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Dancing Bodies at School: Dialogues between Performative Education and the Bakhtinian Perspective / *Corpos dançantes na escola: diálogos entre a educação performativa e a perspectiva bakhtiniana*

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ABSTRACT

This article proposes a dialogue between performative education and the Bakhtinian perspective based on reflections on the dancing body as a transformative force in/of/about the school. In understanding the communication of the body as a materiality of the individual consciousness that enunciates infinite dialogic chains through dancing, it is essential to conceive movement as a sign text, filled with voices that can be read and interpreted. By investigating basic assumptions of performative education in a dialogical approach to a body that enunciates through dancing (danced-utterance), this strictly theoretical article seeks to point out possible paths to (re)think practices regarding the communication and expression of the body at school.

KEYWORDS: Dance; Body; Performative education; Bakhtin and the Circle

RESUMO

O presente artigo propõe um diálogo entre a educação performativa e a perspectiva bakhtiniana, a partir de reflexões sobre o corpo dançante como potência transformadora na/da/sobre a escola. Ao se compreender a comunicação do corpo como materialidade da consciência individual que, ao dançar enuncia por cadeias dialógicas infinitas, é imprescindível conceber o movimento como texto sígnico, carregado de vozes passíveis de leitura e interpretação. Ao investigar pressupostos de base da educação performativa em relação com uma abordagem dialógica de um corpo que enuncia dançando (enunciado-dançado), este ensaio, de cunho estritamente teórico, busca apontar possíveis caminhos para (re)pensar as práticas a respeito de formas de comunicação e expressão do corpo na escola.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: Dança; Corpo; Educação performativa; Bakhtin e o Círculo

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Introduction

This article proposes a dialogue between performative education¹ and Bakhtinian studies to reflect on the voice of the dancing bodies as a transformative force of the school space. Theoretical-methodological contributions from different fields are approximated in a dialogue of correlated areas, enabling their confrontation and the recognition of their limits, in order to expand the discussion on the potential of the body at school, especially for dancing in Art classes.

This work is based on the understanding that research on performance in education needs to expand and broaden their scope of studies to approach current and emerging issues, such as school, teacher's training, curriculum, and the like (GONÇALVES; PEREIRA, 2018).

Bakhtin (1986)² claims that the object of research in Humanities can only be the man – who is not a phenomenon, but a social being, who speaks, communicates and expresses himself during his constitution as a subject, which occurs through the crevices of otherness. Consequently, it is only possible to reach man and do research in the Humanities through the sign texts created by him, his works and his acts. This study assumes that by looking at the subject and his social interactions (in this case as a student-dancer by means of his danced-utterances), the social voices that dialogically constitute him are perceived.

It is noteworthy that this study does not intend to limit performance to the field of art, and it also understands that the performative acts in/of/about the school can eventually unfold into theatricalities to be explored artistically by the body. It is believed that the relationship between performance and art-education under the light of the dialogic theory enables students to re-signify the school, its social constructions, its daily behavior and rituals, among others, in a great celebration of sense renewal.

¹ Several terms are used in reference to performative education, among which “performative pedagogy,” “critical-performative pedagogy” and “performance studies in education” are the most recurrent. In this article, performative education was chosen due to the large scope of the theme for researches in the field of Education: it is not reduced to pedagogical aspects, but it is articulated by different perspectives and research approaches.

² Bakhtin, M. *Toward a Methodology for the Human Sciences*. In: Bakhtin, M. *Speech Genres and Other Late Essays*. Mikhail Bakhtin. Edited by Caryl Emerson and Michael Holquist; translated by Vern W. McGee. Austin, TX: Texas University Press, 1986, pp.159-172.

1 Performative Education: Basic Assumptions

The school space is constantly transformed by the dynamics of its subjects, imposing the most varied forms of organization, which, according to McLaren (1991),³ are named rituals. School rituals endure or wither away in accordance to the various behaviors of teachers, students, staff members, and the school community. It is through the numerous transactions of daily school life that it becomes possible to notice the performance of the subjects of these realities through their actions.

The routine of these school-bodies is surrounded by a number of events that institutionalize them. One example is the ringing of the bell that marks and rules the chronological time of each class. School-bodies move when they hear the bell and start new conversations in the short time between the exchange of teachers. The sound invokes new duties, other ways of organizing the materials, and the rules for the new fraction of minutes to be followed.

Certainly, the school routine is filled with various moments, but the ones highlighted here are the day-to-day rituals since they condition the ways of behaving and acting in educational institutions and control what may or may not be done (MCLAREN, 1991).⁴ The critical experience of different social roles enables us to (re)think conditioned actions and to search for means to effectively act upon them, reinforce them, or even question them.

Performative education understands the body and its education as subject to new meanings. It understands them as language, as a singular and active process carried out by students.

