

Clownesque pedagogy: the school of the only I in primary education

Pedagogia palhacesca: a escola do só eu
no ensino regular

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ABSTRACT

This study refers to a critical reflection on the transgressive potential of a clownesque pedagogy carried out in a municipal school of Uberlândia, Minas Gerais, Brazil. From the adoption of a laughing poetics, clownesque characteristics and the insertion of the clown as a transgressive figure in the school environment when it comes to the proposal of building a laughing school, it was possible to analyze all possibilities, build dreams, subvert logic, disrupt Cartesianism, poetize moments, and choose laughter as part of a ritual aiming at breaking paradigms in primary education.

Keywords: Clown. Pedagogy. Laughter.

RESUMO

O presente trabalho refere-se a uma reflexão crítica acerca das potencialidades transgressoras de uma pedagogia palhacesca, realizada numa escola da rede municipal de Uberlândia-MG. A partir da apropriação de uma poética ridente, de aspectos palhacescos e a inserção do palhaço como figura transgressora no âmbito escolar, no que tange à proposta de construção de uma escola risonha, foi possível perceber possibilidades, construir sonhos, subverter a lógica, poetizar momentos, desconstruir o cartesianismo e eleger o riso como ritual de quebra de paradigmas na educação básica.

Palavras-chave: Palhaço. Pedagogia. Riso.

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In the search for experience

The modern man is getting deeper into socio-emotional exile, making his relationships increasingly distant and cold. Things such as information and work overload, tiring environments and, consequently, bureaucracy in the several contexts of control systems, surround us with a sticky and coercive web. People do not look at each other anymore. The sensitive and the sublime vanished, dreams were kidnapped and the power of encounters dissipated in an abyss almost impossible to go through.

Daily life reflects the pursuit of what we do not have; achievements being considered the predecessor of a new search. We search for the things we do not find within us, sometimes incessantly, and this disturbing exile sets us apart from ourselves as we are aware that the same process also happens with the other. People suppress the power of eventuality due to the consolidation of social armors.

Aiming at proposing a different way that would allow us to achieve pleasure, affection, and the effects of the changes of the I, as a human being, we present this reflective study on the processes of teaching, learning and creating in arts, and also on methodological proposals for teaching theater in primary school, based on the potential of experience and the perspective of clownesque pedagogy. "Experience is about what comes through us, or what happens to us or touches us. It is not about what comes through or about what happens, or what is touching, but what comes through us, happens to us or touches us" (LARROSA, 2008, p. 186). The meaning of "experience" evoked by Larrosa in a period characterized by the explosion of the media, is still extremely current in a society that dissipates to the touch of touching screens. This way, theater becomes a chance for individual's resumption on the importance and worth of their individuality, by starting to see it as something that depends on the encounter with the other, and exercising autonomy when it comes to the choices they make, their particularities, and the comedy field as a product that enhances playful and transgressive identities.

To talk about the experience of transgression in the school environment can be associated with negative aspects such as disobedience, infraction, and disregard of the rules. In this study, however, we will call attention to transgression in the perspective of human action while trespassing boundaries.

And what are these boundaries? The ones that define the hierarchical structure in primary school, the gap between teachers and students, a space that can be understood as an enhancer of encounters, affections, knowledge, and humanity.

To put this study together, we will suggest a topic that reveals the influence of the clown in the pedagogic practice inserted in the context of primary education, thus contributing to the discussion on this matter.

Aiming at contextualizing the pedagogic *praxis* applied in this project as a transgressive experiment and the reasons for the followed directions, we selected the experiences of a professor that let himself discover the connection with his inner clown as a resource for the establishment of a laughing school.

Laughter as a partner in the (un)civilizing process

Primary education is very traditional, disciplinary, and full of military references and at times characterized by a group of people that remain structured within the fragmentation of social spaces, in serial separation by age and the importance of a disciplinary imprisonment using coercive control.

