

# The school is also samba: art teaching as an experience and construction of a decolonial learning process

## Abstract

This article discusses a teaching experience, in the teaching of Art, with students in the 9<sup>th</sup> year of Elementary School II, at the Escola Municipal Professor Waldson José Bastos Pinheiro, in the community of Vale Dourado, in the neighborhood of Nossa Senhora da Apresentação, a school from the public network in Natal (RN). It analyzes Samba as an object of study from the perspective of decolonial learning, identifying how African dances influenced Brazilian culture and, in particular, the theme in question. It problematizes the political-social ills inherited from colonialist exploitation in Brazil and points to the legitimization of cultural manifestations of African origin as actions of resistance and construction of knowledge and learning. The theoretical basis with which we work is based on Freirean pedagogy (FREIRE, 1998); as well as, from the perspective of resuming the “triangular approach” (BARBOSA, 2010) as an epistemological basis. For reflections regarding the teaching of dance practice, Vieira (2007) and Marques (2003) are used. In the historical-social contextualization of the theme in an anthropological and sociological perspective of the Brazilian body, the African rhythm and diversity, the materiality of this rhythm and its relationships, the basis is sought in Sodr  (1998).

**Keywords:** art teaching, Samba, decolonial learning, school, culture

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## Introduction

Oh, make way, I want to pass!<sup>1</sup>

This article describes the project that took place at Escola Municipal Professor Waldson José Bastos Pinheiro, with 9<sup>th</sup> grade students, in the Vale Dourado complex, in the city of Natal/RN, during Art classes. This project, developed in 2019, aimed to address samba as an object of decolonial learning, promoting knowledge of Afro-Brazilian history and culture, based on samba. The result culminated in the formation of a mini samba school with the elements that constitute a samba school.

The methodological aspects learned came from action research in which the subjects involved in the research were able to produce knowledge collectively, that is, the subjects involved in the process were protagonists of the research (of their knowledge). The research subjects were students in the 9th year classes of elementary school, final years of a municipal public school in the city of Natal.

During the writing process, we chose to compose the titles in a way that could refer to samba and its idiosyncrasies. We begin, therefore, with the lyrics of the song Yá yá Mاسمبا, by composers João Roberto Caribe Mendes and José Carlos Capinan (2013).

What a deep night, calunga / In the hold of a slave ship

What a longer trip, candonga / Listening to the drumming of the waves

<sup>1</sup>Ó Abre Alas is Chiquinha Gonzaga's best-known composition, and her most successful. She was fifty-two years old, already a grandmother, and it was precisely in the year of this composition that she began her romance with the young Portuguese João Batista Fernandes Lage, then sixteen years old. The song was made for the Rosa de Ouro carnival cordon, mentioned in the lyrics. Available in: <https://andredinizcultura.com.br/wp-content/uploads/2022/04/AlmanaqueDoSamba-1.pdf>.

Compass of a bird's heart / Deep in captivity

It's the semba of the world, calunga / Beating samba in my chest

Káwo-kabiesile-káwo / Okê-arô-okê

What gave birth to me was the belly of a ship

The one who heard me was the wind in the void

From the dark belly of a basement

I'll download it to your yard

Whoa lightning, axe, thunder

Epa warrior justice

Ê semba ê / Samba á

The Batuque of the waves / On the longest nights / Taught me to sing

Ê semba ê / Samba á

Pain is the deepest place / It's the navel of the world / It's the bottom of the sea

Ê semba ê / Samba á

In the sway of the waves, Okê arô / He taught me how to beat his drum

Ê semba ê / Samba á

In the dark basement I saw the flash / Of the turning of the world

[...]

Ê semba ê / Samba á

It's the sky that covered my loneliness on cold nights  
 Ê semba ê / Samba á  
 It's an endless ocean, without love, without a brother / It's kaô, I  
 want to be your drum  
 Ê semba ê / Samba á  
 I make the moon shine with splendor and brilliance / Moonlight  
 from Luanda (Angola) in my heart  
 Navel of color, Shelter of pain, first navel  
 Mاسemba Yáyá, Yáyá Mاسemba, it's the samba that gives  
 I'm going to learn to read / To teach my comrades  
 I'm going to learn to read / To teach my comrades  
 'Try to read / To teach my comrades  
 I'm going to learn to read / To teach my comrades  
 I'm going to learn to read / To teach my comrades  
 'Try to read / To teach my comrades  
 I'm going to learn to read...

This song consists of a samba, possibly one of the most significant sambas made, in the last times. Yáyá Mاسemba, by composers João Roberto Caribe Mendes and José Carlos Capinan, became notable in the album *Brasileirinho*, by Maria Bethânia, and presents us with a significant image of the large part of the presence of African music in Brazil, from the emergence of chula, of which, samba de roda derives.

In this regard, the website Coletivo Amaro: Cultura, arte e literatura, from Santo Amaro (BA), presents an analysis of the song by the composer Roberto Mendes himself, who reveals:

What a deepest night calunga / in the hold of a slave ship: it's a theory of how foulness got here. The Bahian music Chula (sic), is not just samba de roda, but it is behavior, "it is the need to create verses to overcome the pain (sic) of saudade". Calunga refers to the sea (Coletivo Amaro, 2013).

What the text of the analysis tells us, is that samba was born, in Brazil, as a heritage of Africanity, but, beyond that, it is music and it is behavior, that is, an imaginary surrounding our body, our life, our Brazilian-ness. "Listen" then becomes the great verb. For oral cultures of that period, such as Africa, where batuque comes from, listening is an important cultural composure. In the case of "Listening to the drumming of the waves...", the expression shows us that culture is musical and historical (it alludes to the diaspora of enslaved people across the Atlantic Ocean), but it is also learning, it is knowledge that is constructed. Coletivo Amaro (2013) presents: "Êpa lightning, ax and thunder / Êpa warrior's justice: reference to Xangô. Káwo-kabiesile-káwo / Okê-arô-okê: these are greetings to Xangô and Oxóssi (orixá of the city of Yahweh, sign of justice)".

The culture of sadness and the struggle for liberation on the part of the Afro-descendant people, as we know it today, is presented in the practice of samba poetics in Yáyá Mاسemba, as justice – the enormous justice that was never done to the enslaved people of Africa – and that it should be repaired. One day, it will arrive and it will be possible to free, totally and completely, generations and generations of black people, captives of a racist imaginary.

It's the sky that covered the cold nights / It's an endless ocean, without love, without a brother / I make the moon shine the splendor

and brightness / Moonlight of Luanda in my heart: again it refers to the slave ship, which the black people faced cold, rain, long journeys, illness, hunger and death. The pain of longing is also portrayed, in the moonlight of Luanda, the capital of Angola.<sup>1</sup>

The samba, assays the song, it's a sky that warms and gives hope, during the nights of horror on slave ships. Finally, samba emerges as a very valuable knowledge of Afro-Brazilian culture, which does not seem to be able to enter the minds of a certain portion of Brazilian society, as a philosophical heritage and also a methodology of freedom, even though it is the country's intangible heritage. If, in popular art and culture practices, samba has not yet reached its place of freedom and knowledge, imagine in schools, in elementary and high school curriculum groups in their school practices.