By paying attention not only to what the body does in the classroom, but to the meanings and social values that respond to this body, performative pedagogy can intervene in the educational rituals about which we do not think. The classroom can be transformed into what Ernst Boyer called the social and self-renewal scenario (1994), in which teachers and students can rehearse more equitable, involved, and passionate ways of being and behaving (PINEAU, 2010, p.104, our translation).⁵

³ McLAREN, P. *Schooling as a Ritual Performance: Towards a Political Economy of Educational Symbols and Gestures*. Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 1999.

⁴ For reference, see footnote 3.

⁵ In the original: “Ao prestar atenção não apenas ao que o corpo faz em sala de aula, mas a que significados e valores sociais responde esse corpo, a pedagogia performativa pode intervir nos rituais da *Bakhtiniana*, São Paulo, 14 (3): 139-159, July/Sept. 2019. 141

Thinking the body and its social values means recognizing its expressive value, thus creating methodological strategies capable of giving voice to these students' bodies. It also creates spaces for collective bodies that perform in their social roles, are aware of their reality, and become able to actively interfere in it.

Performance demands a displacement from product to productivity and, similarly, from metaphor to methodology. It is no coincidence, therefore, that most of the material and significant innovations in performative pedagogy came from communication and performance educators to whom incarnating is no theoretical abstraction; it is the heart of our practice in the classroom (PINEAU, 2010, p.103; our translation).⁶

Therefore, in performative education the word *performance* carries a different connotation from most popular meanings. The artistic aspects and the notions of development and/or execution do not contemplate performance in the educational field. Neither does it mean performing as an actor, in the traditional sense of the word, in the roles of teachers or students. It embraces them as social roles that act – whether consciously or not – in the school.

Thinking performance in education becomes a methodological path to be explored, and its borders allow dialogues with different contexts. The non-fixation of performative education to a single form of expression makes it mobile and accessible to various fields of knowledge.

Nevertheless, students' bodies are also seen as protagonists of interaction with the school space. This means that the school environment can and must be understood through them, within them, for it is in the body that sensations and learning take place. Performing, in this case, constitutes a possibility of an active stance, building new dialogues between body, space, and school.

escolarização sobre os quais não pensamos. A sala de aula pode se transformar naquilo que Ernst Boyer chamou de cenário de renovação do eu e do social (1994), de tal forma que professores e estudantes possam ensaiar modos mais equitativos, envolvidos e passionais de ser e comportar-se.”

⁶ In the original: “A performance demanda um deslocamento do produto à produtividade e, de igual modo, da metáfora à metodologia. Não é coincidência, pois, que a maioria das inovações materiais e significativas na pedagogia performativa tenha vindo de educadores da comunicação e da performance para os quais encarnar não é nenhuma abstração teórica; é o coração de nossa prática em sala de aula.”

Regarding body and performance, Gonçalves (2016, p.75) indicates that:

The body is the main object of performance speculation. By it and through it meanings of historical, social and cultural order are synthesized, which can be analyzed by Performance Studies in their relation with space and time, always seen in this process as the fullness of presence and the possibility of experimentation (our translation).⁷

It is within the body and through the body that performance gains voice, and through it students can articulate their actions in a responsive and active manner. Performance studies in education act as tools for thinking social relations, identities, discourses, aesthetics and other forms of human expression and communication.

Therefore, thinking the body at school, and separately, body and school, gives rise to an intrinsic relationship with the idea of body movement. After all, moving requires more than a desk: it requires a broad interaction with space. Besides, it needs to handle the physical, and perhaps moral, structures of the school, bound to power relations that are crystallized in the routine of school life and that define good and bad behavior, usually associated to an aesthetic of non-movement.

As a result, students who do not run, do not act, do not interfere or who barely speak certainly are, in this crystallized vision, the good students; on the other hand, any unusual action must be corrected and prevented as soon as possible, as it characterizes the bad students (RANGEL, 1996).

That is a common view of the body's action regarding the use of classroom spaces. This format focuses attention on the teacher, immobilizes the student as long as possible, and avoids dispersion through the ranks that organize learners one after the other, such as factory workers put in their places.

There is no place for body movement; on the contrary, school authorities reject movement and intuitively reprehend the act of moving. Although they are aware that "the body is the vehicle through which the individual expresses himself, the movement of the human body within the school is restricted to specific moments, such as physical

⁷ In the original: "É o corpo o objeto principal de especulação da performance. Por ele e por meio dele sintetizam-se significações de ordem histórica, social e cultural que podem, pelas vias dos Estudos da Performance, serem analisadas na sua relação com o espaço e com o tempo, sempre consideradas, nesse processo, a plenitude da presença e a possibilidade de experimentação."

education classes and recess” (STRAZZACAPPA, 2001, our translation).⁸ Defending the presence of movement in the school, the author emphasizes that:

In the various classroom activities, the child should remain seated in his chair, in silence, and look straight forward. On this respect, Ciro Giordano Bruni affirms that “it has become almost a rule to establish a pitiful distinction between art and science: the first one is learned in a playful manner and the second, in a serious and embarrassing way.” His critique focuses not only on the absence of playfulness in the scientific disciplines of the school, but also on the lack of seriousness in the artistic disciplines, a behavior that tends to accentuate the view that art teaching is superfluous (STRAZZACAPPA, 2001, p.3).⁹

Consequently, the conditions to which one’s body is subjected at school are highlighted in a methodological strategy that not only corrupts free expression but also makes students stiffen during the practices that promote movement.