Despite the culture of “school-exile”, we believe that it is possible to sail towards a place filled with discovery, experiences, and pleasure. However, what differentiates that school the previous one? To understand this dissonance and how the thought of imprisonment still surrounds us and makes us numbs, we will approach some of the ideas of Michel Foucault to talk about the schooling process.

One of Foucault’s greatest interests were the forms of control established by social institutions. His historical investigations have led to innovative approaches on the subject. Foucault analyzed disciplinary procedures adopted in social institutions such as schools, prisons, and asylums, and identified the way they ended up controlling those who were put in these places to impose the so-called normal conduct standards. Subjected to external forces, minds and bodies could be molded by social institutions. Although these institutions promote protection and assistance to citizens, control mechanisms were also inserted on it based on the threat of punishment and also, according to Foucault (1999), “punishment mechanisms had the purpose of ensuring additional labor, constituting a ‘civil’ slavery similar to the one that is provided by war or trade” (p. 28).

The education field was one of the highlights of the analyses of this philosopher. When studying the role of schools and pedagogical concepts, Foucault identified surveillance and training actions for body and mind, i.e., forms of exercising power and produce a certain type of society. In this sense, schools, prisons, and asylums would be considered kidnapping institutions once individuals are removed from their

social space and then kept away for a long period of time to shape their conduct and discipline their behavior. On the idea of prisons as kidnapping institutions, Resende highlights that:

Being the prison an institution where the “capture” of the individual’s existence in all of its aspects is extreme, considering it puts them in a scheme of reformulation of existence, it gets to a point that the individual himself would restrict their life to the time of the sentence (RESENDE, 2011, p. 52).

Schooling, as well as medicalization and imprisonment, arose from a disciplinary need for “a production of control technology”, according to Veiga (2002, p. 91). Foucault (1981) says:

Before anything else, discipline is the analysis of space as one of the constituting elements of the notion of discipline. It is the individualization by space, the insertion of the bodies in an individualized, classificatory, and combinatorial space. Discipline would be the tool of domination and control dedicated to exclude or domesticate divergent behaviors (FOUCAULT, 1981, p. 106).

From this perspective it is possible to understand that education is not only associated with production and dissemination of knowledge, but also in the establishment of relations of power. Hence, we understand segmentation and fragmentation of the school process as traditionalist argument aimed at enhancing a servile society.

We also understand that society follows a cyclical process of constant changes in power relations that are balanced and soon enough are turned upside down due to control tensions. We can see at this point a sort of network connection that comprises a spiral dynamics of taken and retaken positions that subsidize constant tensions. According to Elias (1994), “these chains are not visible and tangible as iron shackles. They are more elastic and changeable, but no less real and, surely, no less strong”(p. 23).

The civilizing process set by schooling submerged in society homogenization made school a place of male supremacy and white ethnicity, thus remaining the importance of household consolidation, creation of models of conduct based on age, and considering intelligence, responsibility and competitiveness as civility virtues. We live in a society that still continues to exclude those who are different such as the prisoner, the crazy, the idle, once they represent someone that ran out the control, and that disturb the order of the social space. It is possible to note that the school institution still aims to shape the individual’s conduct and regulate their behavior to insert them in the social space. Society, in general, is constantly creating mass control techniques via photo and video systems that use not only cameras but also satellites.

Currently, our society is able to control itself with more and more sophisticated technologies that include outer space. Coming back to the text by Veiga:

We could think in the elaboration of an educational initiative that would fit in the context of other networks, in which differentiated and multiple lines weaved the embroidery pattern following the several perspectives an embroidery allows us to observe (VEIGA, 2002, p. 103).

The feeling of imprisonment and self-coercion imposed by various sectors and social institutions and the feeling of imminent punishment and fear that were grown and internalized throughout society's history is very present in the school institution, making us rethink the difficulty of establishing human relations in primary education and how this humanizing educational process can interfere positively on matters such as school dropout and violence.

