


PAPER

Dance teacher education for the school context: views and achievements in step with experience***Formação do professor de dança para o contexto escolar: visões e realizações no passo da experiência***

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ABSTRACT

+This paper focuses on the training of dance teachers for the school context, and it looks at how the initial teacher education of dance teachers is conducted within a public university with a solid background in the field. Two theoretical perspectives to teacher education served as catalysts in the research process: the idea of a reflective and practical professional, connected with that of professional teacher knowledge. Its methodology involved documentary analysis and narrative interviews, and its epistemic-methodological contribution consists in an (auto)biographical approach. The analysis was built from aspects that inquire on the initial teacher education of dance teachers, as well as on dance education conceptions and practices. The results indicate that reflections about dance elements and personal experiences with the artistic field are considered in teaching and learning processes in dance. Findings include views of dance as an art form, as well as methodologies that are conducive to creative processes and an education conception that is both interactive and collaborative.

Keywords: Teacher Education. Dance Teacher Education. Epistemology of Practice. Teacher Professional Knowledge Base.

RESUMO

O artigo tem como foco a formação do professor de dança para o contexto escolar, e teve por objetivo compreender como se configura a formação inicial do professor de dança no Brasil, no âmbito de uma universidade pública com trajetória consolidada na área. Duas perspectivas teóricas da formação docente funcionaram como catalisadores do processo de investigação: a ideia de profissional prático reflexivo em articulação com o conhecimento profissional docente. Sua metodologia desenvolveu-se com análise documental e entrevistas narrativas, tendo como aporte epistêmico-metodológico a perspectiva (auto) biográfica. A análise foi construída a partir de aspectos que se debruçam sobre a formação inicial do professor de dança, e as concepções e práticas de formação em dança. Os resultados indicam que a reflexão acerca dos elementos da dança e a vivência no campo artístico são consideradas nos processos de ensino e aprendizagem

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em dança. Constatou-se a compreensão da dança enquanto arte, a presença de metodologias favorecedoras de processos criativos e uma concepção de formação interativa e colaborativa.

Palavras-chave: Formação de Professores. Formação de Professores de Dança. Epistemologia da Prática. Base de Conhecimento Profissional Docente.

Introduction

This article presents results of a study focusing on the teacher education of dance teachers for the school context. The study is conducted in a scenario of affirmation of dance in the school curriculum, expressing the need for specific training for dance teachers. It involves some interconnected factors that contribute to delimiting the question that guided the research. What would these factors be? On the one hand, dance is observed to be present in school between the fields of Art and Physical Education (Soter, 2016); on the other hand, recent curriculum documents have emerged that assign an institutionalized place to dance in basic education (BNCC, 2018). In between both, some aspects stand out which clearly show the lack of teachers properly licensed and qualified to work with dance in the curriculum adopted from early childhood to secondary education (Battle, 2016); additionally, there is not enough physical space to practice it in school, as well as a lack of awareness in the school community about dance teaching and its potential for students' education (Marques, 2010). Thus, the importance of and need for specific teacher education is starting to be perceived, especially because there is a long way to go for those engaged in the connection between dance, school, and teaching (Strazzacappa; Morandi, 2012). This path will require facing challenges and building knowledge and practices that can increasingly help legitimize this form of education as specialized teacher work.

Thus, this study focused on investigating how this professional is being trained in a public university setting that is particularly prepared for this, with significant accumulation of knowledge of the field and reputed professionals who have been dedicating themselves to its cause and its consequent expansion in academia. Thus, the problem was addressed through this question: What teacher education paths are comprised in one's process of becoming a dance teacher in the context of an undergraduate licensure program that stands out for its tradition in the field? Therefore, this study aims to understand how the initial teacher education of dance teachers has been conducted in Brazil, in the context of a public university with a solid background in the field.

Through their presence in school, dance teachers are the ones who can enable pupils' educational development in the field of dance, as these are the teachers who have specific knowledge of this field, as well as knowledge of teaching. These factors led us to look at the teacher education of dance teachers for insights into how one can learn to be a teacher of this curriculum component in the context of an undergraduate licensure degree program with a significant reputation in the field.

Therefore, this study examined the teacher education of dance teachers in the context of a public institution that is a pioneer in the field of dance, so as to bring to the fore its curriculum intentions, the knowledge sources it works with, and the knowledge mobilized to train students to

teach dance in school.