Moreover, even if the performance in the field of education should not be restricted to the analysis of an artistic construction, it is noted that it is possible to approximate the assumptions of performative education to the teaching of dance in the school sphere. This is because this art is intended to question, interfere, and problematize the body and its space.

In Elementary education, “the research processes and artistic production of dance focus on what occurs in and through the body, discussing and (re)signifying relations between corporeality and aesthetic production” (BRAZIL, 2018, p.193).¹⁰ It is estimated that, by dancing, students are invited to imagine, express themselves through movement, articulate cognitive processes with sensitive experiences, and add meaning to their experiences.

In the current physical-organizational structure of schools, there is little space for students to perform and little attention is given to the relationship between body and

⁸ In the original: “o corpo é o veículo através do qual o indivíduo se expressa, o movimento corporal humano acaba ficando dentro da escola, restrito a momentos precisos como as aulas de educação física e o horário do recreio.”

⁹ In the original: “Nas demais atividades em sala, a criança deve permanecer sentada em sua cadeira, em silêncio e olhando para a frente. Ciro Giordano Bruni afirmava a esse respeito que “virou quase regra estabelecer entre a arte e a ciência uma lastimável distinção: a primeira se aprende como uma atividade lúdica e a segunda, de uma maneira séria e constrangedora. Sua crítica não se fixa apenas na questão da ausência do lúdico nas disciplinas científicas da escola, mas também na ausência de seriedade nas disciplinas artísticas, comportamento que tende a acentuar a visão de que o ensino de arte é supérfluo.”

¹⁰ In the original: “os processos de investigação e produção artística da dança centram-se naquilo que ocorre no e pelo corpo, discutindo e (re)significando relações entre corporeidade e produção estética.”

movement. Even Art classes can succumb to the grinding reality to which schools are subjected. Both the lack of resources and the current school system, which is not dissociated from traditionalist social imaginaries of teachers and students, weaken the desire to know and recognize contents related to dancing, oftentimes barely articulated with the context in which they are produced (GARBARDO JUNIOR; MAÇANEIRO, 2016).

It is noted, then, that it is possible to combine the fields of art and performance in order to problematize that reality. By performing in/about the school, the body can establish dialogues with education itself, thus defending movement as a thinking and responsive form of communication and expression.

Accordingly, by having students reflect upon the school culture, their rites and signs and allowing their bodies to encounter infinite possibilities of moving, new feelings of belonging to this space as well as confrontations and different positions become possible. After all, to perform is to act, and to act means to actively position oneself in the world and to interact with, contribute to, interfere in it.

It is not about solving problems or proposing a methodology that is ready to work with the performance's body in art classes. It is about affecting relationships between subjects, (re)establishing possible relationships between body and space, awakening other repertoires and themes for creation in dance.

Paraphrasing Azanha (1990-1991), it is within the classrooms that the fate of educational policies and reforms is decided. Thus, the pedagogical processes that seek to implement new ways of teaching and learning can modify crystallized structures in the school culture. Performing them through conscious bodily practices can create new meanings for both the teacher and the student. Besides, in this teacher-student and/or student-teacher relationship, it can make ways to (re)interpret, (re)learn and (re)act (to) new forms of social production at school, in the bodily and performative interaction of the subjects.

2 Bakhtinian Perspective: The Danced-Utterance

Dancing, as an artistic language, can turn the school atmosphere into a differentiated place of learning. It allows the fruition, reflection, sensitization and

activation of the body, integrally developing the students. After all, “bodies that know themselves have great possibilities to establish differentiated dialogues with the others, the environment, and the world” (MARQUES, 2010a, p.206, our translation).¹¹

As we reflect on the art of dancing through the dialogical perspective, we note that the body is capable of communicating, because movement expresses sign texts, constituted by perceptions of a subject, of what moves inside and outside him, which is susceptible to reading, interpretation, and comprehension (CASTILHO 2016).

