

**Listening images: essay on an inclusive cinema and education video workshop<sup>1</sup>**

***Ouvindo imagens: ensaio sobre uma oficina audiovisual inclusiva de cinema e educação<sup>2,3</sup>***

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**Abstract:**

This essay reflects on the production of a video resulting of a cinema workshop held with deaf and hearing students of a public high school in Rio de Janeiro. The workshop integrated the project Ouvindo imagens, conducted by Laboratório de Vídeo Educativo of Universidade Federal do Rio de Janeiro (LVE/Nutes/UFRJ), whose objective was to promote the approximation and integration between deaf and listening groups of students through the practice of cinema. Our work highlights the place of existence of linguistic minorities in relation to the school, the cinema, and the social addresses that target this group. With the support of the concept of modes of address, we analyze the development of the workshop, specifically the process of film production. As a result, we identified the experience of the workshop provided powerful forms of relationship between the participants, as evident in the video itself and in the collaborative system of its production, triggered by the social discontent experienced by the students in the school context.

**Keywords:** video workshop, deafness, modes of address, inclusion, cinema and education

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## **Resumo:**

*Este ensaio reflete sobre a produção de um vídeo resultante de uma oficina de cinema realizada com estudantes surdos e ouvintes do ensino médio de uma escola pública do Rio de Janeiro. A oficina integrou o projeto Ouvindo imagens, realizado pelo Laboratório de Vídeo Educativo da Universidade Federal do Rio de Janeiro (LVE/Nutes/UFRJ), cujo objetivo era promover a aproximação e a integração entre esses dois grupos de estudantes por meio da prática cinematográfica. Nosso trabalho destaca o lugar de existência das minorias linguísticas em relação à escola, ao cinema e aos endereçamentos sociais que a este grupo são dirigidos. A partir do conceito de modos de endereçamento, analisamos o desenvolvimento da oficina, especificamente o processo de produção do filme. Como resultado, identificamos que a experiência da oficina propiciou formas potentes de relação entre os participantes, como fica evidente no próprio vídeo e no sistema colaborativo da sua produção, acionado pela força de um descontentamento social vivido por eles no contexto escolar.*

**Palavras-chave:** oficina audiovisual, surdez, modos de endereçamento, inclusão, cinema e educação

## **Introduction**

In the interface between cinema and education, a series of practices have been studied and questioned by researchers and the subjects of these actions, so that the relationship between these two fields is increasingly being legitimated as a unique field of studies due to its complexity and the effects resulted from this approximation.

In this process of field consolidation, a reflection that lingers and helps to understand the construction of this trajectory, even if in didactic and broad terms, expresses the interface between cinema and education from two main references: a more classic one, focused on “educational cinema” practices, and another more contemporary, focused on practices of “cinema as art” in the schools. Be by adhesion or contestation, the different practices developed in the scope of the interface between cinema and education will invariably position themselves towards one or another or even a mixture of both references.

As said, the first subscribes itself more systematically in a processes guided by an “educational dimension” of films, connected to the use of different film genres in the classroom,

together with the teacher's interaction; or directly connected to special productions called "educational films"<sup>4</sup> (Xavier, 2008, p. 15). From the set of practices that constitute the so-called "educational dimension" of films, it is worth highlighting the possible connections with the ideas proposed since the 1930s until the 1960s by the *Instituto Nacional de Cinema Educativo* (Ince - National Institute of Educational Cinema) that, "among other pedagogical instruments, has elected educational cinema as a way to renovate school practices and guarantee the access to school knowledge to a higher number of people" (Catelli, 2010, p. 606).

The second reference is part of the processes guided towards what Ismail Xavier (2008) calls the "formative dimension of cinema", understood as a human action connected to art, values, perspectives of the world, broadening of repertoire, and also as a language that mobilizes and unbalances certainties. According to this author,

the cinema that "educates" is the cinema that makes one think, not only the cinema, but the most varied experiences and issues it focuses. That is, the issue is not to "give content", but to provoke reflection, question what, as a construct with history, is taken as nature, an unquestionable data. (Xavier, 2008, p. 15)

Anita Leandro (2001) also reinforces the distinction between the "educational" and "formative" dimensions of cinema, while proposing a reflection on the differences between "pedagogical images" and "pedagogies of image". According to the author, the "pedagogy of image" is on the image that thinks and makes one think, that has an intrinsic pedagogy; it is on "the work of the movie, the movie as a *place* of work, a *place* where men's creation takes place and, therefore, of transformation of the world" (Leandro, 2001, p. 31, author's highlights). The "pedagogical images", on its turn, would focus on what Ismail Xavier (2008) calls "educational dimension", that is, an image whose content (ready, finished) needs to be transmitted and understood as such by those watching them.

