



Between School and University: dinosaurs and little notebooks towards an embodied dramaturgy

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ABSTRACT – Between School and University: dinosaurs and little notebooks towards an embodied dramaturgy – This six-hand written paper insists on the non-dichotomy between body and mind, action and thought, objectivity and subjectivity, in order to reach the fertile adult-child relationships within fictionality. It supports the practice of theater teaching both at the university and at school, in the key of an embodied dramaturgy: a writing mode and usage of the dramaturgical text in which corporeality is central. Presenting more questions than answering them, it searches for a dramaturgical work that narrates, dialogues, and proposes performativity and changes in the worlds-of-life of teachers in Undergraduate Theater Teachers Education as well as in the worlds-of-life of their prospective students, Brazilian children and teenagers.

Keywords: Dramaturgies of the Body. Childhood Culture. Creation. Pedagogies of Theatre.

RÉSUMÉ – Entre l'École et à l'Université: dinosaures et petits cahiers par un dramaturgie incarné – Cet article, écrit à six mains, insiste sur la non-dichotomie entre le corps et l'esprit, l'action et la pensée, l'objectivité et la subjectivité, afin d'arriver aux fécondes relations entre l'adulte et l'enfant au sein de la fictionnalité. Défend la pratique de l'enseignement du théâtre à l'université et à l'école, dans le cadre d'une dramaturgie incarnée: façon d'écriture et d'usage du texte dramaturgique dans lequel la corporéité est central. Présentant plus de questions que de réponses, on cherche un travail dramaturgique que raconte, converse, et propose performativité et changement dans les mondes de vie des étudiants du premier cycle de Théâtre, ainsi que les mondes de la vie de ses futurs étudiants, les enfants et les jeunes Brésiliens.

Mots-clés: Dramaturgie du Corps. Cultures de l'Enfance. Création. Pédagogies du Théâtre.

RESUMO – Entre Escola e Universidade: dinossauros e caderninhos por uma dramaturgia encarnada – Este texto, escrito a seis mãos, insiste na não-dicotomia entre corpo e mente, ação e pensamento, objetividade e subjetividade, de modo a alcançar as férteis relações adulto-criança no âmbito da ficcionalidade. Defende o exercício da docência do teatro tanto na universidade quanto na escola, na chave de uma dramaturgia encarnada: modo de escrita e de uso do texto dramaturgical no qual a corporalidade é central. Apresentando mais perguntas do que respostas, busca por um trabalho dramaturgical que narra, dialoga, propõe performatividade e mudança nos mundos de vida dos discentes das Licenciaturas em Teatro, bem como os mundos de vida de seus futuros alunos, crianças e jovens brasileiros.

Palavras-chave: Dramaturgias do Corpo. Culturas da Infância. Criação. Pedagogias do Teatro.

Featuring: Six hands, various bodies and some dramaturgies

flower

after sixty years, my mother returned to budapest with the three daughters. we were walking down an important avenue, when she stopped, plucked a flower from the flower bed, took off the stem and blew: the flower made a noise, as that of a whistle, it was a trick she used to do when she was little. and there we were, the three of us, amazed, watching my mother being little again¹ (Jaffe, 2011, p. 67).

We are three Brazilian teachers-researchers, three bodies crossed by so many others: three bodies constituted by the discourses and practices related to theater and education, to the subjects of the scenic pedagogies which are the focus of our teacher's investigative work. We are, therefore, six writing hands; we constitute ourselves and learn through various bodies, bearing in mind some dramaturgies in/of/and with the bodies at play – embodied dramaturgies, then. We inhabit the worlds-of-life of the university and of the school: our fields of investigation.

This paper begins even before the call for articles of the *Revista Brasileira de Estudos da Presença* (*Brazilian Journal of Studies on Presence*); we became a triad of academic partners, of exchanging thoughts and deeds, since 2014, in the course of the project *Little Anthropologies*² in which we discuss childhood in articulation to the arts and literature through anthropological and theatrical lenses. Not as much as, and beyond the formalization of investigative partnership through a research project, however, labor, academic and emotional encounters between us have been happening for more than a decade, through lines of intersection between our work dealing with the pedagogy of performing arts, childhoods, games, playing, traditional cultures, storytelling, cultural artifacts, teacher education, among other topics that we hold dear.

Partnership set, we, then, have as a general goal to build links, ties, acts of meaning in our teaching, joining the Theater Teachers Education of three Brazilian universities through discussion and shared debate over an extended time. As *extended time* we understand a temporality lived over many years, with no hurry, no rush, and no direct binding to strict sense deadlines, but focused on interaction and in the exchanging of possibilities. A time that, not chronological, relates to other durations.

We will refer to dramaturgy as a heterodox, hybrid, phenomonic, and undivided way of working with children and teenagers, whose core is the non-dichotomy between textuality and corporeality, i.e. we connect in experienced narratives through the very doings: bodily experiences, games and fun activities, inventiveness in the use of ordinary and extra-ordinary objects. Finally, it is a dramaturgy that arises from a true *work-in-progress* (Cohen, 1998) in which the game experience and conviviality reify what Machado (2004; 2015) has named as improvisational scripts, revealed by possible texts, movement scores, storyboards and images.