In this regard, it is essential to highlight the issue of meaning and its ideological signs and the dialogic theory so as to understand the enunciative and authorial phenomenon of the body discussed in this text. Ideology is a notion used to designate the universe of products of the “human spirit,” which encompasses the forms of social consciousness: ethics, art, philosophy, politics – the immaterial culture. Ideological products rise from social reality, and in assigning meaning to it, a sign is formed. It is an object, image or word coated with meanings from the interaction between subjects; that is, it is endowed with symbolism (BRAIT, 2005).

The ideological domain coincides with the domain of signs because they are mutually correspondent. In other words, wherever there is a sign, there is also its ideological nature with its semiotic value. The very individual consciousness is formed based on such a semiotic system, which emerges through social interaction, impregnating itself with ideology - a system of intelligible signs among the participants (VOLOŠINOV, 1973).¹²

The individual consciousness acquires form through signs, created in social relations. They are the sustenance of its development, which eventually reflects its own logic and laws. If it is deprived of its semiotic content, which is also ideological, no sense remains (VOLOŠINOV, 1973).¹³

Dialogism is the foundation of language in the Bakhtinian perspective, because life is dialogical in nature. Based on Brait and Magalhães (2014), it is possible to affirm that, inextricably linked to interaction, dialogism is the basis of the process of discourse

¹¹ In the original: “corpos que se conhecem têm grandes possibilidades de estabelecer diálogos diferenciados com os outros, com o meio e com o mundo.”

¹² VOLOŠINOV, V. *Marxism and the Philosophy of Language*. Translated by Landislav Matejka and I. R. Titunik. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1973.

¹³ For reference, see footnote 12.

production, since, for the construction of utterances, the subject takes the other into account as an active interlocutor.

In the dialogical theory, the subject is not the origin of his utterance, because he does not enunciate something with a meaning that originates in itself or that is produced only in the exact moment of communication, in the present, as entirely new, unique or strictly particular. One's utterances are part of a continuous network of interaction between the self and the other(s) as every utterance is immersed in the infinite chain of discursive communication.

Therefore, the constitutive otherness of the subjects is foregrounded since, according to Amorim (2009), in the Bakhtinian perspective the other is a reference, the condition for the existence of the self. Otherness is a constitutive relation, immanent of social relations and present in the most varied manifestations of language. It is realized in the multiplicity of voices that intersect in the discursive phenomenon (BRAIT, 2005).

Otherness and the very principle of dialogism imply the crossing of voices in a space and at a time that are socially and historically constituted. There is not only an 'I'; there is, in fact, a 'we.' The human being does not exist for itself, but only as he is for the other (BAKHTIN, 1993).¹⁴ The interaction between I-other-others allows the unfolding, the multiplication of voices. Dialogism and otherness define the subject, and it is not possible to conceive the Being separated from the relationships that constitute him. In other words, the subject's particular utterances are not so particular. They are a set, a plurality of voices formed by the dialogic constitution of the subject in society.

Then, assuming that movement is the utterance of the body and based on the notions of dialogism and otherness from the Bakhtinian perspective, it is possible to understand movement as constituted by a network of dialogic relations with the movements of others in a continuous "chain of movements," already existing in the world (CASTILHO, 2016).

To make a dance performance, the subject appropriates gestures and theatricalities filled with meanings from the society that surrounds him. His movements only seem to be exclusively his, belonging just to himself, but they are part of the echoes of movements that constitute him both as a subject and as a participant of situations of interaction (GONÇALVES; CASTILHO, 2016).

¹⁴ BAKHTIN, M. *Toward a Philosophy of the Act*. Translated by Vadim Liapunov; edited by Vadim Liapunov and Michael Holquist. Austin, TX: Texas University Press, 1993.

Bringing that discussion into the Education field, under the Bakhtinian perspective, it is possible to affirm that the students' movements during artistic experiences do not occur abruptly and involuntarily. They are utterances impregnated with meanings of the dialogical enunciation of the body, produced through otherness, because the body also communicates in infinite dialogic chains through dancing (CASTILHO, 2016).

In Art classes, it is estimated that students interact with other bodies and other movements in a creative, active, dialogical way. What would seem to be a simple movement enunciated by a single subject, is, in fact, a plurality of movements.

This way, in understanding students' movements as their utterances, this article relies on the notion of danced-utterance, from Castilho (2016), according to whom the body does not speak, nor moves in separate moments – it does not move in order to speak; neither does it speak in order to move. While dancing, the student, in the instant of his action, speaks, produces meanings and constructs sign texts. Therefore, the hyphen from 'danced-utterance' better organizes the proposed notion and forms a binomial.