With the idea of inverting the control established in school, which would favor the transgression of this civilizing process, it was proposed, artistically speaking, a laughing pedagogy, named clownesque pedagogy, based on the understanding and appliance of theatrical scenic resources by an artist-clown as a transgressive and powerful figure in the sense of enabling mechanisms of rediscovery of pleasure and making the school an environment of exchange, experience, and development of sensitive burlesque. Like the children who once ran away with the circus, taking the circus ring to school enhances moments of aesthetic appreciation and individual and collective artistic creation in the field of comedy that contributes to laughter autonomy in the school context. According to Albuquerque,

Laughter expresses the domain of the I over itself and freedom, and this is why it would be the reason why it makes uncomfortable those who love the cage of certainty even though they are flexible; it means detachment and the courage to face life without guarantees of absolute truths (ALBUQUERQUE, 2006, p. 103).

Contributing to the reflection and possible associations that will be established in the development of this theoretical corpus, next we intend to point out some things on the clown's trajectory in the circus context from a European genealogy.

The clown and the circus: an European perspective

The modern circus show is inherited of a master sergeant from the English Cavalry, the petty officer Phillip Astley

(1742-1814) that, around 1770, when training his horses noticed how easy it was for acrobats to stay balanced on top of an animal when they followed a circular trajectory, which, for physics, is easily explained by the action of centripetal force. According to Teixeira and Júnior, “centripetal force, for Isaac Newton, is a type of impressed force acting in a body, in the case of a circular motion, and turned to rotation center” (2010, p. 233). Because of that, Ruiz (1987) highlights “Astley chose an absolutely cycled track for the scenic area of all circuses that are real circuses”. To illustrate a little bit about how it would have been the experience of Astley and his trained horses, we suggest the video “*Circus Day in Our Town*”, 1949, *Encyclopaedia Britannica Films*³.

Astley’s strictly disciplined company was mostly constituted by several former members of military cavalry, including acrobats, tightrope walkers, magicians, and clowns, the circus ring being the circular space in the center, a place where artists show their skills, a place reinvented for such demonstrations. Other important aspect on this reinvention is the fact that the circular space have roots in a very distant period. We could cite the Greek Theater as one of the most widely known references, since it established scenic, spatial, textual and interpretative structures, among others, and forged, in very a solid way, the basis for the study and research on theater modernization, or on circular spaces such as the ones around a campfire where Neanderthals shared their adventures in hostile lands in a kind of rudimentary theater community.

Astley’s idea was a success, considering he was able to have a building with a circular stage structure in London, his hometown, naming it *Astley’s Royal Amphitheater of Arts*. Later, precisely in 1772, he was invited by the French Luiz XV to perform in Paris. This provided him the opportunity of establishing some alliances, promoting the construction of a branch in 1783, the *Amphitheater Anglois*. This date marks the beginning of the formation of circus families.

According to Ruiz (1987) on the structure of the performances on the ring “Astley himself directed and presented the show, starting a remarkable practice: the one of the master of ceremonies, conductor of the show, which is called ‘ring master’ among us; this guy, according to Avanzi and Tamaoki (2004), “is the stage manager of the circus ring. He is the one who runs the process mounting and dismounting of equipment and the presentation of the show”(p. 30).

Bolognesi (2003) says, “medium and small circuses focused on Repertory Theater put the clown in the center of the plot, also including his name as the title of the work performed” (p. 66).

3. Section of video “Circus Day in Our Town”, 1949, Encyclopaedia Britannica Films.

Analyzing the history of several civilizations, we realize, in many cultures, there are traces that suggest the historical background of the modern circus, such as the Olympic games, balancing acts, which, for Jara,

are all celebrations in which the soul of the circus was already present: the rest is the desire of overcoming the development of any physical ability, trying to create beauty, perfection, harmony and balance aiming to entertain, amuse, amaze and compel public's admiration (JARA, 2000, p. 32).

In Chinese culture we find a sharp ancient body work, acrobatic art being a specialty that, from Ruiz's (1987) point of view, "was considered a singular skill since 200 b.C., in addition to music, dance, and theater, all forms of artistic expression at that time" (p. 19).

