Dis/obeying, un/folding, shredding and weaving a new ethics of existence in the school daily life

Des/obedecer, des/dobrar, des/fiar e tecer uma nova ética da existência nos cotidianos escolares

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ABSTRACT

The article presents cartographic fragments of experiences created by teachers and children from early childhood education centers in the city of Vitória/ES, who, driven by a policy of joy, invent possibilities of resistance to policies of centralization and curricular standardization, opening gaps for new curricular inventions. It questions the strength of the joy constituted in school collectives, which are engendered together with daily rituals, norms and prescriptions of life, timed and hierarchical times, questioning the effects of power technologies and their functioning on the bodies of ordinary everyday practitioners schoolchildren. Betting on the insurrection of bodies as a possibility of disengaging the games of truth policies, which try to fix us in a single model, under the surveillance and control of standardized assessments, quality index meters and awards based on productivity. It concludes that stating that inventing policies of joy in schools is to create spaces for conversations, with the signs of the arts as triggers of thoughts that can move collective resistances and curricular inventions.


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RESUMO

O artigo apresenta fragmentos cartográficos de experiências criadas por professoras e crianças de centros de educação infantil do município de Vitória/ES, que, movidos por uma política da alegria, inventam possibilidades de resistências às políticas de centralização e de padronização curricular, abrindo brechas para novas invenções curriculares. Problematiza a força da alegria constituída nos coletivos das escolas, que se engendram junto aos rituais cotidianos, às normatizações e prescrições da vida, aos tempos cronometrados e hierarquizados, questionando os efeitos das tecnologias de poder e os seus funcionamentos nos corpos dos praticantes ordinários dos cotidianos escolares. Aponta na insurreição dos corpos como possibilidade de desassujeitamento dos jogos das políticas da verdade, que tentam nos fixar em um único modelo, sob a vigilância e controle de avaliações padronizadas, medidores de índices de qualidade e premiações a partir da produtividade. Conclui afirmando que inventar políticas da alegria nas escolas é criar espaçostempos para redes de conversas tendo os signos das artes como disparadores de pensamentos que possam movimentar as resistências coletivas e as invenções curriculares.


Introduction: to discuss in order to become insurgent...

Ê, ô, ô, vida de gado
Povo marcado, ê!
Povo feliz!
Ê, ô, ô, vida de gado
Povo marcado, ê!
Povo feliz!
(Zé Ramalho)

The chorus of the song O Admirável Gado Novo,² from the composer Zé Ramalho, convokes us to question the strength of joy constituted in the school

2 The song title O Admirável Gado Novo creates resonances before the current neo-conservatism context mainly when we experience narratives from the government minister publicly referring to the population as a herd of cattle. It also enables us to discuss the collective force present in the school life that subverts the movements of social subjection and machine’s servitude (LAZARATTO, 2006), created by the current policies, and creates tactics to escape from immobility and precariousness.
collectives, which crosses, interspersed with their rites, normalizations and prescriptions of life, clocked and hierarchical times and still makes us question on the effects\(^3\) of *power technologies* (FOUCAULT, 1995) and their performance in the bodies of *ordinary practitioners* (CERTEAU, 1994) regarding school life. Following the same thought, it also leads us to discuss practices, policies, and teachers’ education to become insurgent, releasing life in its all potential.

We believe that teachers and students, driven by the power of meetings and by the policy of joy, produce possibilities of inventive resistance, motivators of new curricular inventions. Thus, we bet on the insurrection of bodies as a possibility of disengaging the games of truth policies (CARVALHO, 2016), which try to have us fixed in a single model, under the surveillance and control of standard assessments, mediators of quality index and permeations from the productivity. Dis/obeying, un/folding, standing up before such paraphernalia of codes and normalizations is not a simple task. They are escaping lines, created by flows of power and collective intensities, which make possible the revolts, the dislocations, the resistance processes and, at last, the inventivities and daily acting.