Theoretical-methodological aspects

Two theoretical perspectives to teacher education served as catalysts in the research process: the idea of a reflective and practical professional (Schön, 2000) connected with that of a teacher professional knowledge base (Shulman, 2014). We assume this educational perspective to be particularly relevant in training dance teachers and in their teaching role in basic education, so it represents a nodal idea for the study.

In developing his thesis on the reflective and practical professional, in what he calls an “epistemology of practice,” Schön (2000) builds relevant criticism of the professional training based on technical rationality and advocates for training that is built in the studio, through experience. Two central ideas are critical to understand the epistemology of practice: knowledge-in-action and reflection-in-action. Both start off from spontaneous activities of daily life. The former is based on implicit tacit knowledge, which is expressed when one performs a given task, without requiring prior or systematic reflection. The latter is when a professional is faced with a given situation where they are challenged to seek new solutions, on which they may reflect during and after their action; this movement is not isolated and quick, as it involves repetition and investigative action. Still according to the author, another moment that is part of this movement consists in reflecting on the reflection in action, a more elaborate act where the professional aims to understand their action, improves their interpretation of that action, and is able to create alternatives for a given situation.

Thus, reflective practice requires specific preparation, based on the assumption of learning by doing, in clear opposition to reiterative instruction, and clearly valuing experience. This approach is founded on the importance of “reflective action,” made possible by the modus operandi of the studio, in which the interaction and collaborative work between students and teachers can promote systematization and problem-solving.

We propose that the epistemology of practice represents a powerful approach to dance teacher education. This argument relies on the view of a practical and reflective professional’s education advocated by Schön (2000). In this view, as he criticizes technical rationality, the author also brings forth an approach that considers the learning arising from the studio, from artisanship, from artistic talent, from tacit, practical, and reflective knowledge. These aspects are conducive to an art education, and are also found in the modus operandi of artistic endeavors, since art education is also founded on experimentation, reflection, and repetition.

The practical and reflective perspective is connected to Shulman’s (2014) studies, as the author criticizes the field of teacher training, which he says neglects aspects related to classroom management and teachers’ ideas on teaching. In his observations of veteran teachers at work, the author relied on arguments that aimed to answer these questions: What are the sources of knowledge for teaching? In what terms can these sources be conceptualized? Imbued with these questions, he builds his arguments around the categories knowledge, teaching sources, and the concept of pedagogical reasoning. This author believes that the content taught, the classroom

context, and students' physical and psychological characteristics are important aspects that should be known by teachers who attain licensure in the various teaching fields.

Thus, Shulman (2014) lists some categories and organizes them around the professional knowledge base. We highlight the category "pedagogical knowledge of the content," as it represents the amalgam between the content of a particular field of knowledge and pedagogy, and identifies the distinct bodies of knowledge necessary to teach. We therefore question: What is the pedagogical knowledge of the content in the case of dance teachers engaged in dance teaching in schools? As an autonomous knowledge field, dance possesses a range of knowledge that has developed throughout history. However, as it enters school, it pulls to itself the teaching aspect, driving our interest towards thinking about what would be the epistemology of dance teaching in school and what would be the dance teacher's pedagogical knowledge of the content.

Therefore, we inquire on how to think about the specific contents of dance with the questions that involve pedagogy and the "how to teach". The idea is to promote a teacher education that guarantees that the future teacher is able to know and propose ways of mediating pedagogical practice. It is also necessary that such practice is based on conceptions that allow situating the social role of these mediations.

Following our research-guiding question – which led us to investigate what educational paths are comprised in the process of learning to be a dance teacher in the context of a licensure degree course that stands out for its tradition in the field –, our choice of field and subjects pointed to an intentional and purpose-led definition, with predefined criteria and profiles. The empirical field, i.e., the chosen public university institution, should be one with significant accumulation of knowledge of the field and reputed professionals who have been dedicating themselves to its cause and its consequent expansion in academia.

In this sense, we searched the E-MEC (2018) for federal, state, and private institutions across the five regions of the country that offered undergraduate programs in dance (baccalaureate, licensure, and dance theory), and arrived at the following table:

Table 1: Possible research fields

INSTITUTIONS	TOTAL	BACCALAUREATE / TECNÓLOGO¹	DEGREE
FEDERAL	25	7	18
STATE	9	3	6
PRIVATE	12	4	8
FEDERAL, STATE, AND PRIVATE	46	14	31

Source: E-MEC (2018).