We evoke, thus, the dramaturgy in its direct relation with the body and with performativity. Children, teenagers, students, teachers – they are all performers that, in this process, investigate the dramaturgical power of their bodies in relations with the world. In Fabião's terms (2008, p 238.): “[...] If the performer evinces the body, they do so to expose the body-world”.

We shall note in here that the body will be never understood from a Cartesian dichotomy between body and soul, between thoughts and feelings, between reason and act. Body comprises the entirety, the subject in their most complex relations with and in the world, in interaction; involved in concomitant and indelible processes of doing, thinking, feeling, acting and being – *in* the body, not *with* the body. Our gaze is guided by the maxim that we do not have a body; we are a body instead, always in relation with the world and with others. Those relations with the otherness, the difference, similitudes, the known and the unknown constitute us.

Sofia (2013) ponders on the notion of an intrinsic relationship between action and perception, on the need for overcoming the current notion that places perception and action in distinct corporeal-mental poles. The author tells us that within and beyond the sensory and the motor systems there are complex, inseparable, emerging and selective structures.

If there is indeed a direct connection between perception and action (intuition that was to be corroborated a few years after [*enaction*] with the discovery of the mechanisms of mirror neurons), each perception of our world is as well an action on the same world. The world of the perceived is, therefore, not a predetermined world, but a world that changes in relation to our actions³ (Sofia, 2013, p. 40).

We affirm, along with Sofia (2013), that the interaction of the subjects with the world is the very action of the subjects in the world.

Incorporated knowledge – a concept used by Hastrup (1994), relates to the “corporeal nature of knowledge”. For her, cultural models are incorporated both in the sense that they are internalized in everyday body practices as well as in the sense that they are (externalized) in actions more than in words. Be it in the textual weaving as well as in the practical experiences that entail and support them, we are aligned with these theoreticians and their propositions on body and culture.

In this text we seek to answer the following question: how can we knit a relationship between dramaturgy and body, dramaturgies with/of/and on bodies in theater teaching? This question was born of our efforts as teachers and researchers in undergraduate theater teachers education, interested in childhood and adolescence. It also comes from our curiosity about how it would be possible to articulate theoretical dramaturgical knowledge and the dramaturgy at play, coexisting, with our students (in our bodies) and their future students – especially children and teenagers. This way, we intend to map and intersect the worlds-of-life between university and school, between adults and children, between our writing and the reader.

Our personal contributions will be perceived in the unfoldings of this work, for we are here also in search for a kind of authorial writing that can affirm the particularities of our knowledge and work area: theater and its teaching and learning processes. We aim at developing a type of discourse that delimits a possible territory; we propose a speaking word (Merleau-Ponty, 2003) that talks with the player not only in intellectual, cognitive syntony. Our quest is for a performative dialogue, that is, an open conversation, a work in process in which the reader fills in the blanks, re-creates ideas, (de)understands ingrained notions about theater and education. Ultimately, our quest is for another quality of academic text that at times will seem a *bricolage*. However, we do not consider that a mistake: it is, in fact, above all a proposition for the construction of a six-hand written text. It is also an elective affinity with what Kincheloe and Berry (2007) name as *methodology of the bricoleur*⁴.

We are looking for a Theater Teachers Education (TTE) that sets the students questions relating to the dramaturgical experience in a way of nev-

er leaving physicality aside, especially with regards to the performative work with children and teenagers. We would like to adopt a principle in which the bodily work is not external, but one that consists in the very human inter-subjectivity. If we take as a reference the Merleau-Pontinian notion of one's *own body* (Merleau-Ponty, 1999), all relational activity and inactivity constitutes itself in gesture-and-speech and silence, indivisible human spheres, in which theater and performance dwells with great intimacy. How to unveil gesture-and-speech, and silence, in a way of educating the theater teacher - this is the starting point of this article.

The question that steers (stir) us through these writings stems from the shared interpretation of two research processes carried out by Marina Marcondes Machado (2015) and Luciana Hartmann (2014; 2015). Machado's text, resulting from the investigative processes, is entitled *Multiple dramaturgies and the cultures of childhood and youth: creation in the ways of learning and teaching at the UFMG Theater Teachers Education course*⁵. Hartmann's research (2014; 2015), *Little Storytellers: what do children of different narrative traditions tell?*, resulted from field work with children at a public school in a satellite-city of Brasília (DF, Brazil), and from the post-doctoral internship research held in two public schools in Paris, in which immigrant children were encouraged to become storytellers.