From the brief exposition, following the imagery we have of samba in Brazilian life, we can say that the school is also a samba school. That makes us reflect on some questions throughout the school process: If there was an understanding, by the school, in Basic Education, of the importance of samba and of all Afro-Brazilian culture, we would need institutional mechanisms to establish mandatory of History and Culture African and Afro-Brazilian, at Schools, How does Law No. 10,639 (Brazil, 2003) do it? That is the school made up of students from an origin other than Afro-diasporic? Does the school and the entire community of Vale Dourado, in Natal (RN), lack Arts teaching? What art can be "taught" at this school? Can samba go to school to be a subject, subject, content and pedagogical experience?

It was by discussing this problem that we rethought Art teaching as an experience. From this perspective, we seek to build, at school, in the 9<sup>th</sup> year of Elementary School, a decolonial learning process,<sup>2</sup> that is, from an experience in the Arts, in particular, in Dance, which would bring us closer to who we are, to our African face, from samba.

The text brings a possible understanding and reflection on samba as a teaching proposal for the construction of decolonial learning in the school space. Objective provide knowledge of Afro-Brazilian history and culture, based on samba. It is also proposed identify how African dances, especially samba, influence Brazilian culture; raise questions about racism as a result of colonialism<sup>3</sup>, in the country's history, as well as, about religiosity and its resistance actions; and also provide aesthetic experiences in Afro-Brazilian dances as learning paths. Based on the proposed objectives, we ask, raising the problem question: why work with samba at school as a possibility for a decolonial teaching/learning construction?

This problematization is based on the assumption that cultural resistance can be identified, especially in practices associated with the teaching of Dance, when we propose approaches to popular dances, as Nóbrega<sup>2</sup> rightly mentions, when he says that "Popular dance is inserted in the set of cultural practices, thus influencing and being influenced by hegemonic culture, revealing ways of being and understanding that are inferior due to experience in multiple social contexts [...]". In other words, even in a school context, where the most powerful assumption should be cultural diversity, the invisibility of what is popular and, above all, African predominates.

<sup>2</sup>Decolonial: refers to a continuous struggle against colonialities imposed on subordinate groups. For a better understanding of decolonial thinking, we suggest the author Catherine Walsh who addresses the term decolonial and its reverberations to this day in more depth.

<sup>3</sup>Colonialism: refers to the process of social, political and cultural domination provided by countries that exercised power over colonized countries, according to sociologist Anibal Quijano, 2005. Available at: [http://biblioteca.clacso.edu.ar/clacso/sur-sur/20100624103322/12\\_Quijano.pdf](http://biblioteca.clacso.edu.ar/clacso/sur-sur/20100624103322/12_Quijano.pdf). Accessed on: 22 April, 2022.

What can be observed is that we continue to reproduce traditional body practices, sometimes limiting ourselves to technical, normative standards brought from Europe; or same, to demarcation patterns that privilege a single perspective of movement, such as classical dance, for example, which follows, often being an example of the only bodily possibility for teaching other dances. What do we do then? We must settle down and continue rubbing a classical ballet rehearsal room, pushing the desks to the corners of the wall, to give 40 or 50 minutes of mimetic effort of a standard Eurocentric dance or break with this colonialist imaginary and set up a drumbeat on the desks, taking samba to class?

Samba is a dance. It's worth repeating: samba is dance, it's art, it's culture, it's politics, it's nation, it's a school subject and universal imagination. It works to form the basis of a Brazilian identity, bringing to light the problematization of racism and the different concepts of blackness. This concept emerges as a [...] neologism in the French language, in the 1930s, to mean: the circumstance of recognizing the great collective of Africans and people of African descent; the awareness of belonging to this collective and the attitude of claiming oneself as such; the aesthetics projected by black artists and intellectuals based on this consciousness; the set of African civilizational values on the continent of origin and in the Diaspora.<sup>3</sup>

Still according to Lopes,<sup>3</sup> the samba It is "circumstance of realizing the great collective of Africans and people of African descent". This makes us a community of many tribes and cultures. It is also "the awareness of belonging to this collective and the attitude of claiming oneself as such"<sup>3</sup> and makes us belong to an ancestry, with a heritage from traditional peoples coming from Africa. As if that were not enough, it is an "aesthetics designed by black artists and intellectuals based on this consciousness" (Idem), which unifies us as esthesis, knowledge and taste of the body. Samba is, after all, "the set of African civilizational values on the continent of origin and in the Diaspora" (Ibidem), forcing us to recognize ourselves in this struggle, in this path of self-valuation and affirmation. Therefore, it is our obligation to introduce samba into the school.

Therefore, samba is necessary within the scope of Dance at school, so that its history, its origin, its music, its composers and its subgenres are understood, including the sociocultural specificities of the students, beyond the essentialisms, sometimes, disseminated in our country. With this, we seek to resolve the lack of knowledge and, consequently, prejudices who are responsible for the denial of African influence in the construction of Brazilian culture.

### In the beat of life<sup>4</sup>

I am the samba

The voice from the hill is me, yes sir

I want to show the world that I have value

I am the king of the land<sup>5</sup> (Keti, 1955).

Samba initially appears as a musical genre, taken from the Candomblé terreiros of Recôncavo Bahia to Rio de Janeiro, by black

<sup>4</sup>*In the beat of life* it is a samba composed by Ary Barroso and originally recorded by Carmen Miranda, in 1934. The song was covered by Elis Regina, in 1974. Available in: <https://andredinizcultura.com.br/wp-content/uploads/2022/04/AlmanaqueDoSamba-1.pdf>

<sup>5</sup>*The Voice of the Hill* (from 1955) composed by Zé Keti, is considered one of the best sambas of all time, recorded by singer Jorge Goulart, is part of the soundtrack for Rio 40degrees, by Nelson Pereira dos Santos, inaugurating Cinema Novo. Available in: <https://andredinizcultura.com.br/wp-content/uploads/2022/04/AlmanaqueDoSamba-1.pdf>

Africans, at the time, "freed" peoples. The story is well known in samba circles, which highlight how Bahian aunts opened their homes in the Rio suburbs and became famous, sheltering a large number of freed slaves and others, mulattoes and whites, to celebrate their achievements and remember their origins, reinvent futures, as the sambas of Ary Barroso, Zé Keti and Caetano Veloso remind us.

Bahia

First station in Brazil

When he saw the Mangueira in its entirety, he saw

His true face showed

What a joy

It was not in vain that she sent

The Ciatas to bring samba to Rio

Because the myth arose this way<sup>6</sup> (Veloso, 2004).