Guided by these two principals of reference, this essay aims to reflect on the production of a film done by deaf and hearing students of a public high-school in Rio de Janeiro, during a cinema workshop proposed by the project *Ouvindo imagens* (Listening Images) (*Laboratório de Vídeo Educativo* of the *Núcleo de Tecnologia Educacional para a Saúde* at the *Universidade Federal do Rio de Janeiro – LVE/Nutes/UFRJ*). This project aims to integrate deaf and hearing K-12 students

<sup>4</sup> "... that supposedly structures itself as a communicative act that presents, in a way or another, a demarcation, a teaching methodology, a pedagogical principal, guided towards a specific domain of knowledge, or to train a practice" (Xavier, 2008, p. 15).

through the practice of cinema. Respecting the cultural specificities of deaf students and hearing ones, the project starts with the assumption that cinema, as an experience to be shared by both groups, can be a resource of great potential to effectively integrate and approximate them, as it works with something both groups have access to : image.

The cinema workshop developed by the project planned actions targeted to the formation of audience and an approach of filming techniques in an environment that would allow sharing experiences, horizontality, and dialogue among participants. In this essay, we refer to the experience of thought of Alain Bergala (2008), who allows us to understand the practice of cinema in school as art and as human action. Bergala considers art a gesture of experience, something that is not taught nor simply learnt: art is experienced. This is, therefore, a practice that matches the most traditional sense of schools, as schools are, unquestionably, the place reserved for the processes of teaching and evaluation.

Another point that shapes this essay refers to the studies on reception. The idea of active reception, as pointed out by Stam (2003, p. 281), show us that “cinema offers the audience specific positions and roles, but the audience can negotiate such position due to taste, ideology, individual cultural contexts”. Also Stuart Hall (2003a, 2003b), when developing a non-linear and multidirectional model of communicative process, shows us that the readings we do of hegemonic-dominant codes are, often, negotiated readings, that is, interpretations and critical readings that follow specific logics and objectives according to situated sociocultural frames. According to this author, negotiated reading compose a decoding that mixtures elements of agreement, adaptation, and opposition. At the same time, it recognizes the hegemonic definitions, endowed by great meanings, recognizes its own rule in a more local contested level, establishing what he calls “politics of signification- the fight on discourse” (Hall, 2003a, p. 402).

In this direction, we take the concept of “modes of address”, referencing Ellsworth (2001), to reflect on the choices made by these youngsters during the workshop. The author refers to addressing as something that takes place somewhere between the “social” and the “individual”, proposing a view that “stops placing the modes of address within the text of a movie and starts to understand it as an event” (Ellsworth, 2001, p. 13). On this perspective, we try to reflect on the film done by the students in the cinema workshop and the personal achievements during the process as an effect of the audience experiences brought by each participant.

We also highlight, in this experience, reflections on the perspective of inclusive education and linguistic minorities, seen as a process to guarantee rights in which all can learn to live with differences. According to Díez (2010), to talk about inclusive school means changes in pedagogical practices, so that we can have less segregationist practices and more humanizing ones.

## **Why having a workshop with deaf students in an inclusive school?**

Since the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, in 1948, the World Conference on Education For All, in Thailand, in 1990, and the Salamanca Declaration, in 1994, there has been a consolidation of proposals of inclusive school as a way to guarantee education for all (Loureiro, 2006). In the school context, the embodiment of this practice has led to a series of interventions that aim to give visibility and place, in the educational scene, to subjects that in a way have always lived on the margins of the educational process.

In the educational area, public policies are guided by the principle of inclusion and school managers have to create political-pedagogical projects that value professional development and the involvement of all members of the school community. School becomes, then, a place where children and teenagers start, through coexistence, a possibility of social transformation (Pletsch & Glat, 2010).

In this scenario, the singularity of the educational process of the deaf has led the academic and the deaf communities to defend a differentiated work proposal, through the offer of a bilingual education, that is, a proposal that presupposes the use of both languages during schooling: *Língua Brasileira de Sinais* (Libras- Brazilian Sign Language) and Portuguese. Besides this, in the last decades there has been an increasing boost in the communication processes through visibility (Campello, 2008). Therefore, there are new discourses, not only verbal, oral, or written, but imagetic discourses that mediate knowledge production through technologies and visual resources.

In this sense, a workshop that welcomed deaf and hearing students seemed to be an adequate proposal for such reflection. However, we should mention that the development of theoretical and practical works focusing on the relation between the fields of cinema and education, and the questions arisen from inclusive practices in the school are still rare. The scarce sharing of experiences in this context, while forcing improvisation and detours during the project, has also strengthened the need to do this study and share this experience, even if incipient and inconclusive. When a deaf student arrives in school, his/her lack of language, or the use of a language that is not understood by most people in the community can result in exclusion, even in an inclusive school. Thus, a pedagogical exercise that understands the needs of the deaf through essentially imagetic approaches can open to these subjects not only possibilities of school learning, but also the possibility of more equalitarian relationships with his peers.

## **The cinema and education field**

Generally, since the end of the 1990s, when low-income classes started to have a greater access to recording and editing equipment, the idea of “video workshop”<sup>5</sup> was taken under a perspective guided towards having a (whole) film done by the participants by the end of the courses, so as to have a certain proof of “learning”.

With the growth on the access of video equipment and the inevitable arrival of this experience in the school environment in more recent years, deeper reflection have been guiding other practices, among them those that result in a mentality dedicated to the consolidation between cinema and education as an increasingly legitimated field of studies, which is of particular interest to this essay.