The *palhaço* or the clown was always present in an essential manner in several circus demonstrations. To solve any possible confusion about the terms "palhaço", in Portuguese, and clown, Ruiz explains:

The word "clown" comes from "clod", which binds to the English term "peasant" and its rustic environment: the earth. On the other hand, "palhaço" comes from Italian *paglia* (straw), material used in the coating of mattresses because the original clothes of this comic character were made of the same cloth used for mattresses (RUIZ, 1987, p. 12).

Even with the important definition already given by Ruiz, we highlight the singularities of Wuo (2013): "in the language of the show, the two words ("palhaço" and "clown") converge in comic aspects" (p. 111).

For Wellington Nogueira, founder of *Doutores da Alegria* [Doctors of Joy], the figure of the clown is present in all kinds of relationships in our society. *Doutores da Alegria* is a non-governmental organization (NGO) that carries out hospital visits in São Paulo, Rio de Janeiro, and Recife since 1991, and aims at satirizing medical procedures, which leads to a change in reality. For further clarification, we propose a speech by Wellington Nogueira in *Doutores da Alegria – the movie* (2006).

In Middle Age, the clown can be identified in the figure of the court jester, a servant engaged in distracting his master by entertaining him using pantomime. According to Pavis (2005), pantomime "is the use of gestures rather than words by comedians in a theatrical show" (p. 274).

In Commedia Dell'Arte, according to Burnier (2002), "we can point out the clown in characters such as *arlequino* and *puntinela*, servants that, despite being playful, had a naive personality" (p. 207).

Throughout history, we can point out some differences between white and auguste clowns. For Bolognesi,

White clowns feature good education and elegance of gestures and costumes, while the augustes feature loose clothing, huge shoes, the one who did not fit in the progress, in the machine and in the industrial worker's jumpsuit (BOLOGNESI, 2003, p. 68).

The red nose is a the main characteristic for both the clown and the *palhaço*. According to Burnier (2002), “the clown is the smallest mask in the world, which despite hiding the least, it reveals the most” (p. 218). Wuo (2013) believes that “being a clown means to play, accept and exorcise the laughing public exposure as a comic attribute of corporality and language” (p. 109).

In the history of the circus, we can find great clowns that have marked their time, among them: Benjamim de Oliveira, Piolim, Ripolim, Chicarrão, Fred Villar, Arrelia, Picolino and George Savalla Gomes, o Carequinha. In the movies, according to Burnier,

The first clown was the French one called Gabrielle Leuvielle, pseudonym for Max Linder. Later, clowns such as Charlie Chaplin, the duo Hardy and Laurel, Buster Keaton, Harold Lloyd, Jacques Tati, Jerry Lewis, Mazaropi, Oscarito and Grande Otelo stand out (BURNIER, 2002, p. 202).

From the concepts listed, we highlight Burnier's (2002) speech to give the clown “the full extent of aspects such as naive, pure and human” (p. 209), and Wuo's (2013) speech on the intrinsic transgressive features of the art of clowning. We reiterate that several aspects cited by other authors also resonate and sometimes influence the structure of the clown as a trigger mechanism for this study by considering our personal and professional formation, establishing points of discussion, and understanding of the proposals here exposed.

How did the idea of clowning at school come up?

The graduate program *Stricto Sensu Profartes* offered by the Universidade do Estado de Santa Catarina (UDESC) [States University of Santa Catarina (UDESC)] in partnership with 11 higher education institutions, among them the Universidade Federal de Uberlândia [Federal University of Uberlândia], aims to train art teachers to teach in primary education aiming at contributing to the improvement of education quality in the country.

Starting from the research line “Processes of teaching, learning and creation in arts”, the purpose of this study is to

investigate clownesque pedagogy within the school environment, more specifically in primary education, by focusing on theater teaching methodology. We chose to talk about the experience of arrival of the clown named Gregório in school, its implications and laughing infections in the school context for both teachers and students. The project was nominated “Clownesque pedagogy: the only I school in primary education”.