Through this search, we found 31 dance licensure degree courses offered in federal, state,

¹ T.N.: The Brazilian tecnólogo program is similar to an Associate Degree in Applied Science in the U.S, though a tecnólogo degree always qualifies its holder to pursue post-graduate education.

and private institutions. We then created a new chart using the courses' year of creation as the criterion. The year of creation is relevant as it defines the length of time dedicated to the field, which is consistent with the idea of a tradition. We suspect that higher education institutions that had been working for longer with dance and training teachers for the field accumulate experience and professional knowledge about it.

The fact that an institution was among the first to create a licensure degree in dance can reveal aspects that characterize experience and tradition, having formed a greater number of teachers and built and settled a field (dance as academic knowledge). Finally, time and tradition can also reveal the presence of important theoretical references through people who have occupied/occupy prominent positions in the field. Thus, the research field was chosen based on criteria like the course's time of creation and tradition, which pointed us to the Federal University of Bahia² (its course was created in 1956) as an empirical field of study.

It should also be noted that an institution does not represent something static in time: It possesses movement, and its changes arise from the actions of those participating in it. Considering this, a narrative approach emerged as a promising epistemic-methodological possibility to enter the institution and contact its people, in order to understand their views, perceptions, and thoughts about the initial teacher education for dance teachers that was provided there.

With the principles of narrative research always in mind, we found it necessary to adopt two methodological strategies: documentary analysis as the secondary material and interview as the primary material. With regard to our guiding documents, we analyzed Resolution CNE/CP No. 21, of July 1, 2015 (Brasil, 2015), and Resolution CNE/CP No. 2, of December 20, 2019 (Brasil, 2019). In addition, we also analyzed the National Curriculum Guidelines for Undergraduate Programs in Dance, the National Curriculum References for Baccalaureate and Licensure Degrees in Dance (Brasil, 2010), and the National Common Curriculum Base for Art/Dance. For this article, we will only present the analyzes resulting from the interviews.

Regarding the field research, the group of subjects was as follows: the institution's director, the coordinators and vice-coordinators of its dance licensure degree programs (daytime, nighttime, and distance learning), some of the teacher trainers in its Structuring Teaching Core (NDE), and teachers undergoing initial teacher education who were attending the final terms of the dance licensure degree program (daytime and nighttime). The subjects were chosen based on our need to hear those leading the initial teacher education of future teachers in a licensure degree program, as is the case of the coordinators and teachers in the program's NDE. In addition, we found it equally relevant to hear students who were finishing the program, as we considered that it would add significantly to the study to obtain different views and perceptions about the initial teacher education provided at the institution. The study also heard two teacher trainers from other higher education institution³ as

² The study reported here was submitted to the Ethics and Research Council (CEP) at the institution the authors are affiliated with, and was fully approved. Following the CEP guidelines, as well as those of the institution where the study was conducted, we chose to use fictitious names to designate the participants.

³ The interviews were conducted on a pre-test basis, and due to the relevance of their accounts, we decided to add them to the material to be analyzed. Their names were chosen because they are teachers with a renowned dance teaching background and extensive knowledge of the field, and were therefore treated as privileged informants for the research.

privileged informants, totaling a group of 15 interviewees, as can be seen in Chart 1, below:

Chart 1. Research subjects' identification

NAME ⁴	POSITION	TIME AT THE INSTITUTION
Alessandra	Daytime licensure student	2014 – 2019/1
Andreia	Daytime licensure student	2015 – 2019/1
Antônio	Dance licensure degree coordinator, DL, and an NDE faculty for the daytime program.	Since 1994
Berenice	Dance licensure degree vice-coordinator, nighttime program, and an NDE faculty for the nighttime program.	Since 1979
Caio	Graduated from the nighttime licensure program	2014 - 2018
Carolina	Director	Since 2012
Celina	Teaching staff vice-coordinator – daytime baccalaureate and licensure programs – and a teaching internship trainer.	Since 2017
Dalva	Dance consultant	Since the 1960s
Daniel	NDE faculty, nighttime program, and specializing in the body studies module, with an emphasis on folk, indigenous, and African-Brazilian dance.	Since 2016
Fabício	NDE faculty, nighttime, Specialization Course Coordinator, and a tenured faculty at PRODAN ⁵ and the master's program.	Since 2016
Larissa	Privileged informant - Dance Licensure Degree Coordinator (at an institution in the South region of Brazil).	Since 2005
Marília	NDE faculty and specializing in the body studies module (emphasis on Black dances); critical and analytical studies and body laboratory.	Since 2016
Roberta	Teaching Staff Coordinator, nighttime, baccalaureate and licensure programs. Faculty at PRODAN and dance post-graduation programs (master's and academic doctorate).	Since 2015
Sônia	Privileged informant - Professor of Dance Didactics with extensive dance teaching practice – Dance degree course (at an institution in the Southeast region of Brazil).	Since 2010
Suzana	Dance Licensure Program Coordinator, daytime program.	Since 2017

Source: the authors, based on the study dossier.

