language, one must ensure that students understand its meaning/significance and know how daily expression can be worked and transformed into artistic expression, something out of the routine. We suggest experiments that enhance the representation of sensations and feelings (joy/sorrow, pain, nervousness, calmness, agitation, etc); imitation of things, animals and people; mimicry (expression of ideas through gestures); representation of everyday, historic, real or fictitious characters; stimulation of the bodily senses (auditory, visual, tactile, olfactory and

gustatory); create something using topic generators (poems, movies, music, news) and other representations.

It should be noted that the work of bodily expression should lead the student to express his feelings, to overcome his limitations of gestures and his timidity, which hinders any form of communication. To accomplish this, we can employ games using bodily expression, which will facilitate the student involvement in a playful manner; we can teach how to develop a specific theme (picnic, movie, Greek gift, night at the circus); we can say words for a group to discover; show different sound effects, and more.

The research on the subject, the discussion of a particular theme, the creation of a character, do laboratories that will help build and consolidate a given character are some of the educational possibilities. We can use silence, music, different sounds (instruments, objects, papers, body percussion etc). Some suggestions in this regard is found in Stokoe and Harf (1987) and in Fassina, Pereyra and scene (2002). The body language, in this rational society, should be widely discussed as a major theme of the educational process.

Regarding gymnastics, the historical issues (how it appears, what is its purpose, what is its role in the history of physical education, what are the trends that permeate this manifestation, what is its critical potential) are some of the knowledges to be explored. We can also explore the basic forms of movement (walking, running, jumping, rolling, climbing etc) resorting to rhythmic variations and noise, to the diversity of situations created by the students. Objects constructed by the students (swings, walking stilts, fabric tunnels) or objects that exist in the school (ladder, tires, balls, rope) are means to address the various gymnic forms in contemporary gymnastics such as rhythmic gymnastics, artistic gymnastics, acrobatic gymnastics and general gymnastics.

Rhythmic gymnastics (RG) is a competitive mode that requires the use of equipment. It is associated with music and

with a gesture of its own, and possesses total and flowing movements. Historically, it came from the field of entertainment, from the use of the body as entertainment/spectacle in the streets, public squares, fairs, circuses, and in particular, from the realm of manipulative movements (juggling). Its role in physical education should not be one that focuses only on the techniques as seen in the high performance sports, but rather one that leads the student to understand this manifestation of culture through the exploration of gesture and its meanings. To accomplish this, official/traditional devices can be used, and also materials made by the students, like strings of paper lined with paper tape, PVC bows, balls of newsprint or socks, or apples made with plastic bottle and a piece of wood, strips and tapes of cloth or crepe.

Themes that provoke reflection, analysis and criticism can help treat rhythmic gymnastics at school. Among them we can mention: the standardization and aesthetic of the RG (body posture, among other things) movements; the characteristics of this manifestation as a female and male sport; the patterns of the body of this modality as a high performance sport; the (non) policy for sports development in the country; the search for a concept of a RG that allow the participation of all.

Another gimnic manifestation that can be crafted in school is the acrobatic gymnastics, presented by the FIG (2005) as being a sport that works with individual and collective acrobatic elements of extreme difficulty, in perfect harmony and timing. Another important fact is that this sport is different from other gimnic sports because of lack of equipment. Practitioners of this sport have space to develop courage, strength, flexibility, cooperation and mutual assistance. This is because the gymnast is the foundation that ensures and promotes the acrobatic figures.

It is noteworthy that the experimentation of this kind of gymnastics in school can happen in different spaces, and because it does not require the use of materials, it contributes

significantly to the enrichment of social relations. Working with the acrobatics can and should emphasize the human formation, considering that it does not require a high level performance from students. The dependence of each other in team gymnastics generates liability in the community relationship.

The discussion of artistic gymnastics as knowledge of school physical education refers essentially to the importance of this knowledge as well as the creation of job opportunities in schools. An easy way to understand this modality of gymnastics is understand its historical construction. It came from the field of entertainment, from the use of the body as entertainment/spectacle in the streets, public squares, fairs, circuses, essentially, from free acrobatics and devices. We thus realize that its fundamental core movements arised from the necessity of man's daily movement (walking, running, jumping, etc) as well as from the gestures that break the patterns of common movements (inversions around a longitudinal axis, jobs that require the use of excessive strength, elasticity and agility).

Although there are many possible gymnic manifestations to be developed in school, we perceive general gymnastics as a special form of education. General gymnastics usually precedes competitive gymnastics, and according to Smith (1999), it is a successful (re)signification of the first gymnic manifestation, which can be seen in the bold gestures of the acrobats, in the joy of the equilibrists and the children's play. It merges different kinds of gymnastics, dance, theater, capoeira, elements from the circus, among other things, and is explored by collective experiences with or without the use of materials. Moreover, it can be reconstructed from the knowledge inscribed in popular culture, in philosophical knowledge, in artistic knowledge and in scientific knowledge. Treatment of general gymnastics should emphasize the participation of all students, respect the limits of each student, privilege different strenghts and respect the subjectivity of the gesture. We turn our attention to the development of an

inclusive, democratic general gymnastics, allowing knowledge and production of gymnastic knowledge in all its dimensions, which can lead the student to a distinguished human formation.