Methodological procedures

The search field chosen was the Municipal School Odilon Custódio Pereira, a superior institution from Uberlândia, Minas Gerais, Brazil, where a temporary teacher was the responsible for the art field. Placed in a peripheral location of the southern region of the city, this school offered classes during the morning and afternoon periods to approximately 950 students from elementary school. This institution started on February of 2003 and, as reported by the school management, it was only in 2015, with the arrival of the teacher-clown, that studies had an arts teacher specialized in theatrical language.

The methodological choices followed by us comprised dramatic and theatrical games using concepts widely disseminated in Brazil from Spolins' and Jean-Pierre Ryngaert's works, in addition to games conducted during clowning workshops by the teacher on the potential of humor, jokes of the child-juvenile world, considering the potential of laughter as a transgressor of hierarchical structure and human relationships when it comes to education.

Regarding the scope of this research, we chose to understand more than one specific group, once this study aims to reflect on the laughing transgressions experienced by students in the contact with a teacher who sometimes undertakes his own clown in educational practice, and who also does not previously determine the groups that are going to witness these moments. We reiterate that these moments not always happen in an intrinsic and objective way; in several opportunities, they occur sensitively and subjectively when conducted by a laughing teacher who allows himself to be playful. It is called clownesque pedagogy when elements of the clownesque universe are applied in teaching exercise to reflect on the artistic and educational practice with the help of laughter. Thus, the knowledge discussed throughout this research relies on the experiences randomly lived by 19 morning classes from the third to the ninth year of primary education during the year of 2015, and developed in weekly meetings of around 50 minutes each.

We have chosen the action research as our investigative method according to the progress of this study; it has consolidated as a more comprehensive alternative since its format is characterized by constant collaboration, besides the fact that all participants are, at the same time, subjects and researchers.

Regarding the research forms, one of the possibilities is action research defined by Thiollent:

Empirical gathering was carried out in close association with an action or resolution of a collective problem, in which researchers and participants of the situation or problem are involved in cooperative mode (THIOLLENT, 2008, p. 14).

For André,

the potential of action research is recognized, particularly when it comes to the analysis of this practice and the favoring of socially disadvantaged groups; he also considers the fact that the number of research on this perspective has increased in the educational field (ANDRÉ, 2003, p. 37).

We gathered the data in the form of visual records and observations. The treatment of this material was conducted in a qualitative manner, from a critical and subjective analysis that highlights understandings and peculiarities of this pedagogical initiative.

Research on the school-field was held throughout the school year of 2015. Among the several actions promoted, we randomly chose three of them that addressed the reflections of this study. The first action comprised the impressions on the school's art teacher; the second action, the poetic initiation of the circus in the school with the advent of the child of the red nose; while the third action comprised Cartesian transgressions of a class of eighth grade of Brazilian primary school.

The physical and psychological demands of a study with this particular format inserted a field of research like the one we have here found support in elements such as dedication, patience, and determination, especially in the perspective of everyday life.

The school of the only I: the daily life of an art teacher in primary education

The attempt to retrieve the feelings experienced in the everyday life of an art teacher in primary education is the reason that led us to adopt the clownesque pedagogy as an alternative to individual and collective training from the perspective of the "subject of experience" (LARROSA, 2008, p. 160).

At school, problems and possibilities follow transversal paths. The meeting of these forces promote tensions that tend to go up and down constantly. Teachers meetings in common spaces become schizophrenic complaints. Many are the reasons that trigger professionals' biopsychosocial instability are: violence on the inside and on the outside of the school environment, work overload, the bureaucratization of the educational system, the high population density in the institutions, the lack of financial resources and public policies that promote the restructuring of Brazilian education.