The interviews aimed to understand the singular combination of facts, situations, relationships, meanings, and interpretations each respondent gives to their own experience and which found the sense they have of themselves as a singular being. By allowing us access to their accounts through

⁴ The study subjects will be identified by fictitious names so that their real identities remain confidential, as established in the free and informed consent document.

⁵ Arts Professional Graduate Program.

the interviews, they enabled us to produce meanings about the studied object. As Bueno (2002) reminds us, we can learn the social context based on the specifics of an individual praxis.

Based on the studied object and the research questions, the interviews were recorded and transcribed, and their contents organized in analytical charts, following the idea of convergence and divergence in our interviewees' accounts. Their responses were entered into the first chart according to each question as expressed in the interview script. In the second chart we selected the excerpt (or excerpts) that corresponds to present-related topics in the interview script. In the third chart, we selected and organized the excerpts following the idea of convergence and divergence, creating an intersection of accounts. This approach was adopted to identify the study's main analytical topics. Despite its simplicity, it is also a judicious process, requiring time and creativity, and allowing us to examine the interviewees' narratives in close connection with the research goals.

In this study we present the results of the narrative interviews, organized around two main aspects: the initial teacher education of dance teachers and conceptions and practices of dance education.

The initial teacher education the dance teacher from its protagonists' perspective:

In the dialogs with the coordinators, teacher trainers, and students, as we centered the debate on the initial teacher education of dance teachers, some aspects were perceived.

The first one points to the importance of deepening and expanding reflections on dance language elements, combined with advocating that students experience the artistic process and that it should be crossed by dance-related experiences. Some examples:

Experiencing the artistic process, I think that's fundamental. The dance experience is an experience, not special... very different from others... I think it can develop a number of things that are essential for human beings, like solidarity. Noticing the next person, because when you're dancing, you have to look so you don't bump into them, and they don't bump into you (Dalva – teacher training).

In Dalva's words, dance teachers' initial teacher education should allow them to experience the artistic process which, in our view, is built through artisanship, experimentation, repetition, imbued with reflection. Below is what a future teacher tells us about this issue:

This context of praxis, really, not practice as in theory and practice. We're always trying to understand these processes through logbooks, portfolios, in processes like the performative panel, which is a sample of works for each module, or between modules, which is shown in other configurations: video dance, installation, performance, plays, parades (Alessandra – initial teacher education student).

In her account, Alessandra reports on the teaching and learning process she has been experiencing in the dance licensure degree program. Initially, she describes how praxis, as concrete action, arises from a process that does not allow dichotomies and also involves going through a process that takes place in various forms or expression. They allow mobilizing knowledge of the field of dance, experiences that shape students' singularities, as well as memory and creation. This whole

path can promote “reflective action”, whereby interaction and collaborative work between students and trainers allow systematizing and solving problems, as in the epistemology of practice (Schön, 2000).

This movement—between the thought and the experienced—shows that dance teachers’ initial teacher education takes paths that are affirmed in the field of art as a process. As Dalva points out, this experience is not special, but rather different from others, and the difference is affirmed in its dynamics and in the teaching and learning processes. As it enters school, dance can share a way of teaching and learning that is built by experimenting, and it can also expand its potential to act, corroborating the dialogue between art and teaching, as discussed by Marques (2011).

Following with this discussion, which is focused on dance teachers’ initial teacher education, the second aspect highlighted was the need to link students’ artistic education to a pedagogical dimension. The view below is representative of this aspect:

I think we need a curriculum and a teacher education that engages well with the artistic field, because the licensure program often leaves a lot to be desired for the artistic part, and it cannot be like that. You don’t need to be an artist, but you need to understand what the role of that art is, [...] dance can educate because it is dance, not because it was designed to educate. So perceiving art in itself, the pedagogical dimension of it needs to be worked on as deeply as possible. And it can’t be something shallow either, it can’t stay in the artistic part only, and every man for himself when you go to the classroom. And at the same time these two parts have to be combined with practicing heavily. So, I’m not so glad that they’ve increased the pedagogical practice hours (Celina – vice-coordinator).