To do so, it is necessary to follow the conduction of the subjectivities processes, “[...] to follow and unravel the lines: a cartography that implies a micro analysis (what Foucault used to call microphysics of power and Guattari, micro policy of desire)” (DELEUZE, 2010, p. 113). Therefore, we led to follow the collective utterance agencyings\(^4\) that used to be triggered through meetings with the cinematographic pictures, literary, in processes of inventive formation without the intention to interpret, but aiming at experimenting in order to capture the subjectivities and affection\(^5\) processes that emerged into meetings with the pictures in conversations networks (SILVA, 2019).

Betting on the insurgencies of bodies means to be involved in “[...] the possibility of another relation with myself”, as affirms (CARVALHO, 2016, p. 35). It means to reconsider the beliefs of our collective experiences in the search of producing other and new relations with the social body. According to Foucault (1995), where there is power, there is resistance. It is well known that power, in the educational field, is not only concentrated at one specific place. For instance, power does not only emerge from the Secretariat of Education or from the prescribed documents, but multiple relations of forces that are established in

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3 According to Deleuze (2013), an effect is a trace, state of a body meeting another body. They are shadows that move along the surface of bodies in continuous movements. Affections.

4 The subjectivity is produced by collective agencying of enunciation – plurality of speeches and actions that enable the processes of deterritorialization and the transforming into subjectivities.

5 We see affection as the body affections in which its power to act may increase or reduce. Joyful affections expand the power of action; whereas the sad ones reduce the power to act.
continuous and open movements produce it. The referred author postulates that “Power is a bundle of relations somewhat organized, somewhat like pyramids, somewhat coordinated” (FOUCAULT, 1995, p. 248). Accordingly, it is more complex to think of the possibility of any attempt of arbitrary and control of a standard curriculum for the Brazilian educational field, especially by the diversity and plurality of the schools we have here. However, it is necessary to discuss the networks of power and forces that constitute inventive curricular movements.

Our research\(^6\) aimed at cartographing the daily resistance movements created by teachers and students during their curricular experience and compositions and to analyze the production of new subjectivities ways emerging from such experiences. Subjectivities understood here as an individuation that is constituted in several individual, group and institutional instances. This way, subjectivity is not produced by people or identities, but by intensities that are un/fold and resist the relations of power, creating new life possibilities.

Thus, resistances named by Foucault (2006) arise, like the pleb, which dribbles the power, which responds to power, getting rid of it. The plebs – just like power – is not a substance; it is an action, a performance, an event. Fernández-Savater (2015) questions whether plebs are so mobile, heterogeneous and complex, can they be organized? He answers yes, specially, communicating and unfolding their resistance practices. So, do other teachers and students, besides him, perform their daily duties organize and dis/locate themselves along with the inventive resistance processes? What are the effects of “the arts of making teachers and students” (SILVA, 2015) to un/fold and shred the lines that move the curricular guidelines and weave a new ethics of existence in the school life?

This way, our purpose in this writing-experience text is to present a cartography of the movements created by teachers and students in the invention of resisting the attempts of imprisonment and immobility of the schools’ inventive processes and the possibilities of a policy of joy that expands the collective power of action and the curricular creations.

Our argument is that the daily collective resistance created by teachers and students in the meetings with pictures (cinematographic, literary and other signs of art) in conversations networks, question the neoliberal and neo-conservative policies that try to standardize and regulate the pedagogical practices through curricular prescriptions and large scale assessments and, above all, enable openings and crossings of intensive flows and power for the creation of new curricular processes and inventive learnings at schools.

\[^6\] Post-doctoral research with Junior scholarship from the National Council of Scientific and Technological Development (PDJ/CNPq).
The rest of the text is organized in three parts. In the first one, we present the resistance processes created by teachers and children before the immobility attempts regarding their creative processes. After that, we highlighted the effects of the joy policy and the collective power in the networks of power, knowledge and subjectivities present in the school daily life – a desire drive that motivated the inventive processes that are constituted in conversation networks with the teachers in the movements of inventive formation. Finally, we present some final considerations, with some hints to prevent us from becoming unaware and inattentive in relation to the games of power that constitute us.