In Machado's proposal, in order to dramaturgy to be addressed within a semester of fifteen weeks, it was divided, although schematically, in three units of work, thought and action: dramatic, epic, and post-dramatic dramaturgy. Dialogue, narrative distance and hybridism are the respective keywords of the writing modes - and *usage* of that written dramaturgy. To dialogue, to narrate and to perform can be the verbs, or actions, to be exercised by the students in Theater Teacher Education, so that they may envisage dramaturgical exercises for children and teenagers from what the author calls the *objects of culture* - borrowing from Winnicottian psychoanalysts (Graña; Outieral, 1991). Here we extend this notion to artifacts - songs, books, comics, games and playful activities, articles in newspapers and postings in blogs, among others. We also highlight the everyday observation or what Brecht (1998) has named *street scenes* as material for the dramaturgical "trick".

In the projects developed by Hartmann (2014; 2015), dramaturgy emerged in storytelling sessions, in which children were encouraged to narrate, tell them, write them down and, finally, to perform them. Each project had an average length of four months and the main objective was to provide a free and open environment for children to tell their own stories through different recreational activities (theater games, plays, and storytelling). Some of these stories and some of these narrative procedures with, and on the body are presented below as a way of encouraging the reader to materialize, in their own way, these possible dramaturgies of the body.

TTE students and Dinosaur Paw: from university to school

In order to propose a creative work with the children and adolescents corporeality, we can develop simple dramaturgical notions: the power of dialogue, the ironic distance (that of the joke and of game), the contemporary imagery mode, and the tradition of copying (of the 'statue' game, of mimesis as the core node of human capacity to symbolize). Drawing from Machado (2015), we will realize dramaturgical ways to guide children and teenagers to another place: to inhabit a third river-bank, to transport oneself to the intersection between reality and fantasy – to theater.

This is the first example:

A guy named Mariz
had pain in his nose
'I'll throw it away'
He said - and he immediately
did it and he lives happily since.

The little poem above is in Tatiana Belinky's book *Limeriques*, (1987, p. 15). Now let's move on to a possible trans-creation⁶ of *Limerique* for a play (dramaturgy) to be staged, used, misused, re-sized for the bodies of children and teenagers:

Days before ... Mariz, in a lot of pain, goes to the hospital. In the emergency room, he is attended by Dr. Botelho.

NARRATOR: This is the story of Mariz, a man who got rid of his nose.

MARIZ: Doctor, I'm in a lot of pain!

BOTELHO: Where, Sir, where?

MARIZ: In my nose, Doc, in my poor nose.

Dr. Botelho gets closer with a magnifying mirror.

BOTELHO: I need you to show me your pain in the mirror!

MARIZ, impatient: But... Dr. Botelho, don't be such a pain in my back! ... it is on the edge, in the middle, and bottom of the bloody nose - or my name is not Mariz...

Botelho, mad because of the poor and ugly rhyme 'Botelho/back', hit his nose with the mirror, breaking the object.

MARIZ, bleeding: I'll throw it away!

Mariz and Dr. Botelho freeze the action.

NARRATOR: And so he did; and today, he lives happily. End of Mariz' story, the man with no nose.

Let us say that through *nonsense*, absurd, funny scenes, as conducting adults among theater students, we can work the theme of parts of the human body, the disfiguring, the possible injury, and the aesthetics of terror: how to breathe without a nose? And other ideas and feelings, thoughts and actions regarding Mariz' relationship with Dr. Botelho, the relationship of the players with their characters, and with their own bodies, all could be worked in imaginative concreteness.

Following is a second example, a theatrical trans-creation of a (worn out) nursery rhyme - the public domain song *Carnation quarreled with rose*.

Carnation quarreled with Rose
Under a balcony
Carnation was hurt
And Rose, thorn into pieces

Carnation got sick
Rose went for a visit
Carnation fainted
And Rose started weeping

Next, a possible trans-creation of the popular song – our creation for a dramaturgy to be staged, toyed, re-trans-created and embodied by children or teenagers:

Characters:

Carnation
Rose
Ambulance Driver
Nurse
Doctor
Gardener
Garbage-man
Drugstore owner
Father Carnation
Mother Carnation
Father Rose
Mother Rose
Sister Carnation
Brother Rose
Soccer player
Hospital owner
Toy Library Director
Hospitalized Orchid
Hospitalized Calla Lilly

PART 1

Carnation and Rose play sword fighting.

CARNATION: Rose, draw your sword!

ROSE: No problem!

They exchange many sword strokes. Rose thrust to Carnation's stomach. Carnation falls and screams. But, from the ground, he hits Rose...

ROSE *in pieces*: Oh, what a shame! I'm naked!

Carnation does not think it's funny. Rose gets down to the floor to check the heartbeats. Rose yells and cries.

ROSE: Carnation, come back! Come back, Carnation!

*Ambulance sound.
Ambulance arrival.*

PART 2

*The scene takes place inside the ambulance.
In there: Carnation, Rose, Ambulance Driver, Doctor, Nurse and Gardener.
Carnation is on the ambulance stretcher, unconscious.*

AMBULANCE DRIVER: Never in the history of this country had such new and up-to-date ambulance been wasted (like that) on a little flower...