At the heart of the discussion, the need for dance education to engage with both its artistic and pedagogical sides appear. This dialogue must be thought out so that both are imbricated: Knowledge of content of the field of dance must be deepened, as this is the dance teacher’s teaching object. On the other hand, when teaching this content, the teacher needs specific knowledge of the field of teacher education or, in Celina’s words, the “pedagogical dimension.” We believe that this aspect can be addressed when we think about the concept of pedagogical knowledge of the content as discussed by Shulman (2014). It links specific knowledge of a particular field to the aspects that involve teaching and how to teach. We believe that the challenge of a licensure degree program in dance is precisely to propose a dialogue between both fields, as Celina pointed out. We are not stressing a fragmentation, but thinking about what dance teachers’ pedagogical knowledge of the content is. This is a topic that needs to be discussed.

The third aspect concerns the strategy of strengthening the dialogue between initial teacher education and basic education schools. The interviewees’ accounts referred to in-school curricular internship quite often and showed an emphasis on bringing university and school closer together. The account below is representative of this aspect:

We began to see that licensing a teacher required them to have public school experience. So, we increased the courseload supposedly for internships to 4 semesters, that’s a big courseload gain. In the 5th semester they begin to approach a formal teaching position, a school, to diagnose whether or not it offers dance, whether that’s possible. Then the next semester they propose an intercession, design a project, and in the last two semesters,

they'll actually apply it in the school curriculum. So, this makes a huge difference in the dance teacher education (Daniel – teacher trainer).

This excerpt highlights the importance of engaging in a curricular teaching internship within a school. The increased internship course load determined by official documents, like future teachers entering the public school that is partnering with the institution, allows circularity between both spaces. Students have a real education locus, with teachers trained by the investigated institution itself; if they wish, they may later occupy the place of teacher trainers in the basic education schools of the region. Being in a school, understanding its institutional culture, proposing lesson plans, perceiving students' demands, leaving the student position to experience that of a teacher, represents an extremely relevant moment in the dance teacher's training. Being in a school is learning to think and act like a professional (Novoa, 2017), learning to be a licensed teacher in the field of dance.

For the participants, the fourth guiding aspect in dance teacher education concerns the importance of considering student profile. This recommendation is directly related to the substantial changes in the higher education admission process, particularly the abolition of the specific skill test (THE) and the implementation of the Restructuring and Expansion of Federal Universities (REUNI) policy. The dance school in question abolished the THE in 2014, and admission to undergraduate courses has since then been via the Unified Selection System (SISU). The specific skill test would take two days of technical, interpretative, and creative assessment, including group classes and a day of written test, analysis of videos or texts, and was meant to assess what candidates knew of contemporary dance (UFBA, s./d). In turn, the REUNI (a program that supports the restructuring and expansion of federal universities) was implemented in 2008 to expand students' access to and permanence in higher education.

After both actions, i.e., the abolition of THE and the implementation of REUNI, the participants highlighted significant changes in student profile. Today the institution has four undergraduate dance programs, three of which are licensure degrees, and each class has its own characteristics. This student heterogeneity brought significant changes to the institution, as seen below:

We had a specific skill test. So admitted candidates had some previous knowledge of dance, the specific skill test itself gave us a hint of what we'd find here. Then, after we adhered 100 percent to SISU and removed the specific skill test, the profile of admitted students changed a lot (Celina – vice-coordinator).

[...] After REUNI, we saw an extraordinary change in student profile. Salvador has 85% of Blacks and Browns, and 15% of whites. At the institution, up until 2000, we'd have 80% whites. What a distortion of society. See? It's a ghetto, a space, a territory that's privileged, white, elite, though with a very high level of sensitivity (Dalva – teacher training).

A significant change for the institution appears because abolishing the specific skill test was a step towards a more accessible higher education in dance. Faced with the question, "Can anybody dance?", the institution replied, "Yes, anybody can dance!" and a choice was thus made for an inclusive dance education. This decision extends the institution's field of activity and brings into the teaching and learning processes new challenges, such as student heterogeneity.

In this context, the REUNI policy emerges as an agent for a more accessible higher education,

which also led to change in student profile. Though distinct, the accounts point to significant changes in the student body. Whether by its own choice, or by a public policy at the national level, the fact is that the institution grew, more young people were able to access higher education in dance, and this expansion brought along new challenges.