Revolts, confrontations, deviations: *something from pleb* emerge in the conversation networks with teachers

What are the revolts, the confrontations, deviations, dislocations and resistance processes created by students and teachers in their daily actions and manifestations before the neoconservative waves surrounding our lives? Foucault (2006), when analyzing the riots’ movements in Ira, stands out the identification “something from plebs” inherent to all revolts and that such “something” is present in all of us. What would be “something from plebs” that escapes from bodies before the manifestations of power? Which energy emanates from bodies before several attempts of making them docile, passive and obedient?

Freitas (2016, p. 48), by quoting Foucault, affirms that this *something from plebs* is the will of not being governed in a certain way by nothing nor anyone, “[...] has to do with the individual exercise of freedom in the power interior, but to escape from it”. Plebs relates with the spirits of the riots that are conceived in processes of negotiations and driven by the desire of a world “[...] where many other worlds fit, in which equality is the difference and where the multiplicity of ways of life is acknowledged”. Somehow, the revolts indicate escape lines that force a rupture against all sorts of conservatism, either political, cultural or social.

7 In 2016, Brazil imported from North America a government technology that is the construction of a political and economic crisis for the resumption of power by conservatism (PELBART, 2017).
With our research, we could realize that teachers react when they come across proposals and projects sent by Secretariats, not created by them, to be “implemented” at schools. Thus, they indicate that it is not enough only to think about actions during teachers meetings, with interacting and including the students in the planning. Or, even, when we see the students escaping from the scheduled activities, doing them in a reckless and fast way, in order to spend more time on the projects they create. This way, the revolts are constituted through actions and reactions in the games of power, of relations. They are struggle movements that promote the insurrections, the possibilities of teachers and students’ autonomy affirmation and the creation of new existence ways. In short, a policy, ethics of existence.

In the meetings with teachers, we question their reactions before the situations in which the teacher’s autonomy is diminished. We even question: what affections undermine and disempower teachers’ actions? Nevertheless, we also discuss: what affections empower and reinforce the collective body in the school life?

In the conversation networks (CARVALHO, 2009), teachers verbalize some attitudes they no longer accept in their lives, for example, comply with actions imposed by decrees that had not been discussed with the group or, when, by any means, try to alter their curricular creations thought with the children to produce some activity, for commemorative dates protocol compliance only. By listening to the workmates stories describing how embarrassed they feel in front of parents and students, the teachers share feelings of indignation and welcome. They also express their dreams and wishes to produce each time more experience and collective compositions. This way, we realize that when the teachers think together and plan collectively, they manifest something from the plebs and promote a rebellion that is not specific, much less uniform; it goes through common spaces and “[…] disseminates in a form of an explosion of singularities behavior that is impossible to be contained” (PELBART, 2017, p. 102).

These resistances and insurrections that emerged in/from the conversation networks expand the power of collective action. The conversation networks give opportunities to the circularity of feelings and differences. We have seen, in our researches, that the use of artistic signs as triggers of the conversation networks (such as, pictures-cinema and literary pictures), may broaden the teachers’ resistance and the curricular inventive movements. We noticed, for

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8 **Artistic signs** are capable of revealing the essence of artists, their trajectory and their art itself. They make possible the displacement and creation, because they do not represent, they express feelings, emotions, art (DELEUZE, 2006).
instance, that the pictures from the *Coraline e o mundo secreto*\(^9\) movie triggered processes of resistances and inventive movements, as the teachers stand out:\(^{10}\)

*The contrast observed in the colors of this film has moved me, because, before a life that had been sad for the child, a possibility of joy emerges. That makes us think that there will always be unexpected and unpredicted ways out.*