NURSE: Oh, poor thing!

GARDENER: Every flower is a person too! (Every flower got its rights!)

CARNATION *mutters, opening his eyes*: A “poor thing” is a rat offspring!

End of Part 2.

PART 3

To be created by players from the list of characters, context and situations already established.

In the second example, the conducting adult brings an initial theme, working with short and easy-to-remember dialogues so to, after two theatrical moments brought in relatively ready, propose to students to unfold the dialogues, conflicts, confusions, sameness, as well as everything a hospital could bring as dramaturgical space. And we think it is the most interesting challenge: how to be Rose, how to be Carnation, how to be Lily and Calla Lily?

Let us depart to a third example: to research the possibilities of the creative use of the object *dinosaur paw* (Figure 1) lying on a carpet (to be used as a scenic device by the players). We propose to children and teenagers to play dinosaurs. Following, a creation of ours - a possible imaginative verbal command, or an improvisational route (Machado, 2004; 2015):

We will all form a half circle facing the carpet. Each will have their 'dinosaur moment'. Try planning your entry to the carpet beforehand: how are you going to put the paw on and start to transform into a dinosaur? Be the dinosaur your own way; after a few minutes, take off the paw so to turn into a person again - and exit the carpet. It is the entrance on the carpet itself that will gradually take you to the dinosaur world. Try specially creating the rest of the dinosaur's body on you from the moment you start putting the paw onwards. Focus on the transformation: in the route towards / in being / and in the route back; from human state to dinosaur state, returning later on with this secret saved in you.

In connection with the cultures of childhoods, that is, through the modes of make-believe and the resourcefulness of the mimetic capacity, we take our students to other places and other times, proposing bodily transformation with simple, synthetic, and yet poetical commands.



Figure 1 – Dinosaur's Paw (Belo Horizonte, 2015). Source: Marina M. Machado.

The difference between realistic and prototypical scenes (or even stereotyped) and the imaginative, *nonsense*, provocative scenes, provocateurs of novelty and transformation, dwells, initially, in the way of proposing them. Through the living comprehension in the body emerge new ways of being and attitudes that can be named theatricality. Perhaps the key to the enigma would also be in a deeper layer - in the corporeality of the conducting adult, in their own previous playful and theatrical experiences: towards a bodily richness that will make it even without cloth racks, makeup or any realistic props. Asking them to save the *dinosaur mode* just like a secret of one's corporeality takes us to John Dawsey (2013, p 315.): "In the stories told through the body, there are some other stories that find shelter therein, and that have not yet come into being." Others call it *to seed a repertoire for non-actors*.

Little Play-Writers and Little Notebooks: from school to university

To propose a pedagogical work in theater that transcends the already worn-out (but still very much in use) body-mind dichotomy requires, firstly, an *attitude* of alertness and constant questioning about what we learn and what we practice⁷. In order to perform our daily tasks in theater classes in a more integrated way, we could start by deconstructing the very teacher/non-student relationship and revivifying the question asked many years ago by Fanny Abramovich in the title of his book: *Who educates whom?* (*Quem educa quem?*) (1985). In fact, wouldn't it be richer to think the school less as a space of *education* and more as a space of exchanging among individuals/groups with different types of knowledge, where one shares experiences, projects, desires and, undeniably, frustrations and disappointments too? Would that still be a matter of *educating*? How to take these questionings and reflections to future theater teachers courses and, more specifically, in our case, for the Theater Teachers Education?

It is possible to perceive a significant change in theater pedagogy in recent years in Brazil, marked by numerous publications of books and articles, as well as the creation of working groups, organized and acknowledged within ABRACE (Brazilian Association of Research and Post-Graduation in Performing Arts), the implementation of specific disciplines in pedagogical projects of Theater Teachers Education (many of them created in the last decade), among other aspects. However, whereas this new field has come to meet contemporary demands, it seems that the theoretical and methodological frameworks of the discussions have remained the same for at least 40 years, with rare exceptions. This is not about *overcoming* old traditions, but rather growing with them, from them. For this purpose, we propose what we call a *performed conversation*, in search for possibilities - our situated, contextualized, problematized, embodied possibilities.

Let's start this conversation by repositioning the children, important interlocutors in much of our artistic and pedagogical processes. We have adopted a principle: children are our partners of research, work, play, of creation. They are agents able to reflect, propose, and create. Although it seems obvious, we know that this does not happen with the deserved frequency. In most cases, children are treated as objects of research and not as

subjects. With this in mind, we propose that children become not only our interlocutors, but co-authors of a common research. Places changed, bodies changed. With fewer hierarchies and dichotomies, our relationship opens to new types of contact.