To better understand danced-utterance, it is important to highlight that utterance here is closer to the concept of text, which is considered both an organized fabric of information and an object of communication of a culture, to which meaning depends on the sphere where it is. Texts are configured as concrete utterances and as discursive, social and historical objects that can be materialized in several forms of expression. This is because material incarnation is the presupposition of every phenomenon that functions as an ideological sign – sounds, and physical masses, such as color and body movements (VOLOŠINOV, 1973).¹⁵

Dancing at school holds the status of an artistic text loaded with voices that produce new meanings through the movements of a dancing body. However, it is not any act of dancing that provides students with the opportunity to express their voice in the world and achieve the transcendent potential of the body in motion. “The methodological propositions, the teaching paths – the ‘how’ of teaching and learning –

¹⁵ For reference, see footnote 12.

are decisive in the processes of education and transformation” (MARQUES, 2010a, p.138, our translation).¹⁶

The freedom that dancing provides should not be synonymous to moving for the sake of movement, to a recreational action of a simple leisure and superficial nature; rather, it ought to problematize actions in a ‘doing-thinking’ manner in order to become a sensitizing experience and to produce meanings. In this sense, Marques (2010a) claims that it achieves the dimension of Art – the place of re-signification, transcendence, and eventually transformation.

For a long time, school teachers have limited their classes to the copy and reproduction of dance moves and steps, of repetitive and mechanized rehearsals for school presentations, not making it possible for students to be autonomous and produce knowledge, thus making them repeat practices deprived of authorship. However, it is precisely the authorial creative capacity that ought to underlie Art classes.

Notwithstanding, such practices are bound to the teachers’ vision – their horizon – of how the artist-teacher conducts the experiences of/with/about the movement, activating or silencing students’ bodies, encouraging them (or not) to seek transformation in the dimension of art.

Marques (2010a) refers to transformation as the creative and sensitive processes inherent to art, the connection between students and the “networks and plots of dialogues between dance/art/the world” (p.122; our translation).¹⁷ It is a phenomenon that “allows the transit between knowledge, multiple dialogues, the reordering flows of time and social spaces that are lived, perceived and imagined in/by the dancing bodies,” thus allowing the dancers to re-signify their works, their actions in the world, their existence (MARQUES, 2010a, p.222; our translation).¹⁸

Marques (2010b) argues that due to convenience or ingenuity, many art-educators still prioritize recreational dance activities that focus only on entertainment, with no in-depth discussion or criticism, and rehearsals for folk dances, devoid of any creative processes. They only provide students with a limited experience with dancing

¹⁶ In the original: “As propostas metodológicas, os caminhos e as trajetórias de ensino – o ‘como’ se ensina e se aprende – são determinantes nos processos de educação e transformação.”

¹⁷ In the original: “redes e tramas dos diálogos entre dança/arte/mundo.”

¹⁸ In the original: “possibilita o trânsito entre conhecimentos, múltiplos diálogos, fluxos de reordenação de tempos e espaços sociais vividos, percebidos e imaginados nos/pelos corpos que dançam.”

and do not allow students to sensitize, imagine or distinguish orbits inside and outside themselves.

Therefore, it is necessary for art-educators to promote teaching methodologies that allow a close relationship between students and this area of knowledge. This helps them to research in/about the body, to interact, through movement, with their classmates, with space, society, and to create actions, scenes, and expressions. In other words, this helps the production of danced-utterances, i.e., bodily-enunciative actions, artistic texts, through which students re-signify multiple senses, the multiple voices that ‘traverse’ them.

Therefore, dancing in the school system based on the idea of danced-utterances within the sphere of art implicates the issue of authorship. For Bakhtin, an “author” authors utterances and artistic works. In the Circle, the notion of authorship is amplified: authorship is produced through interlocution, a movement mediated by relations of otherness (GONÇALVES; CASTILHO, 2016).

Bakhtin claims that any text has a subject who is set as its author and that this ‘owner’ has inalienable rights over it. The author, for Bakhtin (1990)¹⁹ holds a position of responsibility to existence as an event. As the author operates with moments of events, his work also configures as the moment of an event. In this relationship of creation, there are voices in the text that are distant, near or anonymous at times.

The author of his art is seen “as an aesthetic-formal position whose basic characteristic is to materialize a certain axiological relationship with the hero and his world [...]” (FARACO, 2005, p.38; our translation).²⁰ Hence, he selects compositional forms of his productions and the universe of values that constitutes his aesthetic object. This defines the artist under an ethical point of view.

This author is responsible for his life and for what he reveals in his art. Although art and life are not the same, they cannot be separated for aesthetic appraisal. The author-as-creator is “a refracted and refracting position” (FARACO, 2005, p.39; our translation).²¹

¹⁹ BAKHTIN, M. Author and hero in aesthetic activity. In: BAKHTIN, M. *Art and Answerability: Early Philosophical Essays*. Edited by Michael Holquist and Valdim Liapunov; translated by Valdim Liapunov. Austin, TX: Texas University Press, 1990. pp.4-255.

²⁰ In the original: “como uma posição estético-formal cuja característica básica está em materializar uma certa relação axiológica com o herói e seu mundo [...]”

²¹ In the original: “uma posição refratada e refratante.”

