

Original Article

Arts and training in occupational therapy: experiences and narratives of university students in times of pandemic

Artes e formação em terapia ocupacional: experiências e narrativas de universitárias em tempos de pandemia

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Abstract

This research proposes an analysis of the importance of art in academic training, through the experience of students in the third term of the undergraduate course in Occupational Therapy at the Federal University of São Paulo, in the ART module – Art and Body, in the first semester of 2020. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, through virtual platforms, bodily and artistic practices were mobilized for the individual and collective care of the group, focusing on dynamics that involved the construction of the presence of bodies in a situation of techno-mediated classes. For this, games, body dynamics, proposals with different artistic languages were used that aimed to promote encounter, building trust, affection and acceptance in response to what each person experienced during that period of physical distancing and its countless effects. The objective was to record and analyze the importance of the arts in the training process in the ART – Body Art module through virtual platforms, in times of pandemic. This is a qualitative, retrospective research, which uses the cartography method, and which sought to analyze the field diaries of the virtual meetings prepared by the student-researcher, which were composed of her experiences as a participant in the module and also by her focus on the experience of the group of students. Photographic records, writings and recordings of classes were also analyzed. We understand that the bodily and artistic practices that were part of the module could contribute to the elaboration of the moment of the pandemic and enabled the creation of a space of care, expressiveness, affection and learning in the individual and collective dimensions.

Keywords: Occupational Therapy, Higher Education, Art, Human Body, Pandemics, Covid-19.

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Resumo

A presente pesquisa propõe uma análise da importância da arte na formação acadêmica, por meio da vivência das alunas do terceiro termo do curso de graduação em Terapia Ocupacional da Universidade Federal de São Paulo, no módulo de ART – Arte e Corpo, no primeiro semestre de 2020. Devido à pandemia de Covid-19, através de plataformas virtuais, foram mobilizadas práticas corporais e artísticas para o cuidado individual e coletivo do grupo, com foco em dinâmicas que envolviam a construção de presença dos corpos em situação de aulas tecno-mediadas. Para isto, foram utilizados jogos, dinâmicas corporais, propostas com diferentes linguagens artísticas que tinham como objetivo promover encontro, construção de confiança, afeto e acolhimento em resposta àquilo que cada uma vivia durante aquele período de distanciamento físico e seus inúmeros efeitos. O objetivo foi registrar e analisar a importância das artes no processo formativo no módulo ART – Arte Corpo através das plataformas virtuais, em tempos de pandemia. Trata-se de uma pesquisa qualitativa, retrospectiva, que utiliza o método da cartografia e que buscou analisar os diários de campo dos encontros virtuais elaborados pela aluna-pesquisadora que foram compostos por suas experiências como participante do módulo e também por seu olhar focado na vivência do grupo das discentes. Também foram analisados registros fotográficos, escritas e gravações das aulas. Compreendemos que as práticas corporais e artísticas que fizeram parte do módulo puderam contribuir para a elaboração do momento da pandemia e possibilitaram a criação de um espaço de cuidado, expressividade, afeto e aprendizagem nas dimensões individual e coletiva.

Palavras-chave: Terapia Ocupacional, Ensino Superior, Arte, Corpo Humano, Pandemias, Covid-19.

Introduction

In March 2020, Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) paused their in-person academic activities due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Federal Education Institutions had to rethink possible paths for the continuity of training processes, now focusing on the care of students, considering the different effects on the bodies and lives of students and the different conditions of digital accessibility at that time. Specifically, the Federal University of São Paulo (Unifesp) paused all undergraduate activities, representing the interruption of different teaching, research and university extension projects.

The pandemic scenario generated different questions and new ways of outlining the university teaching plan, which brought a phase of discussions, reflections and joint planning of effective actions that could sustain bonds between students, betting and affirming, once again, the importance and power of the collective to face different complex situations, especially this one in question, which remains very mobilizing and disruptive of already existing problems: social inequalities, loneliness, social impoverishment, mental health problems, among others, depending on the particularities of each life. As highlighted by Gil (2020, p. 6), the fear of the pandemic “[...] shrinks space, suspends time, paralyzes the body, limiting the universe to a tiny bubble that imprisons and confuses us”.

In a process of “getting out of this bubble” and not paralyzing, virtual media, associated with technologies and their integration and interaction systems, showed themselves, at that moment, as tools to meet the body's needs for interaction and communication (Gil, 2020).

The Unifesp Occupational Therapy course, located at the Baixada Santista Campus, is mostly made up of students who were born in different cities in the region where the campus is located. Therefore, given the need for social and physical distancing imposed by the pandemic, many students returned to their hometowns. Therefore, the virtual environment has become a possible and important channel of communication, although with many challenges.