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<sup>5</sup> Between the 1990s and 2009, the term related to “video workshop” varied according to media publications and agents themselves (Toledo, 2010).

Although nowadays the technical support used in the workshops is video and not film, the use of the term “cinema” seems to have been critical to suggest other thoughts and adopted practices in the relation that has been more recently established with education.

As a tool of social transformation, the access to the means of video production strengthened, in the end of the 1970s and 1980s, the movement *Vídeo Popular* (Popular Video) which had a strong expression. In the experience of *TVs de Rua*<sup>6</sup> (Street TVs) and the production of documentaries, reinforcing a more immediate perspective of the act of looking, called “image-act” by Philippe Dubois (2004). From the process of turning on the “open cameras” of *TVs de Rua*, which gave a “voice” to ordinary people, there needed to be another step: not only give voice, but handing the camera to these people so that they also could create their images of the world. In this sense, the development of workshops and the promotion of the technical mastery of recording equipment became fundamental, beyond other aspects involving the appropriation of video language in that moment.

In the research done by Toledo (2010), we can see in the pedagogical strategies of workshops researched between the 1990s and 2009 the guidance towards the production of a (whole) film by the end of the courses. It seems that the urgency of the 1980s centered on the appropriation of technics to allow an alternative action and face television and the hegemonic cinema. From the 1990s on, the proposals targeted professionalization and entrepreneurship combined to the practices, imposing other senses to the production of videos in the workshops.

As said, in recent years a closer look on the potentials of cinema in education have been suggesting less immediate practices and other political dimensions of filming. In the perspective of some projects, schools do not necessarily need a support or a technique (equipment) to get closer to the cinema practices, but thinking on the place that the experience of cinema and art should take in these spaces. Therefore, the idea of making a (whole) film has been giving space to experiences with fragments of a cinematographic action – what is called “pedagogy of fragments” – often dismissing electronic technologies<sup>7</sup>. Initially proposed by Alain Bergala (2008), such practice resumes, with softer tones, the old conflict on the duality “process *versus* result”, allowing us to assume the “process” as a “product”, even if it is not presented as a

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<sup>6</sup> See Toledo (2010).

<sup>7</sup> See *Cadernos do Inventar* ([www.inventarcomadiferenca.com.br](http://www.inventarcomadiferenca.com.br)).

conventional narrative or under the appearance of a “film”, as it is frequently seen in most common medias of exhibition.

Although the workshop with deaf students did not adopt the pedagogy of fragments in its development, this displacement in the relation between process and product is important to the analysis we aim to do. The experience with fragments ruptures, in a certain measure, with the tacit commitment of a cinematographic doing that has the classic narrative as a reference, that is, the need to tell stories, to chain noticeable senses and causalities, according to general rules, as shown by Rancière.

Rancière (2012) defends that it is the process of subordination of the “image” to the “text” in the poetic thought that establishes, under the same rules, the process of correspondence in the arts; and that the rupture of this conjunction leads to the autonomy of all arts, from the words to the more visible ones. This disjunction is, according to the author, the common core of “modernist” theorization, called by him the “aesthetic regime of art” (Rancière, 2012, p. 50), about which we will return later.

However, it is worth mentioning that the practice of fragments does not abandon the making of (whole) movies in schools but demands other times and objectives to these practices. This is the case of projects as: *Cine en curso*<sup>8</sup>, coordinated by Núria Aidelman, in Barcelona; *Cinema para Aprender e Desaprender (Cinead)*<sup>9</sup>, coordinated by Adriana Fresquet, in Rio de Janeiro; and *Inventar com a diferença: cinema, educação e direitos humanos*, held in Brazil, in South American countries, and other places<sup>10</sup>. Cezar Migliorin (2015), coordinator of the project *Inventar com a diferença*, shows a clear concern with school time in the creation of these practices:

In the dispositives we created, there was always a space for improvisation, for the relation with the other, and for the creation with properly cinematographic elements without the need to necessarily reach a movie. We were afraid of taking to the school the idea of a movie done by the students. There was a big possibility that this proposal could take an excessive space in the practices, with frustrating results. (p. 155)

<sup>8</sup> See <https://www.ambulante.org/cine-en-curso-nuria-aidelman>.

<sup>9</sup> See <http://cinead.org/escolas-de-cinema/>.

<sup>10</sup> All see the theoretical and practical works developed by (Mônica Fantin and Gilka Girardello, at *Universidade Federal de Santa Catarina (UFSC)*; by *Programa de Alfabetização Audiovisual* at *Universidade Federal do Rio Grande do Sul (UFRGS)*; by Rosália Duarte, at *Pontifícia Universidade Católica do Rio de Janeiro (PUC-Rio)*; by Inês Teixeira, at *Universidade Federal de Minas Gerais (UFMG)*; Fabiana Marcello and Rosa Fischer, at *UFRGS*; Milene Gusmão, at *Universidade Estadual do Sudoeste da Bahia (UESB)*, among others..