The Bakhtinian perspective argues that the subject in the act of creation produces characters and objects that are carriers of meanings, which are configured as his other self. The author places himself out of his character, his intimacy, and assigns meaning to his fictional environment where an aesthetic force that allows the author to relate to the character intersubjectively exists (VOLOŠINOV, 1973).²²

As a result, the teaching of dancing in the school that contemplates the production of danced-utterances by students and fosters their authorial potential towards the transcendence of art demands that the teachers create intentional experiences through which students construct networks of open and transient relationships of understanding and participation in social spheres (CASTILHO, 2018).

For the teaching and learning processes to reach full potential, it is necessary to find ways to connect the contents of dance with students' daily lives, with their social and historical universe. This is because in the universe of relationships, "the multiple meanings that we internalize and share, and that give sense to our existence in the intertwining of social networks, are built" (MARQUES, 2010a, p.134).²³ These multiple networks are found in the art of dance.

Human experiences, objects, social situations are already impregnated with multiple meanings attributed to them culturally and socially, in floating times and spaces, by diverse contexts. Each one of us is a web of socially constructed meaningful landscapes; therefore, we circulate concepts, elaborations, understandings and choices in dialogues with social dynamics. [...] "Impregnation" happens as we critically relate with others, with objects and with the environment within the social fabric. Educator Roseli Fontana (2000), based on the theories of the Russian thinker Mikhail Bakhtin, argues that the production of meanings only takes place in the dynamics of interactions, in dialogue. Relationships, rather than unilateral attitudes, permeate our lives, our routines (MARQUES, 2010a, p.28).²⁴

²² For reference, see footnote 12.

²³ In the original: "são constituídos os múltiplos sentidos que internalizamos e compartilhamos e que revestem de sentidos nossa existência, no entrelaçamento das redes sociais."

²⁴ In the original: "As vivências humanas, os objetos, as situações sociais já são impregnados de múltiplos sentidos atribuídos a eles cultural e socialmente, em tempos e espaços flutuantes, por contextos diversos e diversificados. Cada um de nós é uma trama de paisagens significativas construídas socialmente e, por isso, por nós circulam conceitos, elaborações, compreensões e escolhas em diálogos com as dinâmicas sociais. [...] A "impregnação" acontece à medida que nos relacionamos de forma crítica com os outros, com os objetos e com o meio nas tramas sociais. A educadora Roseli Fontana (2000), apoiada nas teorias do pensador russo Mikhail Bakhtin, defende que a produção dos sentidos só tem lugar nas dinâmicas das interações, na dialogia. São, portanto, as relações – e não as atitudes unilaterais – que impregnam de sentidos nossas vidas, nossos cotidianos."

It is essential to allow students to enunciate themselves in several ways in the school context so they can produce texts of various natures, including through the body, producing danced-utterances. In this manner, the totality of the student is contemplated, as a subject constituted by ideological signs, aesthetic and political preferences, muscles, actions, affections, bones and skin. Dance classes must stimulate the student to move dialogically and autonomously, in a full relationship with himself and the other(s), conferring the protagonist role on the student. This way, his voice is placed in the world as an author (CASTILHO, 2018).

In the search for a dialogical and transformative education, contemplating the body in the artistic dimension and enabling the development of danced-utterances becomes a student's right. The Art teacher carries the responsibility to actuate students in an integrative way, giving voice to his body, thoughts, gestures and theatricalities, aiming to develop his potential of interaction with the bodies, thoughts, gestures and theatricalities of the other(s), his sphere, his Great Time.

Not a Conclusion: A Dancing Body at School

The previous sections defined the body as related to place and organic materiality in which both the performances and the danced-utterances are configured, thus making both phenomena seem similar. However, it is necessary to point out that the danced-utterances addressed in this study are in the dimension of Art, where it holds an authorial, creative and sensitizing character. They result from artistic experiences at school, which seek the place of resignification and transcendence inherent to this area of knowledge. Accordingly, danced-utterances can use expressive techniques and theatricalities, and even constitute as a spectacle – although performance in the scope of performative education presupposes performative acts (routine actions and habitual gestures that can be problematized in the school environment).

Performance studies are based on the understanding that “any and all activities of human life can be studied as performance” (SCHECHNER, 2006; our translation).²⁵ That is a non-restrictive and broadly flexible meaning that has been assigned to

²⁵ In the original: “toda e qualquer das atividades da vida humana pode ser estudada enquanto performance.”

performance. Hence, performative education “seeks to produce critical and diagnostic studies as well as practical and theoretical research that reflect upon school and/or educational contexts under the lens of performance” (GONÇALVES, 2016, p.69).²⁶

Due to its experimental nature, performance is understood as an action of the body in its time-space, a poetic-discursive form of performing it and its surroundings, which implies dialogue and criticism. Thus, performance actualizes the conditions of its place of insertion and produces meanings in crystallized and embodied cultural marks - behaviors, habits, ways of speaking and acting, and so forth, which are learned and reproduced in the coexistence of historical subjects.