Thus, both reflecting on dance language elements and prioritizing that students be crossed by artistic experience were aspects pointed out in the interviews. There is also a concern with engaging the artistic and pedagogical dimension with each other, which led us to dialogue with the concept of pedagogical knowledge of the content (Shulman, 2014). Within the same aspect, the interviewees stressed the importance of providing curricular teaching internship within basic schools, although we know that in the case of dance this is still an exception in the country.

The investigated institution has been moving towards a more accessible higher education in dance, and this increased access has brought along new challenges, such as changes in student profile. The accounts say that this plurality of experiences and bodies should be considered in future dance teachers' education process.

Dancing with the trainers—indispensable experiences:

We wanted to understand what, according to trainers, is indispensable in a program's educational experiences. What dance education conceptions and practices are being developed by this institution that is, in our view, a pioneer in dance teacher education in Brazil. Below are different views on the same topic. Let us follow their steps:

A teacher who's socially committed, who'll work with autonomy and with differences. An indispensable thing is this worldview and this profile of a dance teacher who's connected with the contemporary world and who's a facilitator of dance learning processes (Antonio – coordinator).

If you think of Jaque Delors, it's about learning to be and to coexist, so it would be within that core. Then there's this core that's focused on meeting differences, so that's when you put them in contact with differences. Then there is a third core that works on folk and African matrices. Then there is the core of dance and technologies. And finally you have the dance creation processes as teaching and learning processes. So with these cores, you're gradually moving on, you're discovering what contents and skills you have to develop (Berenice – vice coordinator).

To work on the issue of Blacks, the ethnic thing, and Brazil with its presence of African people, it's essential to study that. [...] So what I think is essential today, is for students to understand this diversity, to be open to diversity, and not to particular standards of this or that, but the possibility of understanding what you have, and maybe that is what's really essential (Dalva – teacher trainer).

Based on the accounts above, it was possible to understand that to train a dance teacher, one cannot neglect a conception that is socially committed and therefore prioritizes autonomy, promotes contact with different cultures, and benefits teaching and learning processes in dance.

These aspects were present in Antonio's account when he says that, in dance education, social commitment cannot be missing, and also that autonomy must be fostered and contact with differences promoted. His account aligns with what Berenice reports when she describes the cores that are worked on during the course, such as learning to be and coexist, and meeting differences and the folk and African matrices. The same vision dialogs with, and is confirmed by Dalva's account in emphasizing the importance for students to be open to diversity. While the accounts point to different aspects, they clearly converge in expressing a conception of dance education that builds on autonomy, is concerned with social aspects, and guarantees the contact with differences and cultural plurality.

Also regarding what is indispensable in a dance education process, as will be seen, two accounts in particular brought to the center of discussions the importance of creating art in dialogue with teaching. The first stresses the need to understand and experience dance as an art form, and to enter basic education, with all the nuances that characterize the school environment. The second emphasizes the importance of experiencing creation as indispensable for the teaching practice.

[...] it's necessary to go into theater. I say theater much more like the performance space, which can be a street, any privileged space for performance, culture, so you should understand dance as an art form, I think that's essential. And with multiple possibilities, as a cultural manifestation. So that entry, I think it has to be the first one in understanding, and a strong one into basic education, and then in all forms of understanding basic education (Celina – vice-coordinator).

Experiencing creation. Creative processes where they can experience this, this bug that bites you and you become a creator in any setting, because when you're motivated as a creator, you'll pull it through in any situation, however adverse, you as a teacher walking into a classroom, in the municipal system or in a very poor school that has nothing, if you're a creator, you can turn that class into a wonderful thing (Carolina – teacher trainer).

Based on the accounts above, we can see that the teachers consider it indispensable for a dance teacher education to view it as an art form, as well as the importance of experiencing this know-how in dance, which we consider as a convergence. A dance teacher who has experienced creation in art/dance may propose creative actions in schools, even though the school environment may be challenging (Rangel, 2016). The fact is that both accounts show an explicit attempt to have dance education dialogue with teaching.

Therefore, we resort again to the concept of teacher professional knowledge base (Shulman, 2014). We believe that one's experience in the artistic field, which we argue can take place as artisanship (Schön, 2000), constitutes the pedagogical knowledge of the content in dance (Shulman, 2014). In the case of dance, this knowledge consists in understanding it as an art form (Marques, 2012), as well as experiencing the artistic field, which involves "the experience of creation" (Carolina). Alongside these aspects, there is an explicit reference to school, whether in the sense of experiencing teaching or in that of coming up with creative approaches, even in a challenging environment.