Art, just like all the other areas of knowledge that are part of the school curriculum, is taken for granted because of the inflexibility of educational institutions that follow Brazilian public educational policies. According to Machado,

Most people criticize the curricular documents adopted, even the members of the teams who developed them; however, little courage is observed regarding the need to come up with new improvement strategies for the Parâmetros Curriculares Nacionais (PCNs) [Brazilian National Curriculum Parameters (BNCPs)]. Having to face so many difficulties, some of them even caused by artists themselves, how is it possible to be an artist and a creator in the context of an everyday conventional education of harsh coexistence with children and young people? How to turn a harsh coexistence in a flexible and playful one? Would that be possible? (MACHADO, 2012, p. 3).

In the attempt to answer to the questions asked by Machado (2012), we address clownesque pedagogy with the introduction of a new student.

Labor at school: the arrival of the child with the red nose

It is possible to note that the school remains very concerned with personal and collective production. In several occasions, the constant pursuit of the final result gets in the way of the recognition of the process behind it and its aesthetical possibilities. In several occasions, teachers were questioned on the final result of the learning process of classes they work with. Visual and plastic tendency in which school was inserted blinded the eyes of pedagogical coordination of the school. Attempts to establish a theatrical language in this space were constantly influenced by the concept of "Eurocentric theater"⁴ applied to the school environment. However, according to Passeti (2006), "resistance is also engaging contrary arguments, developing other spaces, and discarding ways of thinking and its temporary stories" (p. 114). The Eurocentric conception of

4. This term refers to the work developed by Prof. Dr. Zeca Ligiéro (UNIRIO), about afro-american performance.

the theater started to fade with resistance action: the arrival of the child with the red nose.

The creative and productive wire – being in a tightrope – was provided with Gregório's arrival, the teacher-clown referenced in this research, the school, early in the second quarter of the academic year of 2015. Without knowing exactly what was going to happen at school, the teacher-clown did not planned to address anarchic subjects in class. According to Passetti (2006), “anarchists are warriors. They overcome the paths from known to certain places by coming up with new routes” (p. 115). He could only think about expressing himself, being honest and generous with his audience.

The clown Gregório came to the school and his feeling of anxiety ended up increasing in giant proportions; for him, it looked like it was his first contact with the stage. Immediately after getting out of the locker room and going to the doorway, he put the red nose out and then back again. He repeated this movement a few times until he had the courage to go out into the world.

He observed how the school community's smile was gradually opening to receive him. This started to make the clown, who was hanging at the tip of his nose, cover his whole body as an electromagnetic laughing wave, transforming it in an extension of the red mask. The school became a different place from that everyday school full of rules and regulations. Retaking Passetti's (2006) words, “this was the insertion of unusual experience, the creation of new routes, experimentation spaces, in the expansion of present life and of future possibilities” (p. 116). Most students waited for the beginning of celebrations; others, a little late, started to arrive and to note that clown figure that was not commonly part of that space. Students started to get closer with a gazing look on their eyes.

Holding a chair, the hidden clown Gregório kept waiting for his moment of “birth”, imagining all potential dates that could happen there. It was high time: contractions crossed his body in smaller intervals, and he had no one else to turn into. He filled his lungs and hugged his companion – the chair – and jumped into a poetic diving into the unknown.

Once the children – the midwives – recognized him, even from a distance, they stood paralyzed: it seems like it was their first delivery. Gregório started moving, in slow motion, getting closer to the moment of birth. He was invaded by a mixture of fear and desire for the unknown, for the world that was formed in front of him. He walked towards the children like he was floating, like he was feeling the softness of the clouds beneath his feet.

From a hole in the screen – the birth canal – that involves

the sports court, right in the background of it, right next to the goal crossbar, all midwives met Gregório who, little by little, was snuggled by dozens of arms. The better the reception, the better was the feeling of enthusiasm and fulfillment. Those midwives have kindly cut the umbilical cord and covered the boy King who had just been born. The excitement of the birth made their eyes burn and tear up. Gregório and his chair were accompanied in procession until his crib – the circus ring – to be introduced to his mother: the audience.