*This film makes us think of the life realities. Coraline would like to live one reality, however her reality is another... So, she fantasizes a different reality. And I think about those activities in which we ask the children to count how many doors and windows there are in our school, just like that Coraline’s scene in the movie [...]. And all the times we teach them the letters. Then the child looks at you and says: “May I go to the restroom?”*. And the child leaves to run away from the activity. We all know that. The bouncy and happy child leaves to see the world outside, analyze beetles, noise, or find more objects for their collections. We obviously have all the planning, all the process, a routine to be followed. Although, sometimes, we have to stop in order to reflect on that question made by the child that has made us change all the plans/programs. This way, we realize that what is different is fundamental.

*The other day, in the classroom, I observed that the children had already been organized and were articulating a playful activity. I was watching the way they were organised. Another child says: “Teacher, are you ready for the activity? Teacher, would you like to talk? Guys, we are wasting our time”. To me, we were buying some time, because I could think of so many things I ask of them that makes no sense to me, neither for them.*

The teachers and students narratives express how the strength of power is microphysics, that is, it passes through the forms of knowledge (DELEUZE,

9 The movie *Coraline e o mundo secreto*, based on the work of the British author Neil Gaiman, with direction and script from Henry Selich, narrates the story of a child who feels bored at her new home and with daily chores, runs into a secret door. When opening that door, she launches a escaping line to invent another/new version of her own life. However, when everything seems to be much better, including the people she was living with, she finds out that there is something wrong, because her “alternative” parents try to capture her in this new world.

10 The teachers’ utterances are not identified and will be in italic typeset and without indentation. We see such utterances as collective agencying, multiplicity of voices that lose authorship by opening to the intensities that make new questions and actions for research and school life.
2010). Power means a group of relation of forces and not form, therefore, we ask Foucault (1995): How are the lines crossed? How to cross the relations of power? Crossing the line of power, exceeding power, all of these, would be making the power itself to get affected: a bend, that according Deleuze, means to have a relation with yourself that leads to resisting, rising. “It is no longer about determined forms, as in knowledge, nor enforcement rules, as in power, it is about facultative rules, which produce the existence as work of art” (DELEUZE, 2010, p. 127). Ethical and aesthetical rules, constituent of new ways of existence, new ways of being teachers and inventing lessons and curriculum movements. Thereby, a teacher stresses:

In order to invent a lesson, it is important to find time, dedication, planning at home, researching, but, for some time now, I see this a little different here at school. And I have been here since 2003. We share ideas and the other colleagues support us and, as we can see, we are putting into practice.

We ask: what has been different and what has produced many possibilities? The teachers indicate that the change comes from the new direction and the way the pedagogical projects have been produced:

The integration at our school has changed, we have been participating more. We do not feel isolated, but supported. We have been working together. Our relationship has changed, even the way we look at our workmates activities and how they see our work. It seems we are more valued, because we work together, share experiences, and produce collectively. It started a while ago and I appreciate it a lot.

Foucault, influenced by Nietzsche, finds the Greek principle of self-care and proposes an ethics that works as an existence aesthetics that, according to Deleuze e Guattari (1976), means a life centered on desiring production. A life as work of art that is constituted in the relation with the group that exercises and invests on practices of freedom, “[...] freedom is construction. It is produced and practiced in each moment and not an analog foundation of the human being.” (GALLO, 2015, p. 372). Self care, as per the Greek aspect, means looking after yourself and the others, because the Greek citizen or the roman citizen used to live in communities, in groups.
The joy policy and the collective power: intensity flows of curricular inventions

What life do we wish to live? Subdued lives, controlled lives, timed lives or inventive, intensive and happy lives? What is important in life? Is it possible to build with will to power? Will to power consists of assuring the difference, of creating processes of solidarity, of sharing knowledge, inventions. As Rago points out (2015, p. 255), to assure life, from Deleuze, is “ [...] relieving: not loading life with the weight of superior values, but creating new values that will be the life ones, that will make life light and active”.