Additionally, we argue that as it enters school, dance connects with teaching; therefore, dance training cannot be thought about without an effort to also think about dance teachers' pedagogical knowledge of the content. Being in a "privileged space for performance" is as important as

experiencing “a strong [entry] into basic education” (Celina); these experiences are not exclusionary but necessary for those who may later engage in dance teaching. We argue that only based on this combination will it be possible to think about other possible meanings for dance in school.

Also in this respect, Fabricio emphasizes the importance of experiencing school during future teachers’ training process. Some examples:

One of them is this contact with the school. It’s fundamental. During the licensure course, it is essential that students go into the classroom and through all procedures, from observation to finally proposing activities, and that they reflect on the difficulties, all of them, that they are faced with in this contact, this dialogue with the institution, the teachers, the students, the community (Fabricio – teacher trainer).

The passage above aligns with previous accounts as it points to the need for students to experience teaching still in initial teacher education. Fabricio advocates for students to be in contact with school and to experience all the procedures involved in teaching. This conception points to a convergence of views that, we have argued, comprehends the school as an important teacher education environment. Experiencing teaching in a supervised way allows adding knowledge that is necessary and essential for future dance teachers’ initial education. We also emphasize that contact with the school, a future field of professional activity, allows students to establish their professional knowledge base, which, according to Shulman (2014), comprises a body of knowledge and skills in teacher education.

Until this point, we have followed the steps of trainers, with attention to the aspects they mentioned regarding what is relevant in initial teacher education. Thus, we can see a clear effort to bring art and teaching closer together, so as to guarantee what is specific to art, its creative processes, and its various forms of expression, as well as what is specific to school and teaching.

We bring into debate the interviews we conducted with future dance teachers. The accounts that reveal their views about initial teacher education, as well as teaching, provide a rich material of analysis, justifying the transcription below:

We work with sampling, creation, and creation sharing processes. And through these, the group gradually gives it some direction (Alessandra – teacher in initial education).

It has texts, practical classes, a bit of their experiences, talking circles to learn what we’ve experienced, how I’ll connect this experience with that of the teacher who’s meditating the classes (Andreia – teacher in initial education).

In the first 2 years, we focus on building [a dance] repertoire, these are the more practical classes, creative processes. [...] we’ll experience it with peers, there’s the solo practice with the baccalaureate. When you enter the educational process, you get to minimally understand teacher education paths... Then the pedagogical processes begin, with teachers in the classroom (Caio – teacher in initial training).

Regarding what teachers do to teach, Alessandra emphasizes sampling, creation, and sharing processes. Andreia’s account, in turn, stresses the use of texts, practical classes, and dialogue circles for experience exchange between students and trainers. From another perspective, Caio’s account highlights repertoire building, practical classes, and creative processes. He also refers to training

focused on the educational process that addresses pedagogical processes in the classroom with teachers. Somehow, the accounts converge in highlighting the creation and sharing aspects, showing a conception of dance education that is rather interactive and collaborative.

We use the studio-based approach to education and advocate that it be central for dance teacher education. This is because the studio-based teaching and learning process stems from experimentation, in a collaborative path, similarly to the aspects pointed out by students, future dance teachers. The sampling processes, talking circles for experience exchange, and repertoire-building practice are concrete actions reported by the students, and they can also be conducted in the studio-based approach, as advocated by Schön (2000).

Also regarding necessary aspects, or what is indispensable in a dance licensure degree program, the accounts highlighted the importance of dance practice, which does not necessarily refer to a closed dance technique, but also to knowledge that is in dialogue with reflection and with other knowledge field. This is addressed in the following accounts:

A critical reflection and a practice. Reflection corresponds to all concepts, whether from pedagogy, philosophy, or from history, anthropology, [all these] have collaborated a lot. So first recognizing this epistemological and semantic bowl. [...] you need this knowledge of the theories and concepts that will underpin the teaching and practice of it. And the practice, it doesn't have to be the strictest technique, a closed, systematized technique. It can expand knowledge and establish connections (Daniel – teacher trainer).

Practice. For the making of it. One of the issues, around the time I graduated here, is that it was all just practice. It was Modern Dance 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6. It was really exhausting, you had little access to more theoretical, more epistemological studies. And out there in the market, when students graduated from here they'd find little opportunity as they hadn't had the experience, the practical experience of dance, the aesthetics of dance. And I think that was a very serious problem this school went through for some time (Marília – teacher trainer).