The main reference for this re-elaboration of the possibilities of cinema in education is the beforementioned Alain Bergala (2008) who drew the methodological bases for a pedagogy of cinema as art in French schools. As Leandro (2010) reminds us, Bergala's proposal:

Should allow an audience a much deeper experience than that arisen from the decoding of signs or the study of narrative... instead of submitting image to an already existing theoretical framework, as the linguistic one, teachers and students would adopt a heuristic attitude in relation to the works, discovering, together, the knowledge produced by films. (p. 81)

An important point to this essay in Bergala's work is how he refers to cinema as an "alterity block"- a sort of "other", a strange object that invades the controlled school environment, to be approached as a space to produce specific knowledge. When referring to the processes of cinema broadcast, Bergala (2008) proposes the following:

There is a different demand between *teaching* in the classic sense and *starting*. There will always be something missing in the starter that has never had a close experience with the creation gesture and *what it implies to the subject*. Because it is from the experience of one subject to the other that we are dealing with in the broadcast of a creation gesture (p. 171, author's highlight)

Adriana Fresquet (2013) shares this idea when saying that nothing is more "foreign to in a school context than art. Art does not obey, does not repeat, does not accept without questioning. Art complains, deconstructs, resists with a certain irreverence. Be careful to read art and not the teaching of art" (p. 70).

Therefore, with this essay, we aim to reflect on an experience of cinema and education with deaf and hearing students from a public school during the creation of a video<sup>11</sup> called by them *Cinema para todos?* (Cinema for all?). In the workshop development context, we will find references anchored in more updated perspectives (cinema as art) and more classic ones (educational cinema), as described previously, having a whole film in the end of the work, as a product of learning, instead of an exercise of fragments of cinematographic action.

<sup>11</sup> The terms "film" and "video" have the same meaning here. Even though videos result from a different technique than films ( the movie film itself), the term here will always refer to the work and not the technique.

## Understanding the concept of modes of address

The communicational circuit proposed by Hall (2003a) differs from the linear idea of message transmission, as it considers that there are in this circuit the steps of production, circulation, distribution, consumption, and reproduction as different moments, whose own characteristics cannot stop an interrelation. Hall's proposal is different from the traditional model of communication because it considers that the communicational process does not end in the communicative act. He defends that the positions assumed by the audience when reading an audiovisual product will interfere in its production and vice-versa, giving to the communicational circuit a dynamic circular movement. In this sense, according to Ellsworth (2001), knowing the targeted audience is key to construct an audiovisual work, but even so the spectators may not identify themselves in the place built for them. So that a work can reach its goal, Ellsworth (2001) considers that, when thinking about the desired audience, the producers need to adjust the audiovisual text, as the audience will also make the necessary adjustments when reading. Thus, from the way the narrative system will be presented to the audience, the place of visibility will be built.

Using the narrative, scenery, costume, image, sounds, and camera positioning, for example, the film can be built to attract and invite the audience to share a perspective of the world, see particular values, notice and live certain experiences, allowing some readings in the place of others. However, we cannot forget that the experience of watching films always imply a diversity and subjectivity of social categories, reason why Ellsworth (2001) calls the attention to the fact that even if a movie is addressed to a certain previously idealized audience, the spectator may not be exactly what the "film thinks it is" (p. 13), or the place that was built for it may not be attractive as the spectator does not see him/herself represented. We can conclude then that the modes of address are a social space between the film and the audience that is not visible nor completely explicit. The audience members will see the mediatic product based on their experiences, beliefs, political perspectives, etc. This means that the event of addressing takes place in a space that is social, psychic, or both. Therefore, it also should be thought as an individual event (Ellsworth, 2001).

## **Modes of address and linguistic minority**

Cultural aspects will always lead to possibilities or lack of possibilities to negotiate what makes us, through associated power strategies, sometimes through deterministic ideas present in different spaces in society. Hall (2003b) considers culture as a space of social signification and a place of human diversity coexistence. It can be considered as something alive, contemporary, a place of subject construction, subjectivity ways. According to the author, it is also expressed in different cultural artifacts (media, art, music, films, books, curricula, and others), that allow the construction of subjects and the promotion and/or reinforcement of stereotypes and social inequalities (Hall, 2003a).

Stuart Hall (2003a) considers as part of the group called “minorities” the individuals that get together not towards an individual or social class issue, but to bring visibility to discussion on the plurality of identities in society. Staiger (2005) believes that the existing rupture among groups in a society is mostly related to the place of submission or oppression socially built to each of those groups. In this sense, when we talk about minorities, we are not referring to the quantitative aspect of these groups, but we are based by a sociological perspective of the individuals that live exclusion and social inequality. Those people are exposed to pre-judgments represented by different enunciates (Bakhtin, 2003), that often banalize or criminalize movements that give visibility to these groups in the fight for ideals as respect and citizenship, and in the possibility to occupy different spaces (territorial, cultural, religious, educational, in art, and others). Groups, such as homosexuals, blacks, Indigenous, handicapped, and the landless, can be considered minorities in a world increasingly more globalized, in which cultures are altered (Staiger, 2005; Hooks, 1992).