Deleuze distinguishes two types of passions as foundations on the studies about ethics in Espinosa to explain that the happy passions put us closer to the power of acting, increase or favor the power of action, while the sad passions put us far away from the power of acting, reducing and preventing actions. Thus, Deleuze (2003, p. 189) clarifies that it is not enough to increase our power of acting; it is necessary to produce active affections and he questions: “ [...] what can you do to produce active/happy affections in yourself?” The active joy is different from the passive joy, which is constituted for an object that becomes us. Your power increases our power; however, we still do not have adequate ideas. “The active joy is produced by ourselves, it comes from our power of acting, it comes from an adequate idea in us” (DELEUZE, 2003, p. 190).

In the conversation networks, having the cinematographic and literary pictures as triggers of thought, it is verified that teachers, moved by active affection caused by meetings with the pictures, start to feel actively “ [...] the pleasure of saying simple things on self-behalf, of speaking by affections, intensities, experiences, experimentations” (DELEUZE, 2010, p. 15). Although, as Deleuze teaches us, to say something on self-behalf does not mean to be assumed as I, above all, an exercise of depersonalization, because at this very moment we let ourselves open to multiplicities and intensities that cross us. The pictures work well, therefore, as flows of power for the future changes to pass, expanding the deterritorialization and reterritorialization processes:

Remember that scene when people are shown with eyes of buttons? That scene moves me, it brings out the fear of the different unknown, weird, that haunts us, because you have no idea of what is going to happen. Then comes the fear. It seems like a scary movie and paralyzes us. It seems like the world tries to swallow us, but we have to confront it and not allow the destruction of the universe and the beauty we have here.
We question: what has made and makes teachers not to be afraid and confront the situations that make their bodies freeze? At last, we discuss: what are the ways to empower and make them face the daily obstacles? Teachers guarantee that the relations are indispensable, friendly, cooperative and happy relationships:

*I think our relations get stronger here, at school, mainly, due to our friendship. When we got here, we had to live with poor situations and fear. We did not know the community; everything was unknown, the children, the families... As time passed by, we started knowing the students better, families were getting closer and we supported each other. I am proud of my workmates and I am happy here!*

To discuss what paralyzes us regarding school daily life and what gives us strength to restart, to affirm the life that arises from the curricular inventive movements, enabled us to realize the power of joy in these processes. The standardization of the knowledge present in the policies of curricular centralization, as well as the policies of assessment reduce the collective energy. However, teachers express that during the meetings with the children, the talks with the families that give the feedback of how they realize their kids are learning, the value given to their jobs, the collective planning and the accomplishment of projects, infect the teachers with oxygen, expanding, the power of collective action:

*I have been here, at this school, for a long time. I am here because I see the possibility of having a happy and healthy life, because I believe this is the kind of joy I should bring to my classroom, mainly because I am not sure for how long I will be in a classroom. It is obvious that having a well structured working space helps a lot, but I see that the support given by my colleagues, our friendship makes me very happy, safe, since we all know that together we are able to make things work.*

How to promote happy meetings that expand the power of life? Is happiness the power of action for the curricular inventive processes? Can happiness be created as policy and resistance? Carvalho, Silva and Delboni (2017, p. 84)
indicate that thinking about invention as joy political dimension is betting on the daily power of life that is reinvented collectively, engendered to different singularities, invention and acting of children and teachers that dribble the bio power that “[...] dares to simplify and sort the power of life in a skill and competency list, empowering the bio power that thrives the collective power of action in the school life.

If happiness is the resistance against sad affections that reduce the collective power of action, we must be very careful concerning our ways of living the school daily life, looking after our relation with our bodies, discussing the daily practices that diminish lives. Hardt and Negri (2016) defend that happiness must be a priority of the government. It is a collective asset. But also highlights that happiness is not something provided by the leaders to the population because it is an active affection and not a passive one, therefore, “[...] the crowd must govern themselves in order to create a lasting state of joy” (HARDT; NEGRI, 2016, p. 412). Happiness instigates the collective desire, favors the plebs organization and, above all, increases the possibility of democratic decision-making and development of self-government.