Studies on childhood's cultures, which are clearly interdisciplinary, have been adopting this fundamental co-authorship with children. Whereas in the performing arts it is relatively common to find practices in which children have a voice and their turn to act in the creative process as much as in the products (scenes, spectacles), there are yet few studies and artistic works that propose a reflection on the effective participation of children as co-authors (Ferreira, 2010, is an example of work in this perspective in the theatrical field). This balanced-distribution of roles [tasks, decision making] between adults and children is still poorly problematized in theoretical work in theater pedagogy (and, let's be fair, the same is true in other areas of the humanities).

Perhaps this is due to a certain naturalization of the status of the child as a being in development, incomplete, a perspective that came to be questioned only in recent times. As Corsaro (2011, p. 18) has noticed:

[...] It is common for adults to see children prospectively, i.e. in a perspective of what they will become – future adults with a place in the social order and its contributors. Children are rarely seen in a way that includes what they presently are – with ongoing lives, needs and desires.

In this author's view, throughout history there have been two different models of analyzing children's process of socialization. The first is the deterministic model (represented by names like Talcott Parsons) – a child plays a passive role in it, he/she is seen as a beginner who cannot contribute to society, or as an *untamed threat*, who must be controlled through training. The second model is the constructivist (whose greatest representatives are Piaget and Vygotsky). It represents, in particular, an important step in recognizing the role played by the child in society. Yet, one of the limitations of the constructivist developmental psychology would be, on the one hand, its focus on the individual child's development; on the other hand, the exaggerated concern with the development results (Corsaro, 2011, p. 29).

In response to these models, Corsaro, a sociologist with an extensive field research experience in early childhood education in both the United States and in Italy, states that childhood theories fail to consider the fact that a child's social development is given solely by the internalization of adults' skills and knowledge, recognizing the importance of collective activities that take place through processes of appropriation, reinvention and reproduction of culture.

Based on these assumptions, Corsaro proposes the notion of *interpretative reproduction* which addresses the reproductive aspects of life in society recognizing the innovative and creative participation of children, whom, therefore, are thought of as beings who actively contribute to the production and cultural changes. Thus, childhood came to be considered as a social category with its own characteristics, which vary according to their contexts and combinations with other social categories.

In a similar perspective, Clarice Cohn (2005, p. 33), in her book *Child Anthropology (Antropologia da Criança)*, repositions the terms that define generational differences: “[...] the difference between children and adults is not quantitative but qualitative; a child does not know less, they know something else”. Our proposal heads towards providing spaces/times for these “other things” to emerge, perhaps in the form of stories, dramaturgies, scenes. We are concerned, therefore, with the space of cultural creativity which is peculiar to children taken not only as enjoyers but also as cultural creators (Sarmiento, 2003, p. 7).

How to know and share this creativity and this knowledge with children though? To answer it, we must problematize the very methodological procedures used in the research. In our teaching and artistic practices, as we have mentioned above, we adopted a collaborative construction perspective with children. Ideals and actions are discussed horizontally within the group, and the teacher acts as an agent that contributes to the process both providing contexts and situations, as much as assisting in the organization of the proposals. In the process, children and adults participate in a common creative act, which may yield discoveries for both.

Let us move to a practical example, mentioned in the beginning of the paper: between 2013 and 2015 a collaborative research on children's narrative performances was conducted in different contexts – a Brazilian public

school and two French public schools (Hartmann, 2014)⁸ – *Little Storytellers*. Here we enter the perspective that brought us together in this writing: narrating involves bodily action, one narrates with the body, through the body, in the body. An expanded body: child's and adult's body-flesh, the scribbled small notebook's or the book's body-paper, body-school, of cluttered desks in shared storytelling acts.

How to enhance these bodies' concreteness (or their action?) in the artistic-theatrical [pedagogical] practice with children? In the three experiments mentioned above, the first step was to talk to the children, proposing their participation as researchers also. They would go find stories using the strategies they wanted. They could interview family members, search for it in books, invent them... Each child received a little notebook so they could write, annotate, draw, copy or invent the stories they wanted. The body-flesh marks the body-paper. What emerges from this relationship?

To answer this question we have to understand the way it happened. Each work session took place once a week and lasted from an hour and a half to two hours. It began with a game or folk-game with the whole group. Then the teacher/researcher would tell a story (which could be a personal story or reading of a traditional Brazilian tale, among other possibilities); students/researchers were encouraged to report their findings, to tell their stories in exchange. As a record-keeping strategy of their narrative performances, we chose to instruct the students on how to operate the equipment (a professional audio recorder and a photo-video camera), and they themselves made the recordings, photos and footages. The body-flesh moves the body-machine. What was there to tell?

During storytelling moments we always acted from an unrestricted listening perspective. Any narrative could be considered a story: fairy tales, traditional Brazilian stories, fables, family memories, life stories, invented stories, TV news, movies... A student of the Brazilian school, for example, brought to the group newspaper news regarding campaigns to prevent violence against women, and a Moroccan student of a French school said he had a dream with the story when asked about its source.

What about the little notebooks? Some were thrown to the floor or were lost before the end of the first class. Frustrated, the teacher-researcher

realized that those bodies-papers did not make sense for some children. Yet some others were cherished, decorated, saved as precious objects.