The black aunts in the terreiro and in the kitchens of the white bourgeoisie's houses kept the flame of music and the dancing body of the African people alive based in slave-owning Brazil, perpetuating its rhythms, its lyrics, its dance and its history. Accordingly with Lopes,<sup>3</sup> the sambas "name generic of several Brazilian dances and the music that accompanies each of these dances; modernly, a musical expression that constitutes the backbone and main current of Brazilian popular music".

It is in this sense that samba triggers a tradition that – through different paths of resistance, body swings, to deflect attacks and avoid destruction and erasure –, since the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century, has founded the imagination of a nation called Brazil and has always been at the center of bodies of these people, although in ancient times, was in the official papers of the Brazilian government and that it was necessary to create a law so that the topic could be validated in schools and other institutions. Therefore, samba goes beyond the imaginary and permeates intertwined bodies of ginga, resistance, tradition, culture. The homeland body, to whom these people and this samba belong, reverberates in all its dancing magnitude.

### My body is my homeland

As an Arts teacher, moving between dance, theater and music, painting everything with Visual arts, the relationship with the theme comes from body experiences, from the street, from childhood, from seeing people dance in the street, in clubs, at carnivals. Samba precedes all experiences of perception of festivity and community and comes from the soul.

Even the experiences of dancing and samba, lived at the University, they come after understanding what samba is. As a child, this researcher lived in the Rocas neighborhood, in the city of Natal / RN, where there were samba schools, always being rocked by the sounds and fast rhythms of this dance that she involved. During carnivals, there was the custom of enjoying the parade of samba schools, and, luckily, one of them rehearsed on the same street where she lived.

Out of curiosity, I used to "snoop around" one on the street where I lived, where there was an Afro-Brazilian religious cult center, since the sounds of those instruments made you follow this enchanting rhythm bodily. Time passed and curiosity increased and the understanding came, at an appropriate age, of what was happening in that place.

<sup>6</sup>Onde o Rio é mais Bahiano, by Caetano Veloso, is a samba tribute, from 2004, released on the album Livro. Available in: <https://andredinizcultura.com.br/wp-content/uploads/2022/04/AlmanaqueDoSamba-1.pdf>

With this, the desire to know more and research about the universe of Afro Culture-Brazilian.

It was in this unfolding of learning, curiosities and desires that it was possible to fulfill two dreams: participating in a dance group and entering a public university<sup>7</sup>. In this way, praxis with samba could be established, as well as contact with and love for popular dances, especially, by participating in the Parafolkloric Group<sup>8</sup> from the Federal University of Rio Grande do Norte (UFRN).

Created over 30 years ago, in the Department of Physical Education at UFRN and designed as the UFRN Permanent Extension Group, this group of popular dances and training actions was the way to stroll with a dancing body. According to Medeiros,<sup>4</sup> the objective of the Parafolclórica Group is “[...] to give new meaning to traditional festivities and take them to the stage with a new scenic approach, different from those experienced in the daily life of the communities of origin”. There were almost nine years of experience in the Parafolclórica Group, learning from African dances, such as Maracatu, Samba de roda, Tambor de Crioula, among others. From these successful experiences, the desire only grew to know more about this culture, so rich and fascinating, that it still influences today.

After this time at Parafolclórica, came the experience in another dance group, formed by former members of Parafolclórica, called Corpus Dançantes Cia de Dança, in which we studied, researched, presented choreographic proposals and shows for some national and international festivals, such as the Culture Festival of Passa and Fica/RN, the International Folklore Festival of Pantanal/MT (Fifopam) and the Festival Internacional de Musica y Danzas Afrocandelareñas, in Colombia. On these occasions, we carry out studies regarding the repertoires chosen in each of the productions, with the aim of propagating Brazilian Cultureleira, in order to insert this knowledge into the school context, since the vast majority of the group’s members are dance teachers. In addition, we hold popular and contemporary dance workshops.<sup>9</sup>

As a teacher, between trips, courses, experiences, exchange of knowledge, the opportunity arose to be part of the UFRN Institutional Teaching Initiation Scholarship Program (PIBID)<sup>10</sup>, in the period

<sup>7</sup>At the university, this researcher participated in other projects during her graduation, carrying out popular dance workshops, such as Tributo à Criança, the Child Labor Eradication Program (PETI) and Trilhas Potiguaras (UFRN), in the municipalities of Natal, Pamamirim, Touros, Nova Cruz, Cerro-Corá and São Gonçalo do Amarante.

<sup>8</sup>The Parafolkloric Group is an extension project at the Federal University of Rio Grande do Norte, which combines teaching, research and extension as academic practices. It emerged in the Folklore discipline of the Physical Education Department over 30 years ago, with the aim of researching and recreating traditional Brazilian manifestations and expressing them through work focused on artistic projection. Available in: [https://pt-br.facebook.com/pg/grupoparafolcloricodaurfn/about/?ref=page\\_internal](https://pt-br.facebook.com/pg/grupoparafolcloricodaurfn/about/?ref=page_internal). Accessed on: 19 September. 2020.

<sup>9</sup>Another very significant experience was participating in a contemporary dance group, Gira Dança, whose dancers are people with disabilities. It was possible to perceive and experience how the relationship between dance, space and different bodies occurs, something new for this researcher. Gira Dança is a contemporary dance company, based in Natal/RN, formed by the diversity of bodies, people with and without disabilities, in its own language, focused on the body as a tool for experiences. Available at: <https://www.facebook.com/ciagiradanca>. Accessed on: 22 April. 2022.

<sup>10</sup>Institutional Teaching Initiation Scholarship Program (Pibid) is one of the actions of the National Teacher Training Policy, developed in the Basic Education Directorate of the Coordination for the Improvement of Higher Education Personnel (Capes), of the Ministry of Education and Culture (MEC).

from 2015 to 2020, as supervisor of teacher training. At the time of participation, in that institutional program to support teaching, she also worked as a teacher at Escola Municipal Professor a Ivanira de Vasconcelos Paisinho, located in the Cohabinal neighborhood, in the city of Pamamirim (RN). Another teaching experience, to this day, occurs at the Professor Waldson José Bastos Pinheiro Municipal School, in Natal.

In the supervision work, through Pibid, we focused on the relationships between body, space and movement in Art classes, based on studies of movement proposed by Rudolf Laban’s system (1978). Furthermore, we developed discussions, experiments, regarding dances of African origin, with debates and possibilities of articulating dance studies and their historical context. With this experience, we realized the importance of making art and appreciating this matrix language African, so rich, as an area of knowledge<sup>11</sup>. We are currently working at Corpus Dançantes Cia de Dança. In this project, we researched Brazilian popular dances and their relationships with the matrices that make up the people of Brazil.