The accounts of Daniel and Marília touch an important point – dance in dialogue with other knowledge fields and their respective concepts and theories. In this case, practice does not necessarily refer to a specific dance technique, but it can start from an experience and then “expand” and establish “connections” (Daniel), which seems to be a purpose for a broader education, (re) connected with the various potential work contexts for dance teachers. Marília's account reports that it was not always like that: For some time, the dance experience at the institution was still restricted to specific styles, which according to the account posed an “exhausting” condition to the education offered.

The teachers' accounts reveal that efforts are apparently being made nowadays to think about a dance education connected with other fields of knowledge. Experiencing dance through the exchange of different concepts and theories can highlight a more plural approach to dance, as we have pointed out earlier. The fact is that the institution has been making changes to the education provided and, currently, due to changes both in legislation and student profile, and to a closer relationship between the university and basic schools, its dance licensure degree program seems to be more attentive to contemporary issues, with an approach to dance education that is based on collaboration. This is because, as shown earlier, an institution is not something static in

time: It moves, and its transformations are made by the people participating in it.

In search of understanding what cannot be missing in the educational experiences developed by the dance licensure program investigated, we asked the coordinators and trainers what they prioritized in dance teacher education. We also heard students, and asked them about what their trainers did to teach them. We found that they prioritize social commitment, student autonomy, contact with different cultures, and are also concerned with fostering teaching and learning processes in dance.

Conclusions

We examined the initial teacher education of dance teachers within a public university with a solid background in the field. This intentional choice allowed us to find a revealing path in terms of experience, theoretical references in the field, and its pioneering history in the field of dance teacher education.

Through the narrative interviews, we were able to understand the subjects' views of research about the initial teacher education of dance teachers for the school context, as well as their thoughts about the education conceptions and practices experienced. With an epistemology of practice as our theoretical framework, we found elements of reflective practice in the dance teacher education for the school context provided at the institution investigated. This educational approach, which requires a framework that prioritizes experimentation, creative processes, reflection, and collaborative work, is expressed as dance teachers' very pedagogical knowledge of the content.

We have argued that dance teaching and learning processes dialogue and find correspondence with a studio-based and reflective practice approach, since they develop from experimentation and repetition, imbued with an analytical and investigative attitude. Thus, we highlighted the point of reflection on dance language elements, as reported in the accounts. Therefore, establishing a reflective relationship with practice, based on action, are also modes of teaching and learning that connect with the reflective practice approach.

We emphasize that as it enters the school context, dance engages in a dialogue with teaching, and for this reason we advocated for the need to build a professional knowledge base for the dance teacher, in particular dance teachers' pedagogical knowledge of the content. This concept reveals precisely the amalgam of both dimensions, which are no longer separated, but rather unified and forming dance teachers' actions as they teach in the school context. Therefore, knowing deeply the contents of the field of dance is as important as knowing how to teach them.

We consider this to be the specificity of the dance teacher in school; it therefore justifies their presence as a dance teaching professional in school, within the curricular component Art. In addition to specific knowledge of dance and art, teaching requires specific knowledge of the education field, such as didactics, for example, which deals with the theoretical and methodological assumptions of teaching and learning.

Based on the findings of this study, we realized that the trainers understand the need to build the knowledge/practices specific to dance teachers for the school context, and that they therefore

advocate a closer relationship between university and school. These intertwined spaces allow formulating knowledge still in initial teacher education, through collaborative work between teachers in initial training and other, more experienced ones, in a low-risk environment, thus establishing a reflective relationship with practice, as advocated by Schön (2000) in the epistemology of practice.

The dance teacher education for the school context that we believe in and advocate is affirmed within the epistemology of practice, adopting a studio-based perspective. This advocacy is justified because it pertains to teacher education in the artistic field and views dance as an art form. Establishing a reflective relationship with practice can not only address the specificities of teaching and learning processes in art/dance, but also promote a more powerful education in dialogue with contemporaneity.

The epistemology of dance teacher education for the school context based on a reflective practice allows us to identify teaching and learning processes in dance that translate as pedagogical knowledge of the content for teachers in this field. We consider this to be a specificity of dance teachers, which can reverberate (who knows) in other possible meanings of dance in school.

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Autora 1 – Participated in all stages of the research; research conception and design; construction and processing of data; analysis and interpretation of data; actively participated in writing the article.

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