The gymnastics manifestations mentioned above present, beyond the technical aspect, the educational and cultural potential value of the gestural field. In this sense, awareness, experimentation and creation, which were suggested for dance, also arise as an overriding need for the work with gymnastics. Some suggestions of how to develop this knowledge in school can be found in Barbosa-Rinaldi (2004).

The work with the selected body practices for this text demands the student's awareness of notions of rhythm, breathing techniques, body expression, recognition of his gestural limitations and his creative potential. It also implies he master its socio-historical, aesthetic, biological and anthropological foundations, among other things.

Through popular games, dance, body language and gymnastics, the body is taken to try all kinds of movements in their variations in time, space, weight and fluency, in several possible combinations, and is driven to create, analyze, criticize, compose, organize the individual/collective gesture and express itself. Thanks to knowledge of the body, the diversity of manifestations is explored. The focus is not only on what is being worked regionally, but above all, on the valuing of the expressions that become globalized due to a need for collective communication.

5 FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

The approach to the issues relating to the process of (re)signification of school physical education that we intended with this text reflects on the production of knowledge in the area, the possibility of access to systematized knowledge, the

aesthetic-expressive cultural practices and the core "movement in expression and rhythm". This attempt sought, however, several incursions in the knowledge that the area offers, but focused on the knowledge that belongs to the rhythmic and expressive dimension, given that this field of rationality/sensibility is still little explored in the school context. We had not exactly intended to present a systematic work of this knowledge, but rather look for possible paths to treat the manifestations presented here, thus aiming to contributing to teaching.

The production of knowledge in physical education was discussed as a complex phenomenon that materializes through the social action of men who had investigative and existential needs. The access to this production is a way to ensure, by democratic means, that educators and learners will know and (re)signify the various kinds of knowledge.

The aesthetic-expressive cultural practices were treated by means of popular games, dance, body expression and gymnastics because they offer a vast wealth to be developed in physical education classes, but are not dully recognized and addressed in the school. A look into the core "movement in expression and rhythm " tried to satisfy the interest in the perception of aesthetic-expressive bodily practices in their relations of autonomy and dependence, in their mediation/interaction capacity, opening possibilities for the teacher to identify their peculiarities and realize their tenuous limits.

We understand that the (re)signification of physical education is urgent based on the premise that education, as highlighted by Hermann (2005, p. 110), has several paths to follow, and its structure "should not prioritize what is strictly rational, but rather give expression to the various forms of creative activity."⁸ The constitution of the human being is given by the plurality of experiences and openness to the

⁸ "não deve priorizar o estritamente racional, mas, ao contrário, dar expressão às diferentes formas de atividades criadoras"

world and to the other, and the aesthetic experience has assumed a sense eminently educational. It is thinking about the possibility of a subject being formed, who has the potential for an ethical, aesthetic, autonomous sensible/rational and emancipatory action that we envisage treating school physical education.

Understanding the core "movement in rhythm in expression" entails that the physical education teacher pay attention to the need to contemplate it in his teaching, exploring knowledges that sometimes become mere appendages of the educational process. This is due, in large part, to several factors, among which the society's disbelief in the knowledge that focus on the aesthetic-expressive rationality, the teacher 's lack of experience in this area (which makes him feel incapable of working with it), the idea of a physical education focused on sports and competition, and the resistance of the students to knowledges which are not conveyed to them as culturally essencial. Therefore, initiatives that aim at increasing awareness of the diversity of knowledge and contributing with their effective action in school physical education has its merits and its transformative power.

Contribuições ao processo de (re)significação da Educação Física escolar: dimensões das brincadeiras populares, da dança, da expressão corporal e da ginástica

Resumo: Este texto visa apresentar reflexões didático-pedagógicas para a educação física escolar a partir do núcleo "o movimento em expressão e ritmo", proposto por Oliveira (2004). Tais reflexões envolvem aspectos conceituais, campo de conhecimento e orientações metodológicas para o trato com os seguintes saberes: brincadeiras populares, dança, expressão corporal e ginástica. O intuito dessa abordagem teórica é propor encaminhamentos que possam subsidiar o trabalho do professor, instigando-o ao diálogo com os conhecimentos rítmico-expressivos e, conseqüentemente, com sua materialização no cotidiano escolar.

Palavras-chave: Educação fundamental. Conhecimento. Educação Física. Jogos e brinquedos.

Contribuciones al proceso de (re)significación de la Educación Física escolar: dimensiones de los juegos populares, de la danza, de la expresión corporal y de la gimnasia

Resumen: Este texto presenta reflexiones didáctico-pedagógicas para la educación física escolar a partir del núcleo “el movimiento en expresión y ritmo”, propuesto por Oliveira (2004). Tales reflexiones involucran aspectos conceptuales, campo de conocimiento y orientaciones metodológicas para el tratamiento de los siguientes saberes: juegos populares, danza, expresión corporal y gimnasia. La intención de ese acercamiento teórico es proponer direcciones que subvencionen el trabajo del profesor, de modo que el haga diálogo con los conocimientos rítmico-expresivos y, por consiguiente, con su materialización en el cotidiano escolar.

Palabras clave: Educación primaria. Conocimiento. Educación Física. Juego e implementos de juego.

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