In this regard, Schechner (2006) adds that:

Obviously, most of the time, people are not aware that they act like that [in their repetitive daily lives]. People just *live their lives*. Performances are marked, framed, or elevated behaviors, apart from just *living life* - restored and restored behaviors, if desired thus (our emphasis).²⁷

He also states that:

Even the most casual social interaction is guided by specific rules of society. Politeness, manners, body language, and all similar operations are according to known scenarios. The specificities of the rules differ from society to society, from circumstance to circumstance. However, there is no human social interaction that is not “lawful,” guided by rules (SCHECHNER, 2006).²⁸

It is possible to observe that such rules and social attitudes that vibrate in the school bodies remind issues related to the notion of the ideological sign, discussed in Bakhtin’s theory. This has led the researcher to analyze the functioning of utterances

²⁶ In the original: “busca produzir estudos críticos, diagnósticos e pesquisas práticas e teóricas que reflitam sobre a escola e/ou os contextos educacionais sob as lentes da performance.”

²⁷ In the original: “Obviamente, durante a maior parte do tempo as pessoas não estão cientes de que agem assim [em seus cotidianos repetitivos]. As pessoas apenas ‘vivem a vida’. Performances são comportamentos marcados, enquadrados ou elevados, à parte do só “viver a vida” - comportamentos restaurados e restaurados, se assim deseja.”

²⁸ In the original: “Até mesmo a mais aparente casual interação social é guiada por regras, e específica da sociedade. Polidez, maneiras, linguagem corporal, e todas as operações semelhantes de acordo com os cenários conhecidos. As especificidades das regras diferem de sociedade para sociedade, de circunstância para circunstância. Mas não existe interação social humana que não seja ‘lícita’, guiada por regras.”

and, consequently, texts, which are also constituted in/by/through the body, according to the previous discussion.

The Circle provides us with a clear understanding of the Being as a subject that is constitutive and constituted by signs. The subject has not only the medium and the context, but also the proper horizon with numerous elements of expression (including verbal, written, artistic or corporal dimensions) where the intersection with other consciousnesses lies so that the *self* exists only with the help of the other (BAKHTIN, 1986).²⁹

The Bakhtinian perspective reveals a “sign-body” (BAKHTIN/MEDVEDEV, 1991)³⁰ whose expression has no beginning or end in itself. Gestures, habitual and daily acts as well as creative and artistic movements seek their raw material in relationships. Through bones, organs, muscles and skin the voices of society, of great time vibrate. This alterity dialogue constitutes styles of walking, stopping, looking, smiling, gesturing, jumping, sitting and getting up, that is, ways of being, positioning and acting in the world.

Moreover, it is possible to verify the importance of analyzing and interpreting styles, genres and expressive forms of the body-signs that occupy the spaces at school. This is because the relatively stable modes of communication, in the social roles and routine actions of these bodies, reveal the laws, aesthetic and political preferences, and objectives of the symbolic universe of the institutionalized education.

Performative education, therefore, seems to follow Bakhtin’s suggestions for an active-dialogical understanding about subjects in a communicative situation (BAKHTIN, 1986).³¹ By inviting students to perform in/about the school and by understanding their performance, the teacher can open spaces for the analysis of crystallized gestures and habits, disrupting the signs embodied in this sphere as well as questioning them, criticizing them. The objective is to promote change in traditionalist attitudes, practices and protocols, which are rigid and contradictory to the advancement of contemporary reflections on Education.

²⁹ For Reference, see footnote 2.

³⁰ BAKHTIN, M/MEDVIÉDEV, P. *The Formal Method in Literary Scholarship: A Critical Introduction to Sociological Poetics*. Translated by Albert J. Wehrle. Michigan: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1991.

³¹ For reference, see footnote 2.

By prioritizing the investigation of the body (a dancing body), subjects are led to see beyond what is commonly seen in the usual world of representations. They thus engage in an experimental research about themselves and their reality in a type of playful educational game that “is related to improvisation, innovation, experimentation, context, reflection, agitation, irony, parody, fun, comic and carnivalization” (CONQUERGOOD, 1989, p.83 *apud* PINEAU, 2010, p.100; our translation).³²

During dance classes, students are invited to explore themselves, to investigate creative ways to move into the space, to explore the particularities of their sign bodies, to establish dialogues with the bodies of their classmates, to feel the small movements that stir within and reverberate outside, that is, to produce danced-utterances. It is estimated that choreographic cells, presentations and performances result from these artistic experiences that reflect embodied content and innumerable meanings.

