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ENTER THE ROUND AND SWING: CAPOEIRA IN EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION AS A DECOLONIZING PEDAGOGY

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Who taught me to swim

Who taught me to swim

It was, it was a sailor

It was the sea fish

who taught me to play

who taught me to play

It was, it was capoeira

It was, berimbau playing...¹

1. Milton Nascimento. **Sea fish**. 1980

INTRODUCTION

The report that we present here refers to the experiences with children aged four and five, based on a pedagogical proposal carried out in 2018 and which is part of the research and extension project called “Play and interactions in the Child Care Unit” in which we seek to identify the arguments and the contents that the children enrolled in the UAC used in their games, in the different age groups, understanding this as an essential moment that allows the teachers to qualify themselves as partners of the children in their games, leveraging the possibilities of learning.

For the development of the research and extension project, we closely followed the work of each teacher, helping with activities, following the routine of the classes and proposing games and games. And it was during this process that we decided to insert in this research and extension project, a pedagogical proposal through capoeira with children with the objective of contributing to the process of integral formation of the child, expanding their reference standards and enabling dialogue about the education of children. ethnic-racial relations, creating new consciences, producing subjectivities and understanding that capoeira contributes to the insertion of Afro-Brazilian knowledge and its civilizing values in the educational space.

Inserting the practice of capoeira in Early Childhood Education allows us to problematize Afro-Brazilian knowledge and content in school spaces, corroborating the construction of decolonizing pedagogies. It directly affects the production of knowledge and promoting forms of education, based on worldviews that think the world from cosmologies based on their own ways of educating and educating themselves founded and maintained by the black population, blackening educational spaces already from

the Child education. To blacken in the sense of thinking of black men and women’s own ways of putting themselves in the world. “Blackening face-to-face in which black and white strive, communicate, without ceasing to be what each one is” (SILVA, 2013, p. 1), thus breaking with Eurocentric standards as the center of relations in Early Childhood Education and thus socialize, inform and dialogue about the ancestral knowledge of the black population, allowing the insertion of this culture in the formal educational environment, creating knowledge, appreciation and respect for Afro-Brazilian ancestral knowledge.

Added to this is the implementation of Law 10.639/03, which amends Law 9304/1996 on the Guidelines and Bases of National Education (LDB), making the “Teaching Afro-Brazilian and African History and Culture” mandatory in the Basic Education curriculum”. We emphasize that the National Council of Education, responsible for regulating the implementation of what is established in the LDB, when dealing with article 26A of Law 9394/96, through the opinion CNE/CP 03/2004, which establishes “National Curricular Guidelines for the Education of Ethnic-Racial Relations and for the Teaching of Afro-Brazilian and African History and Culture”, determines that it must be extended to all schooling - from Early Childhood Education to Higher Education - to the education of ethnic-racial relations and the teaching of Afro history and culture -Brazilian and African.

Furthermore, we emphasize that the pedagogical work with capoeira in Early Childhood Education is based on Afro-Brazilian civilizing values in which we find contributions to plural and decolonized childhoods through orality, circularity, corporeity, musicality, cooperativity, playfulness, sociability. These values

[...] bring to education a perspective of working within a decolonial point of view, outside the hegemonic axis and filled with paradigms with Eurocentric references, moving out of coloniality and the ideology of whitening (OLIVEIRA and GOMES, 2019, p. 29)

ORALITY

It is through orality that we share knowledge, we use music that brings the stories and memories of the struggles of black men and women in Brazilian territory. Trindade (2013) emphasizes that we often prefer to hear a story than to read it, we prefer to speak than to write... main way of sharing ancestry values.

CIRCULARITY

The capoeira roda is constituted as a pedagogical space where we learn-teach-and learn, we form ourselves from circular thinking, beginning-middle-beginning (SANTOS, 2019). We have in the capoeira circle the movement, the circularity, the collectivity that stimulates the renewal and sharing of the knowledge experienced between children and educators, the Afro-Brazilian civilizing values and decolonizing ways of educating/caring in early childhood education.

CORPOREALITY

“The body is very important, as we live with it, we exist, we are in the world. A people who were uprooted from Africa and brought to Brazil with only their bodies, learned to value it as a very important heritage” (TRINDADE, 2013, p. 135). In capoeira, the body is the materiality of the struggle expressed in the ginga and that becomes an agent of resistance to all types of oppression. When working with corporeality through capoeira, we value the possibilities of exchanges and encounters;

waddling, singing, standing upside down, rolling, jumping, dismantling idealized bodies and accepting concrete bodies (TRINDADE, 2013).

MUSICALITY

The rhythm, the music, the dance. The movement are expressions of African and Afro-Brazilian culture, they are found in every part of daily life. capoeira is no different, we feel the sound and we move from the pulse of the percussion and the singing that comes from the drums organized in capoeira wheels, it is the berimbau beats, ladainhas and corridos that determine the way to move, always within a cadence.