When analyzing the deterritorialization processes of the peasants, monetary masses, Deleuze and Parnet (2004) affirms that a society, as well as the collective agencying are defined by their escaping lines and by their flows of deterritorialization. The policy is an active experimentation, because it is not clear how a line may be developed, that is, how the relations of power are going to be built. Thus, it is suggested that such line is handled very carefully, that is, precaution must be taken in order to “[...] make flexible, suspend, divert, undermine, originates from hard work not only with the Estate and other competencies, mas directly above us all” (DELEUZE; PARNET, 2004, p. 166).

Using the shadow gaps in the court… not to finish

We finish with a report of a Physical Education Teacher who observed that the students take advantage of the “shadow gaps in the court” to play over there. So, she also started using that space in some moments during class. When she was not there, she started to see other teachers using the same space to tell stories or even, propose some games and playful activities, etc. Gaps, in the dictionary (FERREIRA, 1993), means crack, slots, narrow and longitudinal openings that enable the entrance of light and air.
The shadow gaps are deviations and displacements created by children and teachers to dribble the device of power\textsuperscript{11} with an abstract machine of overcoming that tries to assure homogenization. Shadow gaps, which search for the ones marked on their agencyings to keep happy, because happiness is the political power for the collectivity, with their singularities and differences, engineering and creating new erasures in the world. As affirmed by Deleuze and Parnet (2004), everyone must bear the several lines (hard and binary segment, molecules or edge, or escaping, or declining). We must be aware of the deterritorialization and realize that the flexible line is no longer personal: “The micro cracks are also collective”, says Deleuze and Parnet (2004, p. 154) and producers of what is yet to come.

Thus, “The institution of happiness is a political and ontological project”, as affirmed by Hardt and Negri (2016, p. 414-415), that will be followed by the smile. Intelligent laughter, full of creation and joy that discusses the dominant competencies. This way, as we expand our power, we distinguish and change, since we are constantly in development. Human nature is always open to educational processes. Changing is possible in the lowest level of our world and ourselves. “We can interfere in this process to guide it in accordance with our desire towards happiness”, because happiness is the result “[...] of joyful meeting with others, meetings that increase our power, and the institution of these meetings in a way they last and repeat.”

Inspired in the authors Hardt and Negri (2016), we discuss: how can we invent policies of joy and love for the schools that may extend all over the universe? The authors indicate this would be thinking of a political program against misery. Misery understood not as lack of wealth and resources, but, mainly, as lack of autonomy, power and creation. Providing the basic surviving means to everyone, health, education and guarantee that all may participate in the constitution of the society, the collective self-government and the constructive interaction with others.

Finally, we cut out fragments of life assure and policy of joy in one of the Municipal Centers of Children’s Education (CMEIS)\textsuperscript{12} in our research: “School is the place of life! [...] Life of all who make the circle of education to renew every day”. When navigating in virtual space created by teachers in order to broaden communication with the community during quarantine times, due to

\textsuperscript{11} Deleuze (2004) distinguishes the device of power, abstract machine and gadgets of the Estate as follows: the first one codifies the several segments; the second over codes and regulates their relations, while the last one makes the machine work.

\textsuperscript{12} Centros Municipais de Educação Infantil (CMEIS).
We noticed that the “yes” for life is expressed through each daily gesture, in the struggle of a more cooperative and better world. Space and time full of slaughters, poetry, hugs, welcoming, acting and inventions.

**REFERENCES**


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13 Covid 19 is a pandemic that in Brazil, started in February/2020. Coronavirus is a family of viruses that causes breathing infections and has already killed, in Brazil, more than 30.000 people in three months (March to May/ 2020).