Among the different enunciates presented in the social environment, this essay is interested in thinking cinematographic productions that, according to Staiger (2005), can be seen as social mediators that educate individuals and/or reinforce social perspectives and educational practices with its capacity of social transformation or reinforcement of hegemonic discourses. Thus, a dimension to be questioned in this study is: what senses have been used by films, commercial or not, to build different perspectives about the deaf? How can school also be used as a transformative agent of these discourses?

To Freire Filho (2004), “mass media is a great force in the propagation and legitimation of labels” (p. 49). The same author points to the critical analyses from Cultural Studies on the sub-representation or distorted representation of what we call minority groups. Often, cinematographic narratives build a symbolic universe marked by stereotypes, prejudices, violence, etc., showing power relations established by a subordination of dominant groups or a non-representation which could be considered as a type of marginalization (Escudero & Saraiva, 2016).

What can images, sounds, shots, and film narratives tell us in the different identities that compose the globalized society we live? Will the place of the audience member belonging to a minority group be always marked by the hegemonic discourse on their subjectivity? Hooks (1992) affirms that there is always the possibility that the audience will resist this reading with an oppositional gaze. In her experience as a black spectator, Hooks confirmed in the movie screen what, in real life, she has lived since she was a child – the oppressed and forbidden gaze of the blacks. She did not feel represented in the image of the submissive black woman, or the comical aspects, or the lack of intelligence, or as an object for the male gaze. However, she says, other women would be seduced by the magic of movies, forgetting the racism of those narratives. To Hooks (1992) each narrative places the spectators in a position, and their class, ethnicity, language, and sexuality will influence the way each subjectivity is filled when watching a movie.

About the deaf, the studies in the area point to a social representation of these subjects as imperfect, sick, handicap, or even retarded (Thoma, 2011). Since the 1960s, with William Stokoe’s studies on American Sign Language, the gestures earned the status of a language for the deaf (Castro Junior, 2015). This movement allowed the deaf community to have more *voice* and space to speak about themselves and their needs. The deaf do not accept and fight to change the representations that see them as a “handicapped individual that needs to be corrected” (Thoma, 2011, p. 220). Castro Junior (2015) describes sign language as

a cultural artifact filled of social meaning, thus one of the most important specificities of manifestation and production of deaf culture. Therefore, the use of sign language by the deaf surpasses the objectives of a simple communication, becoming the mean through which the subjectivities and identities of these individuals are expressed. (p. 16)

In the cinema field, Thoma's (2011) study, when researching on deaf representation in Hollywood films, saw that the construction of the narrative and deaf characters, often, reaffirms the hegemonic social representation of this group. In the addressing analysis, the author considered that most films were addressed to a hearing audience, as they tried to present the "drama" of deafness, besides emphasizing deafness as a pathology. The deaf group participating in the study did not identify itself with the deaf characters on the films, as they identified themselves as subjects with a cultural identity, not as having a pathology. Sign language should be presented as their mother language, an instrument of more effective communication, access to knowledge, and construction of subjectivity, not as something that is taught to the deaf as a last resource when s/he can not acquire the language spoken by the majority.

As spectators, studies point out that the deaf frequent movie theaters, but only foreign films, as those are subtitled in Portuguese. Even so, the accessibility is not complete, as Portuguese is not the main language for most deaf people. Besides, there is the need for more descriptive subtitles of the soundtrack which, according to the deaf, would help understanding the movie text (Melo, 2015; Souza, 2015).

## **The cinema workshop, methodologies, and results**

The project started in the meetings of *Laboratório de Vídeo Educativo* (LVE/Nutes/UFRJ), in which reception studies, film analysis, and spectator formation are some themes of interest. With the challenge of working with these themes in education and inclusion, the project *Ouvindo imagens: produção e recepção audiovisual* was created as a proposal of inclusive education. The aim was to specifically work with deaf children participating of regular classes. The project *Ouvindo imagens* uses the perspective of the LVE group towards these people, understanding that deafness will lead the subjects to construct themselves not as a handicapped, but as part of a linguistic minority who have sign language as their first language, and Portuguese as their second one. This, often, stops the deaf to access a greater social good: culture. Therefore, working with cinema is to allow these students an access to a world of culture and creativity, important paths to anyone's formation.

As said, the video production workshop was strongly influenced by Alain Bergala's (2008) work to whom art cannot be conceived by the student without a practical experience and the contact with the professional artists, which presents him/herself as a "strange body" to school, as a "fortunately disturbing element to its system of values, behaviors, and relational rules" (Bergala, 2008, p. 30).

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Hearing and deaf students took part of the workshop, after its proposal was released by the teacher responsible for the school's "resource lab". Among the deaf students, one had a cochlear implant<sup>12</sup>; two knew little of *Libras*, had much difficulty in reading lips, and compromised speaking; two knew *Libras* better, had reasonable orality and good lip reading. Among the hearing students, one was autistic, another had a motor disability, and another a neurological alteration. There were also hearing students with no special need. The last ones, however, gave up after some meetings, probably due to the rhythm taken in the workshop because of the other students. Thus, the workshop initially had 11 students, but 7 effectively participated.

In this analysis, we focus on the relation of these last ones, the group of special-needs students. The workshop had a team of two interpreters, two outreach undergraduate students, a technician from LVE/Nutes, a speech therapist, Maria Inês Barbosa, from *Instituto Nacional de Educação de Surdos (Ines)*, and a movie professional Geraldo Pereira (the last two, also authors of this text).