In this way, there were many years spent circulating learning spaces, places of knowledge, schools, universities, living with other scholars of the body, dance, movement, but, even though samba and other Brazilian (and popular) dances also wherever they were around, there was always a prominent perspective, an exoticism, as if that culture was not in the right place, as if there was a strangeness. In this sense, bringing the experience of African dances to artistic and professional practice, it was possible to perceive the importance of this teaching for the school space, given the need to work on this theme as an educational possibility, permeated by historical, social aspects and which generates other knowledge in relation to African and Afro-Brazilian Culture for the construction of our society.

## Teaching African dance in the school space

Thinking about dance teaching, from an educational perspective, makes us reflect that.

Its importance for Education is the unique contribution of this artistic language to the cultural development and personal growth of human beings, presenting a new perspective for Education, believing in the possibility of exchanging experiences, expanding the understanding of the educational phenomenon.<sup>5</sup>

It is in this sense that learning from dance provides students with ways to exchange knowledge, expanding their repertoire and experiencing the various popular dances. Intertwined in our culture, whether African or Afro-Brazilian, indigenous or European.

Based on the class proposals, with regard to dances of African origin, such as samba de roda, frevo, capoeira, maculelê and samba Dentro, the research process was initiated with students from Escola Municipal Professor Waldson José Bastos Pinheiro, in 9<sup>th</sup> year elementary school classes in the final years. Classes were held during school hours, in the afternoon shift and in some moments, at the end of the day, on Tuesdays and Thursdays.

From start, we chose some dances to be researched, in agreement with the students, since the majority felt curious to know a little more about these dances, as well as, its historical context, its peculiarities and practices.

<sup>11</sup>The following year, the program was held in Natal, at the Professor Waldson José Bastos Pinheiro Municipal School, where I teach. The experience, until 2019, this time, was in Elementary School: Final Years.

The laboratory activity, initially, it was to propose dialogue actions with the teacher and students on the theme of African dances,<sup>12</sup> in particular, from samba. The activities of the Art discipline take place in a context in which the 9<sup>th</sup> year classes have two classes per week and I was able to develop the proposed classes more assiduously, where they were developed, weekly, with the aim of researching, contextualizing, enjoying and try such a dance.

It is worth mentioning that this methodology took place during the school year, in Art classes. The methodological action took place, at first, as a possibility of investigation, since the results of the experiments, of this construction in collective or individual, were, to the Final, presented to the entire school community (how the body teaching-learning process occurred, based on the students' relationship with the proposed themes).

So that I, as a teacher, interested in the teaching-learning of the topic, could take ownership of the research developed with the students, it was necessary for me to dialogue with authors who deal with the theme, since it was necessary to have this appropriation to be able to conduct the learning process in the classroom.

When talking about the Brazilian people and their identity formation, it is necessary to think about a different ethnic dimension, since the contributions to the formation of this country are permeated by a set of cultural, social, ethnic, structural and, therefore, diverse relationships. It is known to establish a reflection, regarding this construction so that we can understand the narratives of an intersectional context, which for many years have reverberated in various sectors of our society and deconstruct these racist and prejudiced paradigms, based on a decolonial teaching proposal.

Nessatessitura, I relied on Ana Mae Barbosa's Triangular Approach, which enables teaching/learning in a triangular way for the Visual Arts, but which applies very well to the teaching of Dance: doing, enjoying and contextualizing in Art. In this sense, it is necessary to include students in their own context and outline strategies so that there are possible paths for multicultural education. The author postulates that [...] Cultural diversity presumes the recognition of different codes, classes, ethnic groups, beliefs and sexes in the nation, as well as dialogue with the diverse cultural codes of various nations or countries, which even include the culture of the first colonizers.<sup>6</sup>

Benjamin's<sup>7</sup> thinking reiterates this reflection on the history of Brazilian people. The author reports that "The history and culture of African peoples are, effectively, part of the history of Brazil, just like the history of our indigenous people and that of European colonizers, the latter always privileged by school".<sup>7</sup> To do this, it is necessary to establish an understanding with reference to the contribution of African peoples in the formation of our society and promote the contextualization of these teachings in the school environment.

Working on blackness at school has been a great challenge as the topic is still studied superficially and, sometimes, only in the month of November, on Black Awareness Day. Therefore, the study of samba emerged from a perspective of enabling reflection on the theme and promote an understanding of the construction of Brazilian culture based on African influence in several aspects, including dance. Considered a popular manifestation, samba was defined as "black dance" – current in the Portuguese language – according to the Dictionary of the Social History of Samba, by Nei Lopes et al.<sup>8</sup>

<sup>12</sup>From the theme of dances of African origin, themes were raised, bibliographic research, videographic and iconographic research, through image consultation with students, comprising how this perception of the object studied occurred collectively and not just from the perspective of the educator, at that moment.

It was based on Law No. 10,639/03, which conceives the teaching of African and Afro-Brazilian History and Culture in public and private establishments of teaching in the country, that it is possible to work on these themes that are still very little stimulated by teachers at various educational institutions. This regulation aims to study the history of Africa and Africans, the history and culture of these people in the construction of Brazilian culture, in the social, economic and political contexts that are relevant to the history of Brazil. It proposes new possibilities to highlight the importance of black people as participants in a plural culture, as well as manifesting itself as an instrument against prejudice and discrimination perpetuated over the years. School can be a place to acquire this knowledge, as

For educational institutions to satisfactorily fulfill the role of educating, it is necessary that they constitute a democratic space for the production and dissemination of knowledge and attitudes that aim at a fair society. The school has a preponderant role in the elimination of discrimination and the emancipation of discriminated groups, by providing access to scientific knowledge, to differentiated cultural records, to the achievement of rationality that governs social and racial relations, to advanced knowledge, essential for the consolidation and concertation of nations as democratic and egalitarian spaces (Brasil, 2003, p. 6).

This democratic space must be stimulated through basic education, promoting reflections, discussions and affirmative actions in the fight against racism and the deconstruction of prejudices. Thus, the study of samba will contribute as an instrument for identifying Afro-Brazilian culture, providing knowledge about the history and formation of our culture.

When dealing with the theme of samba, as a powerful proposal to corroborate the deconstruction of racism, as a possibility of establishing ethnic-racial relations, it is necessary to pay attention to the contribution that this dance makes to developing a people's identity. In that sense, the article *The universe of samba and the teaching of African and Afro-Brazilian history and culture*, by Camargo and Foganholi,<sup>9</sup> points out a proposed approach to the universe of samba, in order to explain and enable the understanding of education as a way of anti-racist learning in the school environment.

The study of samba, as a powerful form of anti-racist education, implies that reflections on the ethnic-racial, political and cultural aspects of our society are problematized. Camargo and Foganholi<sup>9</sup> mention samba and question why this genre is not talked about or little talked about in the school space, since samba is considered a popular dance. Based on the assumption that this dance is a constituent part of the identity formation of the Brazilian people, denying it as an essential element of this formation is denying history itself, since it is part of our cultural, ethnic, social and political diversity.