In addition,

At school, dance can (and should) be used as a form of social criticism to challenge pre-established values, repetitive patterns and models. In this way, the expressive potential of each and every human body is explored in practice, investing itself in the production of meaning through body movement (MÖDINGER *et al.*, 2012, p.63, our translation).³³

In this process, it is observed that the study of the performances in/of/about the school amplifies the discussion on the social roles, the daily gestures of its agents, the routines of the classes during the school period. It can also find room in the art classes to become a constitutive reference for authorship in the creation of a dancing body. After all, such performances are loaded with dramaturgical properties of interest to this field of knowledge; they are discursive materialities capable of unfolding into theatricalities, becoming danced-utterances, becoming art.

Performance is “understood as a device to analyze the relations between subjects and map new ways of life and forms of expression in different contexts and conditions”

³² In the original: “está relacionada à improvisação, à inovação, à experimentação, ao contexto, à reflexão, à agitação, à ironia, à paródia, ao sarro, ao cômico e à carnavalização.”

³³ In the original: “Na escola, a dança pode (e deve) ser usada como uma forma de crítica social para o questionamento de valores preestabelecidos, padrões repetitivos e modismos. [...] Assim, explorar-se, na prática, o potencial expressivo de todo e qualquer corpo humano, investindo-se na produção de sentido por meio do movimento corporal.”

(GONÇALVES, 2016, p.71).³⁴ Thus, by optimizing it as an object, as a *motif* for artistic productions, we find a contextualized way of thinking-doing dance in school, which, in turn, can problematize the place of movement, of dancing action and of the body in the teaching institutions.

By empowering the bodies of students and elevating them to the status of author, the dialogue with the voices of the school is assumed at the moment the dance is created. It is important to note that:

The contemporary educational challenge, which concerns the work with creative teachers, is precisely to propose a teaching methodology that allows students to enjoy artistic and aesthetic experiences and, at the same time, to propose ways for them to become readers of Dance/the World (MARQUES, 2010a, p.191; our translation).³⁵

For Art classes at present-day schools, “[...] it is increasingly required that the dance teacher exercise his creative abilities, adapt content to different situations, environments, students, publics and expectations” (STRAZZACAPPA, 2001, p.46).³⁶

The role of the teacher and artist-educator is highlighted once again: “as an intellectual, he will have to reach different spheres of society in order to give voice to the body that, through dance, expresses possibility and emancipation” (MAÇANEIRO, 2010, p.215; our translation).³⁷

This way, it is important to reflect about how the dance teacher would be able to run classes as an instigator and transformer of practices that, on the one hand, emphasize the non-dualism of body and mind and, on the other, favors the power of the body as the propelling element of its consciousness, sensitivity, responsibility and autonomy (MAÇANEIRO, 2010, p.214).³⁸

³⁴ In the original: “concebida como um dispositivo tanto para a análise das relações entre sujeitos como para o mapeamento de novos modos de vida e formas de expressão em diferentes contextos e condições.”

³⁵ In the original: “O desafio educacional contemporâneo, no que diz respeito ao trabalho com professores criativos, é justamente propor uma metodologia de ensino que permita aos alunos desfrutarem experiências artísticas e estéticas, e ao mesmo tempo propor-lhes meios para que sejam também leitores da Dança/mundo.”

³⁶ In the original: “[...] exige-se cada vez mais que o professor de dança exercite suas capacidades criadoras, adapte conteúdos a diferentes situações, ambientes, alunos, públicos e expectativas.”

³⁷ In the original: “enquanto intelectual, terá que atingir diferentes esferas da sociedade, no intuito de dar voz ao corpo que, por meio da dança, exprime possibilidade e emancipação.”

³⁸ In the original: “Nesse sentido, é importante refletir sobre como o professor de dança seria capaz de desenvolver a disciplina, enquanto instigador e transformador de práticas que ressaltem o não dualismo do corpo e da mente e, por outro lado, favorecendo o poder do corpo como elemento propulsor de sua consciência, sensibilidade, responsabilidade e autonomia.”

In this study, intercrossing the areas of Performance and Dance under the lens of the dialogic theory is a way of re-signifying meanings for body and movement in the school environment. Furthermore, performative education makes possible new ways of looking at the body in educational processes. At the same time, it generates concerns that require teaching practices to problematize the routines of institutions, which in most cases are not considered, nor perceived. By intertwining performance and dance, bodies can produce discourses (danced-utterances) full of meanings that, through artistic creations, can be analyzed, interpreted and re-signified, contributing to the understanding of the school sphere as a dancing space and to the broadening of knowledge about dance and its intrinsically enunciative-discursive aspects.

This article aimed to look at the art of dance and performative education, through the lens of the dialogical perspective, to offer paths to (re)think the practices of the body at school, giving students the opportunity to (re)think the potentiality of their voices as subjects, capable of (trans)forming the school reality.

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