The school is in *Tanque*, a middle-class neighborhood in the region of *Jacarepaguá*, in the westside of the city of Rio de Janeiro. The general school space had some architectural difficulties, having a vertical structure and narrow hallways and staircases leading to crowded classrooms.

The workshop took place in the so-called "resource lab" in the school, where special-needs students receive tutoring and also where the library works- with the typical activities of

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<sup>12</sup> Electronic equipment, partially implanted, that gives the user a similar auditive sensation as the physiological one.

such a space- therefore, with a circulation of hearing and deaf students in different activities, including during the workshop. The resource lab was small, with many pieces of furniture, weak lighting, and chairs that hindered the movement in the space, besides a considerable number of computers on side countertops – most of them without use, waiting to be fixed.

Thus, it was in this space and with this public that we developed the workshop during seven meetings of three-hour each, with activities such as watching short films (in all meetings there was a movie exhibition and debate) and three practical experiences with image: two brief ones (photography and graphic production – image/text and stop-motion technics) and another, that took most part of the workshop, focused on the production of a film.

For the movie exhibitions, we selected short movies with no dialogues, however we were faced by the fact that in most of them, even though the narrative was based on the image, the audio (soundtrack and sound effects) was a strong element. Therefore, we opted to watch/choose the films with the sound off.

The projection infrastructure (projector, sound, screen) and the equipment used for the film and photography exercises (digital photo cameras and tripods) were offered by the project. We also used some computers from the library and a notebook for the final editing of the video.

In the following analysis, we will focus only on the video production, as it was the main activity in the workshop. In a sense, all actions revolved around the movie we would do. The invitation done by the school to the students promised a film in the end, the other two activities were thought as a support to the central one.

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To understand our video production we must consider, among other elements, the conditions in which it took place. As said, we had predefined seven meetings for the workshop to plan the production of a whole video with a group of hearing and deaf public high-school students. Our little knowledge of deaf culture, the inadequate conditions of the space, and the

absence of an interpreter Libras/Portuguese in most meetings almost prevented the work to take place. We needed to understand and accept their time, so that, out of the seven meetings only two were in fact dedicated to the video production. There was also the need to have a final video in the end to not frustrate the participants' expectations. Such understanding of the allocated time to do the video did not reduce the richness of the experience but forced us to reorganize our methodology.

The movie done by the students, entitled *Cinema para todos?*, lasting 3 minutes and 30 seconds, narrates the story of a deaf girl who goes to the movies to watch a Brazilian movie and is faced by the lack of subtitles. She argues with the movie manager saying that she is deaf and deaf people need subtitles to understand national films, but he, not understanding what she says, laughs of the situation. The film ends with her looking at the camera, searching for someone to understand her. Over her face, the following text: "Cinema for all?".

Not coincidentally, "Cinema for all" (without the question mark) is the name of a project established by the state of Rio de Janeiro, which, through the free distribution of cinema coupons to Brazilian films, "stimulates and democratizes the access to state-system students to movie theaters, provoking debates and reflection inside and outside the classroom" (Cinema para todos, 2012). In the students' film, the words in the end reproduce the logo of this project with the (ironic) adding of a question mark: "Cinema for all?".

The screenplay was proposed by one of the participants and was immediately accepted by the group that, at this time, had already lost some members. The group's argument focused on their experience as spectators of Brazilian movies with no subtitles, what prevents deaf people to understand movies from their own country. The lack of this resource limits cinematographic culture to foreign films with subtitles. However, it is worth mentioning that the subtitles help only those that master Portuguese, a minority among the deaf (Melo, 2015) – what was not the case of the whole group with which we worked.

In the exercises done before making the film, we asked the participants to write short stories lived by each to later create compositions with the photos we would take in the school. The activity imposed us a first detour: it was not an easy task to translate to written Portuguese what is though and organized by the deaf in Libras. Libras is not a resource of the Portuguese language to help the communication between hearing and deaf in Brazil, but a language that needs to be respected in the complexity and singularity demanded by a language, including in its written form. Our sensation of reference loss was strong in this moment. We needed the groups' collaboration to continue with the activity. With the participation of the deaf and the team of LVE/Nutes, we helped one another to create the texts, respecting, in the case of the deaf, their ways of thinking and writing, with minimal adequations to Portuguese grammar. Thus, a deep review on the demand of subtitles in Brazilian films needs to consider the cultural identity of the deaf to understand what type of subtitle would be adequate instead of assuming Portuguese subtitles as *the* accessibility resource.

During the creation of the film with the group, together with the subtitle issue, there was a clear dissatisfaction with the name of the governmental project, they questioned “How come ‘for all?’”. The group had just lived in the school a similar situation to the one in the screenplay. The governmental project had distributed coupons to the school for the film *Gonzaga: de pai pra filho* (2012), by Breno Silveira – a drama on the life of singer and accordion player Luiz Gonzaga. The indignation is even bigger faced by the misunderstanding that “all” in the school would go to the movies, that is, in a way the collective distribution of coupons potentializes the exclusion when defending that “all” would have the same right.