Thinking about teaching samba as a strategy of pedagogical practice, establishing relationships with the history of Afro-Brazilian culture, we must think about the importance of a culture of resistance among black people in the country and their contributions to music, dance, vocabulary, cooking, etc. For this, it is necessary that, in accordance with the opinion of the Law No. 10.639/03, our multiethnic and multicultural country, in its school organizations, includes such teaching in education and "[...] that they are guaranteed the right to learn and expand knowledge, without being forced to deny themselves, to the ethnic/racial group to which they belong and to adopt customs, ideas and behaviors that are adverse to them [...]" (Brazil, 2003, p. 9).

Enable the doing/contextualization of practices Pedagogical practices imply building diverse and plural knowledge, as our country

is built on the basis of a multi-ethnic society. However, it is necessary to establish anti-racist and democratic educational processes and provide less Eurocentric teaching/learning, so that samba, like music and dance, carries a range of historical, social and cultural knowledge. Therefore, it is important to perceive it as a dialogue, in a way that strengthens the identity of the people Brazilian, the from an Afro-descendant dimension.

This thought, articulated with Barbosa's<sup>6</sup> triangular proposal, with studies of African and Afro-Brazilian dances, was only possible from the understanding of the decolonial premises that rooted and helped to systematize the contents of samba in Art/Dance classes in Brazil. school space. Some aspects of this work are the result of a study carried out in teaching, imagining propositional approaches to what we do in the classroom.

Therefore, the most viable methodological basis was descriptive qualitative<sup>10</sup> from the perspective of action research, whose objective was to seek, at the same time, the action and the results of the research. The latter was achieved by the participation of social subjects in investigations, that is, they go from "objects" of study to "subjects" or protagonists of the research.

Based on these methodological choices, it was possible to reflect, in the school space, aiming at contact and practice with the themes chosen in this research, in order to promote a reflective interaction between students and the social experience with research in a school context. The proposals were discussed and experimented according to actions of creation, interaction and perception with the elements suggested in the research, above all, the participants' relationship with the indicated theme, that is, the theme of samba, the construction of perceptions about the notions of blackness and Brazilian identity, ethnic belonging and its reverberations.

These choices, in the research, implied a more incisive review of the fundamentals. That was when the need to establish a theoretical framework that did not strengthen the majority view of Eurocentric thinking emerged. With this, "decolonial" thinking emerged as a possibility for reflection.

The decolonial premise is already established in the typography of the discourse, that is, it is something that denies any effort or commitment to colonialism, the famous coloniality. This thought is reasonably recent, it emerged in the Humanities and Social Sciences as a result of organized social movements, in the late 1990s and early 2000s, from modernity/coloniality study groups, formed by authors in the Latin American context, whose references are recognized as fundamental editions of the author Frantz Fanon (1925-1962), a reference in several areas of study, as well as like the black movements, in African continent, in the Americas, in general and also, European.

Martinican psychiatrist Frantz Fanon shows us, in his struggle, that the colonial process affects the subjectivity of all people who are affected by economic territorial exploitation, thus being an essentially dehumanizing regime. "Every human problem requires consideration from time to time. Ideally, the present should always serve to build the future. And this future is not cosmic, it is that of my century, my country, my existence".<sup>11</sup>

It is in the first book, *Black skin, white masks*, published in 1952, that the black man, essayist and activist projects his effort to change society, confronting colonialist practices. To do this, it makes the agenda of whitening civilization, in History, in the Economy, in cultures, in matter, scandalous; both in the body and in the subjectivity of immense human populations.

According to his studies, from this historical violation of the presence of a black civilization in the world, a whole host of subjects (culturally and historically located) would be contained to countless forms of violence. A large part of his struggle, as a highly intellectual columnist, would be to make the world and its policies recognize themselves as racist, entrepreneurs of a practice of daily, structural, systematic racism.

Based on studies by Fanon<sup>11</sup> and other sources of critical and political reflection on the black presence in the world, decolonial thinking impels, in Europe and the West, as a whole, the struggle for the horizontality of the ways of thinking, feeling, living, knowing, in the sense of making space for other forms of existence of culturality not Caucasian, placing them in the same category and on the scale of referential values. For this fight, Eurocentric thinking is not the best path. Our place, our destiny, diverse and colorful, is the necessary dimension, among other ways of thinking, of living our subjectivities.

Decolonizing means Re-humanizing these people, these subjects who are totally disregarded by this Eurocentric system. Being decolonial means seeking to break with all hierarchies imposed by Eurocentric white supremacy, providing recognition of subjects, of peoples who have been dehumanized and understanding that these subjects are producers of knowledge, of Science, understanding the existence of African, indigenous and minority philosophies which, for centuries, were massacred by a single colonial structure.

It is important to highlight that what is intended with the decolonial proposal is to recognize the places of speech, of listening – which I believe, that the school can be one of these places – and to recognize the place of these people who have long been silenced, massacred, dehumanized by the colonial process. Therefore, the proposal to provide systematized classes with the aim of promoting decolonial education and thinking reverberates beyond the school walls. It is necessary that we can be subjects who bring this knowledge, in order to enable critical and political thinking to our students.

Under this bias, when the research promotes a study on the history of samba, in the school context, based on decolonial thinking, the ways of being and living among black people in Brazil are perceived, in the sense of resistance and contribution to the formation of Brazilian Culture. When it comes to resistance, the history of samba emerged from the displacement of free black people from Bahia to Rio de Janeiro, when slavery ended. These people migrated from one place to another in search of a new life, with more possibilities of having a "dignified" life and finding a welcoming place, a place called a *terreiro*.

The *terreiros* were places of welcome, organized and managed by black women, called "aunts". In these spaces, meetings and events of Afro-Brazilian demonstrations were promoted. Furthermore, the *orixás* were worshiped there, as the aunts – and also saint mothers – maintained African traditions. Meetings of musicians and everyone looking for a welcoming place promoted by these aunts were also consolidated.

Religion, in this sense, played an important role in unity and the Bahian aunts served as a kind of force in social ascension over existing groups of African descent. To this end, "[...] Samba, as well as *Candomblé terreiros*, *zungus* and other forms of collective organization developed, playing a fundamental role in establishing affective bonds and trust among the black population".<sup>9</sup>

Samba brought from Bahia, as a way of worshiping the *orixás*, a celebration practiced in *terreiros*, is consolidated in Rio de

Janeiro, where other musical elements coming from immigrants are inserted. With this, he mixes in a danced and sung rhythm with all his resistance. It is in Little Africa, a place to designate the territorial base of the Bahian community of Rio de Janeiro, established from the 1870s onwards, in the region that extended from the surroundings of the old Praça Onze to the vicinity of the current Praça Mauá that was constituted, from According to Lopes and Simas,<sup>8</sup> “[...] an important hub for multiple expressions of Afro-Brazilian culture, from music to religion. Little Africa was the cradle where samba in its urban form was born.”