Just like a conductor who commands his orchestra, he delighted his mother's eyes. The connection with these eyes favored the emergence of speech. He was thirsty and was looking for a way to be breastfed. From midwives, the mom's figure was personified. Children suggested him several possibilities until a certain pair of eyes called his attention: it was the one of pedagogical coordinators of the institution. Her eyes were calling him and he surrendered to them. He walked towards her and gave her his hand. In a very generous act, she corresponded to him by also giving him her hand. Therefore, he had found who he was looking for in a while. Gregório posited her in the Chair to strengthen their relationship. The meeting was a magical moment that was gestated for so long and completed in that occasion. Both of them got to meet each other, welcome each other, and allow themselves to be.

Thrilled, midwives started applauding compulsively, and that was the cue to mothers' and child's farewell. Both hearts came together side by side and were able to touch each other and say goodbye, not forgetting to thank for all support and needed assistance of those amazing professionals.

The teacher-clown was taken by a deep euphoria: there was nothing scheduled, he had no idea what was going to happen, he let himself fall and allowed the unusual to bring him all the things that ended up happening. Recalling the song "Epitáfio" by the band Titãs, "chance will protect me while I walk distracted". He allowed himself to look and be looked at. He noticed how the relationship established in the clowning word developed both in the hospital and educational environments remains alive, pulsing and engaging. The small details are important to build connections, because, for the clown "simplicity is the most important aspect".

Most students reported have never been to the circus and to the theater. In that day, we carried out a visual register of the event "clown initiation at school".

In an extremely sensitive, sublime, and poetic way, Gregório was received and, from this moment, students became ready to open up with the teacher-clown and his clownesque pedagogy.

Transgressing Cartesianism: meetings in the heights

The clownesque state creates its own relationship settings. It is hard to say when he takes over the teacher's role or vice-versa. It looks like Gregório represents things such as strength, attitude, desire, pleasure, laughter, while the teacher represents a disguise, a mask, an armor. And the teacher comes up in the very few moments when Gregório is not present. According to Jara,

The clown lives in the present moment. He has no plans after the next few minutes, he does not think about the future. Intensity with which he lives the present is a way of achieving the future. His decisions, therefore, result from his actions (JARA, 2000, p. 56).

The unexpected is what triggers Gregório to come forward, get lost in the game, and play with his peers. Coming back to Jara,

Curiosity, ingenuity, the way of looking, honesty and spontaneity, of course, are common concepts found in children and clowns' behavior. Desires for playing, trying new things, and learning are connected to each other (JARA, 2000, p. 52).

The mask, the "red pearl" (Wuo, 2005) at the tip of the nose is nothing more than a code that says: "hey, I can play too!". Despite not using the mask during class, gradually the teacher starts to establish the code during the game. And that is exactly how it happened in an experiment performed in a class of eighth grade, in the second half of the academic year.

One of the complaints reported by teachers of all subjects of primary education, not only of arts, is regarding the lack of an adequate space to the development of their activities. It is possible to note that a large portion of primary education institutions do not have a laboratory dedicated to body work practices. This way, one of the alternative is to transgress Cartesianism, drag the school desks to open enough space to carry out this exercise. However, the idea of dragging the school desks does not seem of all good for teachers who would work in the classes nearby this space, once they are worried with excessive noises. To transgress Cartesianism and decrease confusions, the proposal was to forget classifications, and enhance students and teachers bonding, aiming at making the act of playing for everyone, as pointed out by Jara:

The clown imagines and creates what he thinks that will happen in the future, taking the risk of living, emotionally and physically, everything he imagined, which would lead him to experience several adventures until the moment that his own logic would bring him back to reality (JARA, 2000, p. 56).

According to Jara (2000), the teacher came to a class of eighth grade and observed the school desks were organized in queues, while most students walked by the room. He left his material over the table, walked until reaching the front of the class and said he had a big revelation. Students got curious and soon enough all noises started to fade. He told them he had a gift, a singular ability, he would like to share with them. It was the ability of divination. They show to be skeptical about his statement, so to prove them the opposite, the teacher asked if there was anyone that could help him. Several students raised their hands and he chose one by one to be part of the amazing experience of divination.