PLAYFULNESS

The ludic is inherent to capoeira circles, it is expressed through singing, playing and playing. We use all these elements in capoeira activities. We play with movement with singing, with percussion instruments and this way we celebrate and affirm life “If we weren’t a people that daily affirms life, a people that wants and wants to live, we would be dead, dead in life, without cultur, without genuine cultural manifestations, without axé” (TRINDADE, 2013, p. 136).

COOPERATIVENESS

Afro-Brazilian culture is the culture of the plural (TRINDADE, 2013), in capoeira groups everything is structured in the collective, in the composition of the roda, to keep the energy circulating positively. Each one has a function, the wheel is only possible if they are all connected, converging. At every moment we contribute in a way, whether playing and singing directly on the drums, or clapping and singing while we wait for our moment to play, playing with your playmate, you can’t do anything alone. Our principles are dialogue, partnership and cooperation.

THE PEDAGOGICAL PROPOSAL OF CAPOEIRA

We consider capoeira as an expression of the culture of the black people, with its civilizing values, which contributes to the formation of childhood, allows education from its own methodological approaches that can be understood as “decolonizing pedagogies based on values of the cosmology of the Afro-Brazilian world. and African for early childhood education” (SOUZA, 2016, p. 163-164). In this sense, it promotes the questioning of adult-centric relationships established in early childhood education, because according to this same author, we are the adults who must enter the child’s logic, since we were already a child and the child was never an adult.

We chose Wednesday for the development of activities related to capoeira. During the conversation circles we asked the children if they knew capoeira, some said yes and others they didn’t, but they received the news with great enthusiasm. And one or another child

showed a movement or another that he knew. In this conversation, we explained to the class what capoeira is, the time and day when we would play capoeira games, this way, we organized the activities related to the practice of capoeira to happen once a week, trying to establish a clear routine in order to to facilitate the playing and learning of capoeira, facilitating the children’s perception of time and space, bringing children closer to the content, creating habit and familiarity with the activities.

Souza, Santiago and Faria (2018), indicate that the “art of teaching” through many mechanisms “becomes a colonizing element par excellence” (p.87), not legitimizing the establishment of other forms of creation and canceling the child in its multiple possibilities, which prevents children’s poetic mischief.

We systematized the circle for dialogues with children, understanding it as a learning environment, in which its organization expresses values and attitudes that educate. Conceiving the circle as a pedagogical space



Source: authors’ collection (2019).

allows us to provide guidance to children, both individual and collective, we open space to legitimize other possibilities of creations, building an atmosphere for the healthy and integral life of the child.

Thus, we share knowledge and introduce the most basic movements of capoeira, such as the *ginga*, *cocorinha*, the *au* (star) and the *rolê* (crouching movement), expressive movements, encouraging children to exercise imitation and free creation so that they create your own repertoire of movements, because there is no pattern of movements within capoeira, but capoeira expressed in the body of each one.

We also use games and games to experience the movements of capoeira, demonstrating that it has its own corporeality that makes it possible to be with the other in a space where the ritual inherent to the capoeira circle is shared.

So, we introduced musicality, contact with instruments: *berimbau*, *tambourine*, *agogô*, *caxixi*, *reco-reco* drum, clapping and singing

of *corridos* and *ladainhas*, songs relevant to the universe of capoeira.

Ritual of singing, movements, music, playing instruments, the game of capoeira respect for elders and ancestral knowledge were part of the meetings.

In the last meetings, capoeira circles were already taking place, where children who wanted to play played. The others clapped their hands and/or played instruments such as the *berimbau* and the *tambourine* that were passed around the *roda* and played by all.

This way, we built real relationships that allowed the development of educational actions that contribute to ethnic-racial relations, seeking pedagogical approaches that could be part of the experience and daily life of children in Early Childhood Education and through their musical, playful, ancestral characteristics of resistance struggle, making use, within the proposal, of children's stories related to capoeira and other literatures that approach the theme of Afro-Brazilian culture.



Source: authors' collection (2019).



Source: authors' collection (2019).



Source: authors' collection (2019).

CONCLUSION

The construction of decolonizing pedagogical practices, especially in early childhood education, capable of critically approaching content regarding ethnic-racial identities, histories, cultures and knowledge is one of the great challenges of educational praxis because it also involves the recognition that curricula are not natural, but historical constructions of subjects.

In addition to the insertion of Afro-Brazilian culture in the formal educational environment, creating knowledge, appreciation and respect for Afro-Brazilian ancestral knowledge, capoeira as a decolonizing

pedagogical practice aimed to raise awareness of “the other” and “oneself”, the subjectivities, the differences and, in this sense, the displacement of the look for the understanding of different cultural ways, of living, of thinking, of being.

As a pedagogical practice, capoeira in Early Childhood Education also established a profoundly critical relationship with the dominant educational epistemology in Brazil, in this sense, we seek counter-hegemonic practices, of resistance and taking into account the educator as a political subject and social transformer.

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