For this port area, Little Africa, ships arrived bringing people from other regions and, mainly, freed blacks. In this space, these traditions were perpetuated and established, with beliefs and all forms of manifestation of their culture. It was at the house of one of the most renowned aunts, considered a pillar of national identity, Tia Ciata, that the great samba singers met and could sing and dance their sambas safely, because, as Sodré<sup>12</sup> points out, “[...] Tia Ciata’s house, a respected child babalo, symbolizes the entire strategy of musical resistance to the curtain of marginalization erected against black people following Abolition [...]”.

Despite any and all demonstrations by black people being prohibited, Tia Ciata’s house served as a democratic space for these demonstrations to take place. It was in this same house of resistance that great samba singers were able to release their musical masterpieces – as Lopes and Simas<sup>8</sup> point out with the musical work *Pelo Telephone*<sup>13</sup>. This musical work was the first samba recorded at the time – and is still a reference today. From then on, it took to the streets and emerged as its own style of musical genre.

In his studies, Sodré<sup>12</sup> says that “Samba was no longer, therefore, a mere musical expression of a marginalized social group, but effective instrument of struggle for the affirmation of black ethnicity in the context of Brazilian urban life [...]”. Even considering what the aforementioned author points out, this consolidation of samba, as a means of transformation and resistance, reveals a people who, even freed, were still subjugated to other forms of domination and power. They had no housing, often living without food and without a profession. Therefore, freedom did not really provide a person free from domination by white people.

Considering that samba enables the construction of knowledge of Afro-Brazilian identity, proposing pedagogical practices that seek strategies as paths to promoting anti-racist and democratic educational actions at school are basic principles that value the history of Brazilian Culture. In this sense, from the importance of promoting strategies to combat racism, [...] we understand as fundamental the approach to the origin of several racist expressions and words that, very present in our society, are rooted. Such expressions often have their origin in the cruelty and dehumanization of certain ethnic groups [...].<sup>9</sup>

These strategies serve as a starting point to enable the construction of knowledge about the formation of Brazilian Culture, influenced by the people who lived and settled in Brazil, starting with the original peoples. In this process, there was a range of other peoples who enabled a type of cultural and social “anthropophagy”. Propose action strategies to students educational, with the aim of working on ethnic-racial, becomes a challenge, as deconstructing the prejudices perpetuated over the years requires expand knowledge of the formation narratives of Brazilian Culture and samba can be a tool for these actions at school.

From this perspective, the school plays an important role as a promoter of knowledge in the formation of formal teaching learning, reiterating the opinion of the Lawno.10,639/03:

They have to undo a centuries-old racist and discriminatory mentality, overcoming European ethnocentrism, restructuring ethnic-racial and social relations, de-alienating pedagogical processes. This cannot be reduced to words and reasoning disconnected from the experience of being inferior experienced by black people, nor from the low classifications attributed to them on the scales of social, economic, educational and political inequalities (Brasil, 2003. p. 6)

Providing aesthetic experiences at school as a means of establishing ethnic-racial and social relationships, systematizing pedagogical processes that seek to deconstruct racism and discrimination should be a practice throughout the education network, from Early Childhood Education to university, as well as, it should be instituted, at the beginning of the school year, and cover the possible subjects, in addition to Art and History. In this sense, the language of Art/Dance, as object of knowledge, intertwines with ways of being, perceiving and understanding the world in its various dimensions, namely: historical, anthropological, cultural, gestural, etc.

According to Marques<sup>13</sup> even though school is not the only place to actually learn dance and its specificities, it can be a privileged place for this to happen, given the possibilities of working on various educational aspects, from dance such as sociocultural, educational, philosophical, historical, etc.

Furthermore, working with dance, especially teaching samba, becomes a preponderant factor, in the sense of enabling connections related to Brazilian education and promoting dialogues for the construction of knowledge, providing an understanding in relation to the deconstruction process of prejudices. By establishing this contact with the teaching of samba, the aesthetic experience that dance promotes in students is highlighted, placing them in the context of the formation of our identity. Doing/contextualizing/enjoying requires Art/Dance to be proposed at school, not only in its historical aspects, but also from enjoyment and, in particular, from doing. To do so, it needs to make sense and this is only possible if it is experienced.

This triad, proposed by Barbosa<sup>6</sup> is already registered in the main national document of Basic Education, the Common National Curricular Base (BNCC), when it points out that it is necessary to reflect on the teaching of Art/Dance. For this document, reflection in Art, [...] refers to the process of constructing arguments and considerations about enjoyments, experiences and creative, artistic and cultural processes. It is the attitude of perceiving, analyzing and interpreting artistic and cultural manifestations, whether as a creator or as a reader (Brasil, 2018, p. 192-193)

In this sense, understanding and analyzing artistic processes, as well as how to understand the configurations that permeate Brazilian society and its cultural manifestations, enable teaching/learning in which students are protagonists in the construction of knowledge, boosts the student, in order to cause enthusiasm in the area of learning/teaching. Teaching samba in school spaces, as a Brazilian popular manifestation, is to consolidate it as a national and international reference, characteristic of a resilient, happy, creative and multiethnic people. This study even allows for the establishment of interdisciplinarity, since the languages of Art permeate the creative process in relation to samba, Music, Visual Arts, gestures and the interpretation of scenic language.

Considering the diversity of a multiethnic, plural, diverse and large country in territorial extension, it is necessary to understand

<sup>13</sup>By phone: Litero musical work, authored legally by Donga and Mauro de Almeida, released on record by Odeon in 1917.

this inequality and expand the repertoire of objects of knowledge, in an equitable proponent perspective, which seeks to democratize knowledge in the school environment and, thus, enabling the enjoyment of the work of art. Regarding enjoying works of art, the document that regulates Basic Education, the BNCC, says that it, [...] refers to delight, pleasure, strangeness and openness to awareness during participation in artistic and cultural practices. This dimension implies the availability of subjects for a continued relationship with artistic and cultural productions originating from the most diverse eras, places and social groups (Brasil, 2018, p.387).

Regarding this enjoyment, by enabling awareness of the history of other peoples as part of an integrated whole in our society, the knowledge that is constructed will come from a broader dimension, in the sense of perception of cultures intertwined with Brazilian culture.

### The school is also a samba school

The project was carried out at Escola Municipal Professor Waldson José Bastos Pinheiro, with students in the 9<sup>th</sup> year of Elementary School II, final years. The school is located in the neighborhood of Nossa Senhora da Apresentação, Vale Dourado, municipality of Natal/RN. Art teaching at school is based on languages divided by series, namely: Visual Arts, 6<sup>th</sup> year; music teaching, 7<sup>th</sup> year; Dance, 8<sup>th</sup> grade and Theater, 9<sup>th</sup> year. Although there is this division, by series, in practice, the teacher must work in these different languages.