The students' situation echoes Ellsworth's (2001) question, on the scope of reception studies “how do minorities read films that are never addressed to them?” (p. 32). By “reading”, she refers to the films' plots, to the representation of minorities in the films and, therefore, the implicit forms of inclusion or exclusion in films. However, the case brought by the students does not refer to a film's plot, but a political-educational addressing of a certain cinematographic culture (to which the government subscribes) towards a minority. Such gesture implies considering that the State government, among other issues, when creating the project ‘Cinema for all’, either naturalized the idea that the deaf and other minorities can, for some reason, be ignored in the cultural projects to the population, that is, are not naturally a part of the group of “all”; or naturalized the ignorance that often interposes these students' specific needs, which, when not ignored, would in fact allow them to be part of the “all”, so that they could, among

other things, watch Brazilian movies. Therefore, given the complexity of the elements involved, we could understand that the gesture of the government is more than a project open to criticism by the workshop participants. It is a discourse that molds a cinematographic culture of exclusion. In this essay, we try to understand this discourse also as a mode of address, which allows us to expand the analysis of the film plots, as proposed by Ellsworth (2001), to a broader and more complex context, including the films themselves.

Certainly, Ellsworth (2001) is also referring to the symbolic when dealing with the reception of film plots, but the reading done by the workshop participants on the offer of Brazilian films with no subtitles leads us to answer the author's question with a preceding one: what type of film (plot) would address (deaf) minorities when (here) not even the access to films is guaranteed to them? We should remember that the guarantee of subtitles in Brazilian films is only *one* step towards accessibility.

We accepted, then, the challenge to produce the narrative proposed by the students. Highlighting that our position, more than acceptance, was one of adhesion to their proposal. In a day we produced and in the other we recorded the scenes. There was a total engagement in the production. Together we transformed the idea in a screenplay and raised the production needs demanded by the work. Besides participating as actors, many assumed tasks related to costume – such as “I have this”, “I can bring this shirt”, etc. – and other tasks, as arranging for objects, make up, and props. This was, for instance, the case of the movie ticket. The group suggested that the ticket had to be the same as the original one. The group wanted to establish a direct relation to the governmental project. No allusions. The answer to the addressing done by the project needed to be explicit.

The scene locations were also thought together. We needed to simulate a box office and a movie theater. The movie theater would be recorded in the resource lab itself using the screen and the projector from the workshop and dimming the lights of the space. The ticket office would intercalate photos of a real box office (from the internet), to give a sense of a general shot of a movie hall, and images recorded in the school hall, with closer shots, where we would stick a post of movie and a sign saying “Box office”. With those strategies we would deal with the narrative and would be ready to shoot.

We tried as much as possible to share the tasks, choices, and decisions with the participants. However, given the context described, we assumed a “heavy hand” when making the film. This expression was commonly used to quantitatively question youth participation in workshops during the 1990s and 2000s, a time which the legitimacy of a (whole) film was established based on the proportion that the video was done (entirely) by the participants, without the “hand” of the workshop organizer. Such demand probably originated in the same immediatism of the appropriations previously described by the techniques experienced in that period.

In our workshop, we had no doubt that what was at stake was the experience itself and its unfoldings. Holding the camera and pressing a button are not new actions to a young person in today’s world. The most important aspect was thinking what we could develop, the political possibilities that the movie practice would bring to school, the combinations that could result from each shot and framing. Of that, we could not give up. However, to have a whole film ready by the end of the meetings, we had to assume with a “heavy hand”, a great part of the recording rhythm.

A detail discussed, as the group assembled hearing and deaf, was the use of soundtrack. The decision was quickly reached. The movie would have no sound. The spectator would have a similar experience to the one lived by the deaf. We suggested then a background music during the rolling of the final credits, to reaffirm that the silence during the narrative was on purpose.

Differently from the issues on techniques, the choices and addressing of ideas were entirely guided by the students. There is no doubt that the film had as targets movie producers and politicians. We are then faced by a letter, a video letter, answering the project in question. However, considering the concept of addressing discussed by Ellsworth (2001), we could say that the film was not addressed specifically towards the targeted audience, but to anyone that, in a certain way, identified themselves with some element of the plot. It is in this sense that, as proposed by the author, the “subject position” among the spectators of a film could be assumed by different people, including those that are unrelated to the issues of deafness, youth public school, etc., but that oppose the State by a different reason to that presented in the plot, for instance, due to labor issues.

According to Ellsworth (2001), nobody is exactly the subject the film imagines or wishes. What can be highlighted in the relation between addressing and answer is the fact that such “subject position, independently of how mythical it is, is related in the film to potential fantasies of power, domination, and control” (Ellsworth, 2001, p. 25). This is true for those that are producing as well as those watching. What will people do with the films is uncontrollable, it is unpredictable.

Ellsworth (2001) shows us that the modes of address in a film are not “localizable”, but can give us clues, in the field of power relations, to the political effects it provokes. To the author, modes of address are an event that takes place “in the difference between what could have been said – all that is historically and culturally possible and intelligible to say – and what is said” (Ellsworth, 2001 p. 47).