Figure 2 – Zara's Notebook (Paris, 2014). Source: Luciana Hartmann.

What happened to the stories that were not marked on paper? These would emerge in the body-voice that often preferred to tell them just to the teacher and a best friend, in the corner of the room, privately; or striking into the room, asking for silence, in a stunning performance. There is opportunity, there is time, there is room for all forms of expression - and if there is none, we can create, invent them.

Performed on paper, on the body and/or filmed, each child's stories started to gain colors, gestures, movements, emotions. Each project enabled the experimentation of a shared research in which the demands and transformations operating in all participants along the process were continuously evaluated and, in turn, they changed the course of the work. Thus, princes and princesses could (or had to) coexist with the explosion of the forest, the war between zombies and knights. And the teacher-researcher realized with her entire body how difficult it is to hear an eleven-year-old girl tell how her parents died less than a month before in a road accident; or a ten-year-old boy narrating detailed scenes of sexual violence watched in a movie...

Let us now take a look at some of the accounts that emerged from the creative processes developed by the children:

The Story of a Princess and a Prince

Author: Maria Guiomar, 11 years old

Once Upon a time...

A couple named Brenda and Jefferson. They lived in a very beautiful castle.

Brenda, her dream was to have a baby. The window opened and a bright light and three fairies appeared. And the little fairies made Brenda's dream come true. Three months have passed and Brenda got pregnant. Beside the castle lived a witch with a tamarind tree. Since Brenda liked tamarind very much, she asked her husband, Jefferson, to pull a few. But that didn't do, she ate them and wanted more. So Jefferson went to pluck some more. Suddenly, the witch appeared: 'Why are you pulling my tamarinds out?' - 'Because she's pregnant and she's craving for them'. Then she cast a spell and killed the couple.

End⁹.

We might ask: Is this the end? Did the couple died? An unhappy ending? Yes; and all because of a tamarind... Yes: Maria Guiomar lives in a village formed alongside a major highway by irregular occupation. This village is marked and stigmatized by the larger community due its high rates of violence. The school where Maria Guiomar studies is across the highway and there is no footbridge for the children. Somehow, the girl embodies several layers of her personal experience in this narrative, *fictionalizing* (Palheiro, 1992) and creating another way of expressing them.

Similarly, Zara, a ten-year-old girl, a newcomer from Chad, tells a personal story:

When I was little in Chad¹⁰

Author: Zara, 10 years old

When I was little, in Chad, one day I was playing and my friend was very mean to me because I did not play with her. Her name was Féesae. She took a big stone and threw it on my knee. That hurt me a lot. I got scars on my leg.

When I grew up, I went to Féesae's house. She had many brothers. I asked her:

- Why did you hurt me when I was little?

And she answered:

- Because you did not play with me.

That day she hit me and I hit her too. She cried and then, later, later, later she came to my house and asked me to forgive her. We became friends after¹¹.

Here, it is Zara's body that is hit and she tells the story explaining by whom and how it was marked. Through the narrative performance, she accesses and reviews her memory while creating it for the collective. Zara especially demonstrated her performative capacity when she started to be filmed. In spite of being 10 years old, she hasn't been taught to read and

write in her home country, from where she has departed as a refugee to France a few months before this research. If, on the one hand, her difficulty with the writing put her in a visibly uncomfortable position before some already literate younger colleagues, on the other hand her remarkable narrative performance repositioned her in class relations. This way, Zara's corporeality met the colleagues' different corporealities in the common act of sharing memories, dreams, desires and imaginations.

In the two examples mentioned, possible dramaturgies emerge embodied in the girls' performed stories – ephemeral, powerful, products of a specific collective of children. Although in the narratives' registration, transcription and printing process the body-flesh had given place to the body-paper, this allowed the children a concrete sense of *authorship*. Empowered, they can decide on how to tell/stage/live their stories.

From the Dramaturgy (ies) to (in) the Body and Vice Versa: between school and university

The body is the first place where the hand of the adult marks the child, it is the first space where social and psychological limits are imposed to her/his conduct, it is the emblem where culture comes, writes up its signs as well as its coats of arms (Vigarello, 1978, p. 9).

If we want dramaturgies in/with/of the body into the educational work with children and teenagers, with contemporary childhoods and adolescences, how should we think the formation of the theater professor in undergraduate and in Theater Teachers Education programs? And what about the continued education of theater teachers?

We have come to a deadlock, a divide, a gap, a space of *in betweenness* that sometimes, instead of being used as a propellant of the desire for knowledge, for the collective willingness for construction of knowledge and experience (teachers + students, all in and with the world) – the way it is told in Rancière (2002) about the ignorant master who encourages students to pursue, through the incitement of desire and the power of believing that one can know (and do) – shows us undergraduate TTE students and theater teachers undermined by the weight of theory and clinging onto games as they were the only way of teaching in schools and in non-formal education.