On Black Awareness Day in November 2018, carrying out programming on the theme, a project proposed for the Art discipline, at the school where the researcher works, a set of concerns began to emerge about this theme which, in the school space, is dated in the commemorative parties of the school calendar. There were questions and critical reflections that came, in the sense of rethinking why only work on the theme of blackness and, only on that specific date? Why not extrapolate this project, beyond the commemorative date, making students understand black consciousness in their bodies and in the school body?

Based on the process and results achieved with the Black Awareness Day program that year, we began to observe the cultural and social reality of students and question the possibility of working on a continuity of the theme during the subsequent year. Subsequent classes were debated and organized based on the proposal to research dances of African origin, such as capoeira, maculelê, samba de roda, frevo, samba and their subgenres. Along the way, we decided to enter the universe of samba plot.

Every Tuesday in 2019, during Art class time, we begin the process of researching samba, its historical, political and cultural context, social, well as, the cultures that permeate Brazilian society. We organized the classroom in a circle format so that everyone could interact and thus promote a debate room, where we could develop thoughts, questions relating to the topic.

We started by reading the book *Africa is in us* (2006), by Roberto Benjamim, as a starting point for understanding and researching the history of the African peoples who influenced and constituted the Brazilian people. The textbook addresses the most varied themes in the study of Africanity, considering elements such as dances, food, words and expressions we use, musicality, instruments and all the cultural richness of Africa that constitutes Brazilian society. Figure 1, below, shows students watching a video about Africa.

Subsequently, we read and delved deeper into the studies of Law No. 10,639/2003, as a possibility of being understood as affirmative,

pedagogical and political actions, which could overcome racial inequalities and, also, as support for the elucidation and importance of working on pertinent themes in history African and Afro-Brazilian.



**Figure 1** Appreciation of videos on the topic.

**Source:** Own authorship (2019).

In Art classes, in the 2019 school calendar, we historically contextualized how the expansion of European colonizers on the African Continent occurred, with expository classes in the computer room, and thus, we sought to understand how Brazil was formed and its respective influences and trajectories. Discussions and questions were part of the classes as tools that enabled the learning that emerged throughout the process.

We watched excerpts from the films: *12 Years a Slave*<sup>14</sup> and *Amistad*,<sup>15</sup> seeking to raise awareness of students' understanding of enslaved peoples. At the same time, the Geography teacher was explaining the "African Continent" content, and this interdisciplinarity was important during the project's implementation process.

With these readings and film enjoyment, we asked the students: Which Afro-Brazilian dances do you know or have heard of? From the answers, we began an investigation into the dances mentioned by the students, to begin researching these dances and thus expand our repertoire.

<sup>14</sup>12 Years a Slave – Original title). 2014. Screenplay John Ridley. Director: Steve McQueen (II). Cast: Chiwetel Ejiofor, Michael Fassbender, Benedict Cumberbatch. SYNOPSIS: Not recommended for children under 14: 1841. Solomon Northup (Chiwetel Ejiofor) is a freed slave, who lives in peace alongside his wife and children. One day, after accepting a job that takes him to another city, he is kidnapped and chained. Sold as if he were a slave, Solomon must overcome physical and emotional humiliation to survive. Over the course of twelve years he passes through two gentlemen, Ford (Benedict Cumberbatch) and Edwin Epps (Michael Fassbender), who, each in their own way, exploit his services. Cf. 12 Years a Slave - Film 2013 – Quando Cinema.

<sup>15</sup>AMISTAD (1998) Drama. Historic. Director: Steven Spielberg. Cast: Djimon Hounsou, Morgan Freeman, David Paymer. SYNOPSIS: Coast of Cuba, 1839. Dozens of black slaves free themselves from their chains and take command of the slave ship *La Amistad*. They dream of returning to Africa, but they have no knowledge of navigation and are forced to trust two surviving crew members, who deceive them and cause them, after two months, to be captured by an American ship, when they sail in disarray to the coast of Connecticut. The Africans are initially tried for the murder of the crew, but the case takes shape and American President Martin Van Buren (Nigel Hawthorn), who dreams of being re-elected, tries to condemn the slaves, as it would please the southern states and also strengthen ties with Spain, as the young Queen Isabella II (Anna Paquin) claims that both the slaves and the ship are hers and must be returned. But the abolitionists win, and yet the government appeals and the case reaches the American Supreme Court. This picture makes former president John Quincy Adams (Anthony Hopkins), an unavowed abolitionist, come out of his voluntary retirement to defend Africans. CF.: *Amistad* - Film 1997 – Quando Cinema.

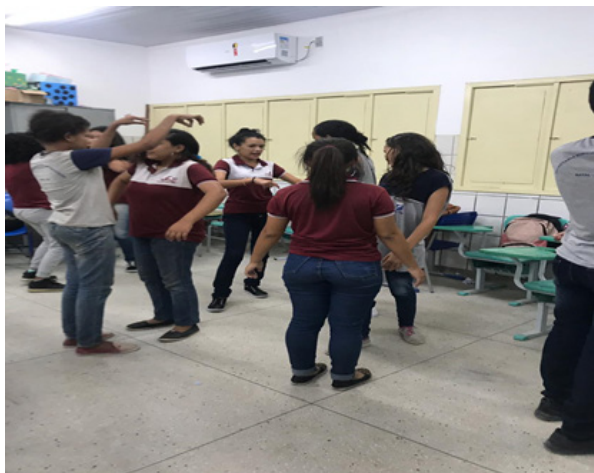


Some students have already danced or danced capoeira, as there is a capoeira group taught by “Mestre Cuscuz” in the neighborhood and many students have experienced capoeira in that place as well as maculelê and samba de roda. In this sense, it was possible for us to explore African dances more openly and, in a certain way, more easily.

We have listed some dances so that we can appreciate, experience and enjoy this art so rich and full of stories, such as frevo, maculelê, samba de roda, maracatu, coco de zambê, coco de roda and, finally, samba and its subgenres. We enjoyed some videos of the dances researched and, in addition to the discussions, contributions suggested by the students, we achieved try out the movements of the proposed dances.

The students brought rich contributions about the dances they knew and we were able, in addition to watching videos about the dances researched, to experience them on the body as a way of perceiving the gestures and movements that make up those dances. Practical classes were held in the classroom, in the school yard and, at times, on the sports court. As these students, the vast majority of them, they were already mine students, from in the 6<sup>th</sup> year, it was possible to provide practical classes in movements, rhythms and dance as paths to knowledge of the body, as established by movement studies then proposed by Laban.<sup>14</sup> We started by stretching specific parts of the body, then of the whole body, individually and in groups. The school makes available Speakers, then, the Classes flowed quite productively.

Over the months, in addition to enjoying dance videos and practical classes, we had the opportunity to study the types of samba and, thus, we chose groups and created seminars with the subgenres of samba and met some important composers and samba authors in Brazil Figure 2.