According to her, the central issue is exactly the constitution of this “space of difference” between addressing and answer (Ellsworth, 2001). She defends that this “in-between” involves both the process of making a movie and the process of watching a movie; they are broader social dimensions anchored in power relations, that is, the difference between what was said and what could be said in a certain representation is a fertile field for negotiation of senses and power between the audience and movie producers, in the professional and in the school areas.

Thus, there are audience displacements, leading us to reflect on resistance forms. However, when talking about resistance, it is not only creating a dualism between those with and without special needs; nor understanding resistance as an exclusive characteristic of minorities, whose questioning would be an answer to the lack of films addressed to this public, shaping what Mayne (quoted by Ellsworth, 2001) calls ‘dominant spectators’ and ‘marginal spectators’ (and, therefore, ‘resistant’)” (p. 34). What seems to be at stake in these power displacements and interests us as a reflection issue in this study is the political character of cinema, especially when done in a school environment.

Migliorin (2015) defends that “in school, cinema is introduced as a power of invention, an intensified experience of aesthetical/political fruition in which the perception of the possibility of inventing worlds is an end in itself” (p. 46). This author, when referring to Jacques Rancière, says that politics in art takes place not because something is said or unsaid in a work, or because it exposes a situation of conflict, but because a sensible instability is established in

the community (Migliorin, 2015). As claimed by Bergala (2008), a disruptive presence that is given by the experience, and not by teaching how to make cinema. In this sense, resuming Migliorin (2015), what can be taught by cinema is a:

*I-don't-really-know-what* of possibilities... that establish a discontinuity between work and fruition... There is no ideal passage between what a movie wants to say and the experience done with this film. Such discontinuity is typical of a certain regime of images which the French philosopher Jacques Rancière called the *aesthetic* regime of arts. (p. 37)

In a certain measure, we can consider that what Ellsworth (2001) calls “space of difference”, that is, something that takes place between addressing and answer, can be related to this discontinuity between films and their effects, as described by Migliorin (2015).

To him, the discontinuity between images and what the world sees as *aesthetic regime* is inseparable of the political dimension, highlighting that in the *aesthetic regime* there is no ready world to which art should take us, therefore this is precisely the risk of cinema in school: “the risk of handing to children the creation of possible and desired worlds, a risk of not dominating the effects of the images they will indeed receive and do (Migliorin, 2015, p. 38).

To end, we understand, based on the perspective of Rancière, that the development of art works (here cinema works) in the *aesthetic regime* cannot ask anything from the audience, seen that, in this regime, there is no such demand. Therefore, what lingers is the experience, as Bergala (2008) said; or, as Migliorin describes, the invention of worlds.

## Final remarks

We can say that Ellsworth’s concept of addressing and the reflections on cinema and education freed us of the common concern of establishing an objective importance to what was said in the film done by the group or the intensity of the narrated conflict, as well as defining its degree of reality or fiction. What this theoretical-methodological framework helped us to recognize in the work was that the invented world in the film produced by the workshop participants exists in real life, because it results of the experience of making cinema (in school).

Ellsworth's works on reception and modes of address were essential to understand that addressing is not controlling reception but recognizing the dimension and the social-political power encompassed in this no-control. In deaf culture, a central issue is metaphor, seen as the language is supported by concrete images. Some Portuguese words do not exist in Libras, for instance, those belonging to the cinematographic universe. We needed to adjust and/or create some things to advance the communication process. We needed to think other modes of address. The selection of exhibited films also taught us a lot. We were also faced by a special attention demanded by this group which has completely changed our scheduled time; and, after, we stumbled on a different form of writing. To each of these detours, there were other modes of address.

Even though the workshop was supported by a mix of references, from more classical to more contemporary proposals of movie and educational practices, the involvement of these teenagers in the process of video production brought out a number of questions, marking a clear understanding of the deaf social position not as a handicap, but as a culture that needs to be recognized as such. The involvement of these people as active subjects in the process of production unveiled, for instance, among other implicit issues, that the proposals (or addressing) targeting this group, especially in Brazilian public policies and laws regarding movies, when existing, are generally based in the (hearing) limitation and not the cultural difference (to be deaf). Therefore, we can infer based on the experience reported that the cinema practice in school has a powerful political immanence, especially when articulated to inclusion issues and the so-called minorities, often naturalized in their invisibility; and that such practice is able to subsidize other experiences that connect the field of cinema and education with inclusive proposals of cinema in school, enriching theoretical-methodological practices and reflections to this entanglement, strengthening deaf participation in the development of solutions that make sense to this cultural group.

If the "space of difference" between addressing and answer created by Ellsworth (2001), and the "aesthetic regime", proposed by Rancière, can be understood as political dimensions in the context of movie practice in school, we can, therefore, understand that the workshop experience, in the area of production or reception, allowed powerful forms of relation among the participants, and between them and the world, whose more obvious expression can be seen in the video itself and the collaborative system of production, triggered by the power of a social

dissatisfaction experienced by them in the school context; an experience with art whose unfoldings, knowledge-wise, are simultaneously undefinable and define other worlds.

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