Theater teaching in Brazil, since its beginnings, as Santana (2010) and Pupo (2005) narrate, is underpinned by the absolute importance of the dramatic game, of the theatrical game, playground games, symbolic games and improvisation as a means for the language elements acquisition (watching, doing, living, understanding, meaning) and for scenic relationship. Today, we may aspire for more complex connections in the formation of theater teachers: how to take the TTE students to articulate theory and theatrical practice with theatrical pedagogy?

This is the place from where we speak and write, a place from where our thinking and desires depart in order to question our practices as professors in the Theater Teachers Education programs, as researchers interested in contemporary multiple and diverse childhoods and adolescences and in ways of doing (and learning, and teaching) that bring to the fore (why not to the dance?) these entangled contents and theatrical notions (content and concepts as in Icle (2011)): body, dramaturgy, game and theory, TTE students and young theater teachers, children and young students.

It is important to note that the TTE students very often feel constrained when, by the time they reach the phase of internship and educational practices in mainstream schools and non-formal educational spaces, they are not able to put together all that knowledge on various theoretical and practical disciplines, and the countless activities of the theatre graduation ranging from doing to knowing, watching, discussing, problematizing, and thinking about the performing arts and about themselves in relation to the world. How could all that turn into a lesson (lesson as meant in the experiential and performative sense proposed the introduction of this text)? How to build a pedagogic practice with students in which the knowledge of the disciplines in the axis body-voice-game-improvisation (the titles are numerous and different in each Theater Teachers Education curriculum of the existing courses in Brazil) can be intertwined to those related to dramaturgy and the history of the theater, for example?

Knowing the game and the body at play, experiencing dramaturgical mechanisms and procedures, creating and telling stories through the body and through the dramaturgy with and on the body, knowing the history of theater and its models, knowing how and who are the contemporary children: we make use of a wide and diverse theoretical-methodological re-

source in the *menu* presented in these writings. How, then, from such knowledge, concepts, content and experiences, to sew a plot that engenders a new text, textures of old threads into a new and unexpected embroidery, rearward and beyond the cognitive key? This seems to be the great challenge to be faced in Theater Teachers Education in Brazil at the moment.

We built (we, professors) our course outlines with what we deem absolutely necessary for the formation of a theater. However, do we offer creative spaces that allow our students to effectively produce pedagogies in theater from/with/ through all these knowledge and ideas? Do we act like the ignorant master mentioned in Rancière (2002), who, because of their ignoring, questions (and instigate), rather than providing answers?

Moreover: why a theater history class would be necessarily lectures-like or start from the display of slides? Why when working dramaturgy in the classroom with children and teenagers we go back to pens and papers, sitting in our classrooms, acting out the disciplinary work which tells us Foucault (1987) of when commenting on the school institution? Why game, body, and imagination, put into action and live, are always the “before” dramaturgy and never “during”? Why the teacher is the one who compiles the material from the students’ improvisations and writes a formal text a posteriori? Or yet, why the teacher chooses a dramatic text beforehand to work with students? Why producing dramaturgy in school is still often detached from the body at play?

Echoing with the previous questions: how the game can exceed its game function (i.e. its entire non-productive objectiveness) and become a major producer of dramaturgy with/in/of bodies in class? How can a theater teacher conciliate what they’ve learned from the dramaturgy lessons at the university with the educational work for children and teenagers? Would there be power in childhoods and adolescences to challenge Aristotle, Victor Hugo, Zola, Brecht, Szondi, Lehmann, Heliadora, Magaldi (among other theoreticians, our old pals in Brazilian universities)? Could our students act towards the breakdown of epistemological monopoly of the *North*?

And still, on how to draw possible connections: why for, after all, one study all this – the authors, history, dramaturgy, aesthetics, the pedagogues-directors – if that knowledge disappears, as if by magic, from theater pedagogical practices – both in regular classes as in free workshops – kept forever

as tangential knowledge or a lecture class, a type of *ace in the hole for the rainy days* [sic], a type of joker-activity, or for *that more agitated bunch* [sic]? At school, theory *calms the class down* what, in itself, points to another problem: theory should dislodge, instigate, show the unknown, destabilize what is already known, even among very young children. Theory that alleviates, kills instead of allowing for new germination.

Finally: have we asked ourselves enough of those questions, we, theater teachers at all levels of education? If we don't present solutions here, we intend, instead, at least to draw some escape lines that start to entwine these body's threads to the dramaturgies and vice versa in our own way, starting from the children and teenagers with whom we have been working: from school to university, from university to school, both perpetually traversed by the world and the worlds-of-life, by the performativity of embodied dramaturgies.

So, here we present experiences that have children, youth and the undergraduate in Theater Teachers Education as protagonists in the construction of various dramaturgies. To play, to account, to write, to draw, to imagine, to report, to interview, to sing, to move, to look at are the verbs present in the experiments reported. *Nonsense* or ironic, sentimental, or terrifying - how to write with and in the body that what our students want to tell, and their students, children and teenagers? Would this be a powerful question in building of pedagogies within dramaturgies of/in/and with the body, an embodied dramaturgy?