The teacher climbed up on his chair in the middle of the classroom, and asked for the ones he called to do the same right in front of him. The rest of them stared at him while he was preparing for the divination game. Actually, the activity consisted in an exercise of constant sums and subtractions using numerals – logic sequences allowed the teacher to guess the final result. Despite its simplicity, students could not figure the game out and had fun both with the divinations and the preparation process behind it. After having won the group's confidence, he used to bring a new divination number: the names of each one of the students, something that would be simple if the teacher did not work with 19 different classes of around 25 students each. He asked a student to climb up on the chair, to close his eyes so that he could focus, meanwhile he asked the other students to say the name of who was playing. With the confidence previously established, students got close to the teacher, telling him the name of the colleague by his ears. As soon as he understood it, he asked for another player to open up their eyes and then listen to the name he would say. They were impressed with the power of divination. The game took place during the entire lesson; laughs echoed through the class until the school sign rang out and voices spoke in a unison: "Is it over already?"

The confirmation of a successful lesson, in a very particular perspective, is realizing the time available was not enough. However, it is possible for us to better understand what happened considering the words by Castro (1997):

Sometimes we put pleasure out of our reach. Or make it bigger than it is, which makes it impossible to carry it or own it. Pleasure is pleasure, it comes in any shapes or sizes (CASTRO, 1997, p. 4).

Many other moments of fun and games throughout the year contributed to the development, analysis and understanding of clownesque pedagogy, which may have contributed to the

personal and professional lives of that school community, because, according to Albuquerque (2006), “laughter is a weapon in the fight against the power. All powerful figures, in a given situation, immediately want to end with laugh, irony, and fun; wants to be taken seriously immediately” (p. 106).

Considerations on clownesque pedagogy

A priori, we also noted that regardless of the clown, the laugh remains extremely present in the school environment during the classes and the periods of recess as a positive experience in the life of these students. Sometimes it can be also observed in the context of mockery of others when it comes to the differences and peculiarities of each individual, such as the way of walking, talking, dressing up, behaving and exposing ideas in a group. The exchange of experience with the clownesque figure, this being inside the classroom or not, favored the arising of sensitive and laughing moments that comprised true transgressions of the hierarchical boundaries of the “educational institution” as a whole.

We also observed that some of the teachers of other subjects, who used to be at a certain distance regarding the students and art teacher, showed changes compared to period before the arrival of the teacher-clown when it comes to laughing inside and outside the school environment. Some students reported the teacher could laugh as well, pointing out this was well accepted by the rest of the class. They said they were glad to see their teachers were also happy.

From these considerations, we realized the experience of the pedagogue clown in everyday relationships with children, co-workers and the school achieve an never before imagined proportion. Considering the concept of madness, the experience of the teacher-clown who can not be taken seriously creates a paradox: the teacher-clown, using the laugh, can seriously address subjects that up to this point were seen as unusual and inappropriate to the classroom context. The art of the clown goes beyond the school walls, breaking the concept of seriousness, overcoming permissiveness and the idea of having right time to laugh during class. Introducing the laughter in the classroom environment. There is no right time or place to laugh; laughing is a state of mind, a state of grace that manifests itself as a sudden moment of playfulness: the clown can speak nonsenses and unusual things, because he is a clown, nobody takes him seriously.

The clownesque figure plays with institutionalized subjects, using the laugh and art to drain out hardened concepts that were crystallized by traditional education.

Consider the laughing transgression as a pedagogical *praxis* is one way of not losing the identity of the teacher-artist, the autonomy to give good and loud laughs with students and teachers. Laughter drains out social conventions and breaks the ice in relationships, which makes us more human and more close to each other, since it puts everyone in the position of players. Both teachers and students share the same importance, fighting hierarchy in favor of a laughing and poetic equality.

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