**Figure 2** Practical movement class.

**Source:** Own authorship (2019).

Figure 3 Every week, we had at least 3 seminar presentations with the respective sambas researched, with images, historical context, characteristics and, when they could be found, videos on the topic. After the presentations, there were debates, discussions and questions, the learning of which expanded with each presentation and I could see the enthusiasm with which several students demonstrated.

At the time, I was still participating in PIBID/UFRN, So, our actions were always in line with the planning of the Art discipline and, in a certain point, in addition to trying out some sambas in the

classroom, I was able to take the two 9<sup>th</sup> graders to a private class. Attic, in Department of Art, under the coordination of PIBID/Dance, It was professor Dr. Larissa Marques.



**Figure 3** Video appreciation and discussion on the topic.

**Source:** Own authorship (2019).

On May 27, 2019, the school provided a bus and we were able to take both classes to this practical class, which was attended by 100% of students. At the end of the class, I instructed them to create at least one page of a written production of narratives that involved the dance experienced and their impressions, with regard to the practical experience taught by the professor from the UFRN Department of Arts.

Figure 4 Soon after, after the experience of practicing samba, at UFRN, we continued with practical and theoretical classes on percussion with professor Eri Araújo. Every Thursday, after school hours, the students had percussion lessons, as well as an idea of rhythms with some instruments that the school made available, and thus, we built our “drums” to compose our mini samba school. The rehearsals that followed were composed of wings and we managed to develop this small structure of a samba school.



**Figure 4** Theoretical and practical Samba class.

**Source:** Personal collection (2019).

We had the opportunity to visit a Samba School (supervisors and students from the Dance course participating in PIBID), located in the Alecrim neighborhood, called Águia Dourada, whose samba theme is that year, was titled “Africa: cradle of human fertilization”. We read the samba plot so we could understand what the lyrics of that samba showed us, allowing, In this way, reflections on the topic and its historical, geographical, philosophical and educational implications.

It was possible to rehearse this samba plot with 9<sup>th</sup> year students and compose our mini school of samba, on that occasion, in a certain

way, already structured. The students themselves were able to make some props, guided and taught by the Samba school prop master Jeová Pereira da Silva, better known as Jeová Silva, his artistic name Figure 5.



**Figure 5** Making props.

**Source:** Own authorship (2019).

In the meantime, we had already built our samba school with costumes, props, drums, wings, music and all the joy that a samba school could offer in its visual, musical and poetic dimensions. During Black Awareness Day Week, we had talks with people from Candomblé to talk about the religiosity of African culture, as well as its religious syncretism. We also had the opportunity to find out more about “Afro Hair”, (@espacodreadlooks) with an expert in the area. The lecture was very interesting, because she made historical explanations, reporting the importance of hair in African ancestry, providing empowerment, from the acceptance of hair by students.

On November 29, 2019, a Friday, we had our artistic presentations as the culmination of Black Consciousness Week at school. We begin with a solo entitled “A Dança de Xangô”, presented by the dancer and founder of Corpus Dançantes Cia de Dança, Gevaldo Cruz (In memoriam), showing all the majestic gestures of this orixá, so important in African traditions, a symbol of justice. Shortly there after, It was Maculelê’s turn, a group taught by “Mestre Cuscuz”, as mentioned previously, made up of students and alumni of the school Figure 6.



**Figure 6** Xangô Dance – Guest Artist: Gevaldo Cruz.

**Source:** Personal collection (2019).

Finally, it was the turn of our “Mini samba school” made up of 9th year students from that school, with their respective wings, whose representations were that of mother nature and its importance for the living beings of the earth; wing of the orixás – in occasion, we had just *lansã*, *Oxum* and *Obá* and the drums also made up of students from the aforementioned series. The parade started at the school entrance and reached the court, passing through the corridors and the

courtyard, where the students sang the samba and played accompanied by the percussion teacher Eri Araújo. Teachers, students, managers, all support staff and the school secretary were present in a joint celebration of Samba, Brazil’s intangible heritage Figure 7.



**Figure 7** Formation of the Samba Minischool.

**Source:** Personal collection (2019).

## Final considerations

Working samba as a pedagogical practice in the light of anti-racist education requires engagement, availability to deal with resistance and, therefore, Ultimately, it enables the deconstruction of a Eurocentric teaching that encourages students to question and problematize the established modes of education that last for many years. Therefore, it is I need to “[...] understand that the success of some comes at the price of marginalization and inequality imposed on others and then decide what society we want to build from now on (Brazil, 2003, p. 5).

Reflecting, questioning, establishing dialogues and promoting the production of knowledge are necessary fields for teaching Art in this century. Such knowledge can dialogue with Art/Dance content to understand Afro-Brazilian cultures and from of these, demystifying the idiosyncrasies established with black cultures and teaching samba can be one of the paths to follow in this area of misunderstanding about Afro-Brazilian cultures, since it, samba, is appreciated, heard, enjoyed and danced by almost everyone.

The teaching of samba, while Dance content can provide a universe of possibilities as a pedagogical proposal for knowledge of African and Afro-Brazilian History and Culture. We can only hope that this doing/teaching/learning of ethnic-racial relations is perpetuated based on this “symbol” that represents a resilient, strong, creative, insightful and resistant people in their struggles: samba.

It is worth noting that the knowledge acquired by students comes from their own perception, while builders of these knowledge, the from the moment they can be aware of the path to be taken, as protagonists, as well as importance of a mediating teacher in this path of collective construction.

Mentioning Bell Hooks<sup>15</sup> when she proposes reflections on a pedagogy in which there is engagement in autonomy, protagonism, she questions about our teaching practice and how we are treating our students. Therefore, the classroom and/or school environment must be a place that provokes reflection, enabling the construction of knowledge. For the author, education must be committed to liberation, taking a stand against racial, gender and sexuality prejudice.

In fact, the classroom needs to be a place that provides a safe environment, in which existing differences can be discussed and identified, but which can be recognized, expressed and defended, in a collective and not individual way, generating a belonging as subjects and their subjectivities.

The entire process, throughout the project, was designed and experienced with the aim of promoting anti-racist education in which the subjects of the action could develop critical thoughts in relation to Samba knowledge, whether in its historical, political, artistic, philosophical and sociocultural context.

Promoting affirmative actions in a society steeped in historical prejudices is not an easy task, but even so, it is essential in terms of a proposal for education as a practice of freedom – already systematized by Freire (1998) and transliterated by Hooks.<sup>15-29</sup>

Thus, the work carried out at the Waldson Pinheiro school reverberated in me, as a mediator of knowledge, a kind of extension of what I lived and experienced, throughout my career, as a curious, teacher, artist, researcher and learner, when I manage to execute a project that emphasizes Samba, as a national identity, a symbol of a nation that persists, fights and resists.

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None.

## Conflicts of interest

Declare if any conflict of interest exists.

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