The stories in here are not a prescription. They are not fix formulas, neither are they meant to be copied. They are, instead, lines drew from experiences about work possibilities with dramaturgy and body and children and teenagers in theater classes or in research related to theater pedagogy which are intended to instigate, perhaps inspire, weaving textures created by teachers and the undergraduates of the Theater Teachers Education - textures between dramaturgy, when read, studied and understood, and that which is still within the space of coming-to-being, among prospective students of regular schools and of free workshops.

It may be from the notebook, from the dinosaur paw, from the newspaper report, the neighborhood gossip, from glances interchanged in the previous class game, from *The Odyssey*, from some Sebastião Salgado's

photograph, a fairy tale, the fight with some cousin, from the sounds of the square, cultural artifacts – so many and innumerable – and from the experiences that cross children and teenagers' lives, the themes and issues around them, and from no theme or subject, no image: from an odor, a color, a fear, and finally, a love. Without an end. The list is endless. It starts with *you and me*, though.

It is critical to work with TTE students in a way that breaks with an over-used attitude of separating *body work*, *vocal work*, *text work*. Good acting classes for non-actors can depart from taking corporeity as our being-in-the-world, corporeity assumed as our biographical envelope, as our hallmark – identity-given, creative, performative, full of imaginary concreteness, pregnant of emptinesses. What matters most for us here is putting an end to the cleavage between subjectivity and objectivity: beginning of a way of being in the world, amongst children and teenagers, where the playing and the game are not the intermedia, but rather the main existential broth of relations between teacher and the beginner, people coexisting, there where the relational field is itself the lesson, it is already the form-content, it is already what matters – a body acquired in a state of risk, temporary, pre-formed within changefulness.

What might be complex is to build the “how”, to turn idea into planning, and planning into action, and action to become a game, and a game to become theater, and to turn theater into incarnate knowledge. We keep searching, building our dramaturgy in our bodies, with our students and the students of our students. The challenge is set: grab your notebook and your dinosaur paw, and take a chance with us!

Notes

- ¹ Lowercase was kept as in the original.
- ² The three authors are researchers in this project, which was awarded a grant through CNPq's Call Notice-14/2014 (Edital Universal CNPq-14/2014), and is coordinated by anthropologist Guilherme José da Silva e Sá, professor in the Department of Anthropology at the Universidade de Brasília.
- ³ Author's Portuguese translation from the Italian original, further translated into English.

- 4 Kincheloe proposes *bricolage* as a strategy of analysis and interpretation of phenomena that include the diversity of subjects involved and in which investigation procedures constitute themselves along the very process.
- 5 Text winner of the Rubens Murillo Marques Award, Edition 2015. São Paulo, FCC, 2015.
- 6 Term adopted by us, coined by Haroldo de Campos (Tapia; Nobrega, 2015).
- 7 We here think in the paradigm shift proposed in Boaventura de Sousa Santos and Maria Paula Meneses' *South Epistemologies* (2010), that join forces with the post-colonial critique to the epistemological monopoly of the global North, which denies *other* knowledge, but that of science and technology.
- 8 The research were conducted in three fifth-grade groups at the EFC 01 Sobradinho, satellite-city of Brasília, between August and December 2013; and in two CLIN classes (Adaptation classes for non-francophone students, which welcomes foreigner immigrant or refugee children) between February 2014 and January 2015 at École Keller, located in *11ème arrondissement*, and at École Eugène Varlin in *10ème arrondissement*, Paris. The studies conducted in Paris at Université Paris Ouest - Nanterre La Défense were under the supervision of Professor Muzart Fonseca dos Santos, and were financed by CAPES Bolsa de Estágio Sênior (Senior Internship Grant), awarded for post-doctorate abroad.
- 9 The story of Maria Guiomar was written by herself in the small notebook. The original spelling was kept.
- 10 **Quand j'étais petite au Tchad**
Quand j'étais petite au Tchad, un jour j'étais en train de jouer. Ma copine était très méchante avec moi parce que je ne jouais pas avec elle. Elle s'appelait Féésae. Elle a un gros prit caillou et elle l'a lancé sur mon genou. Ça m'a fait très mal. Je suis resté avec des grand scicatrices dans ma jambe.
Quand j'étais Grandi je suis parti chez Féésae. Elle avait beaucoup de frères. Je lui a demandé:
– 'Pourquoi, quand j'étais petite tu m'a fait mal?'.
Elle m'a répondu:
– 'Parce-que toi, tu ne jouais pas avec moi'.
Dans ce jour elle m'a frappé et moi aussi je lui a frappé. Elle a pleuré et après après après elle est venue chez moi et m'a demandé de la pardonner. Puis on est devenue amies.

¹¹ The story of Zara was orally told, recorded, transcribed, and later translated into Portuguese by the researcher.

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