A series of meetings of occupational therapy teachers and Common Axes that make up the course's pedagogical project began¹, with the participation of student representatives, to rethink the continuity of the processes of training and being trained as an occupational therapist.

Among many questions, we asked ourselves: how to continue undergraduate activities amid the pandemic? How to sustain contact and the student-university bond in a virtual format, in “life between screens”? Would it be possible to maintain relationships and work collectively? Thinking about reconfigurations demands reflections on possibilities and limits, considering the different levels of education and institutional and curricular differences (Gatti, 2020). Even with many uncertainties, a series of propositions and agendas were quickly drawn up that guided us over the months to continue with our task of welcoming, caring for and continuing the training processes, and encouraging the students' permanence at the public university, free and democratic (Lieberman et al., 2022a).

The group experience that favored the development of the research was experienced by students of the occupational therapy course, in 2020, who were studying the Therapeutic Activities and Resources (ART) module: Art and Body. In the module, themes of art, body and culture are usually discussed through various proposals, such as: dance, theater, massage, music, crafts, plastic activities, group dynamics, cooperative games, etc., linked to the practice of therapy occupational and the problematization of the ethical, aesthetic, technical and political aspects of these actions. Pedagogical strategies aim to sensitize and provoke students towards what Kastrup (2001, 2007, 2010) called *inventive learning*, which seeks not to “solve” problems immediately, but to problematize situations, produce some strangeness, meet something that surprises us, that forces us to think to trigger creative processes in ourselves.

In the proposal, it is considered that the teacher is not the center of the teaching-learning process. Situated from the point of view of art, it circulates affections and functions as an attractor. In addition to being a sender of signs, the teacher is an attractor of affection (Kastrup, 2001). The learning process also takes place through experimentation and self-knowledge in encounters with others, focusing primarily on group devices. The discussions refer to content studied, and practices carried out in other modules, both specific and common axes.

¹The pedagogical project at the Baixada Santista campus of the Federal University of São Paulo envisages a curricular design structured around four training axes, three of which are common to all courses, in which classes are mixed, and one is related to the specific practices of each profession. They are: “The human being in its biological dimension”, “The human being and its social insertion”, “Work in Health” and “Approach to a specific practice in Health”.

Body awareness practices, in OT, present themselves as a powerful instrument for transforming everyday life [...] as they become experiences of the subject himself, provide the appropriation of self and establish a working condition that promotes awareness and the creation of a daily life and health in constant care and production (Saito & Castro, 2011, p. 178).

As in the entire process of graduating in occupational therapy, this module took place entirely in person. However, due to the advancement of the Covid-19 pandemic, and with academic activities suspended, the collective of course teachers, driven by awareness of the uncertain moment, the difficulties of access and the economic, social and emotional situation of the students, started a process of care and reception for students. As highlighted by Teixeira & Dahl (2020), the disruption of routine, insecurity and concern regarding the illness of people close to them affected students in a vicious cycle, in which the disruption of routine and emotional suffering prevented the reinvention of a new everyday life that needed to be formed.

In this sense, the arts constituted an important device for approaching, reflecting and reinventing everyday life. We understand the arts as expression, but also as a process of human production, to understand their own history, considering the different socioculturally instituted forms (Burke, 2003). Therefore, the arts proved to be a direct possibility, through sensitivity, of not only relating to the world, but also being able to be in it (Xavier et al., 2021).

For Almeida (2004), art is the constant creation of oneself, through new ways of being in the world, recreating one's existence, enabling changes to be significant and lead us to new realities, intensifying life. According to the author, we produce life as a work of art, existence as creation. In this way, it seemed relevant to reflect on the experience, as it brings the possibility of continuing the training task, giving visibility to the challenges imposed at that time.

Therefore,

[...] as part of this new mediated relationship, in half, broken, fragmented, we were forced to redouble our actions, as if to compensate for the lack of performance of our bodies moving, materialized in space, and exchanging verbal and non-verbal signals throughout the classroom. in the intentionality of communication with and for everyone (Xavier et al., 2021, p. 3).

Contrary to this tendency towards fragmentation, it was necessary to establish adaptive processes in relation to the proposals, taking as inspiration and possibility, the presence of bodies in environments with what was available, that is, cell phones, computers and any device or way of connecting with us remotely.

Therefore, this text is dedicated to reporting and analyzing the experience lived between the months of March and October 2020. We understand that they had different moments and, consequently, were felt by students and teachers in different ways. Because of this, we aim to record and analyze the role of art in the training process in the ART – Body Art module, through virtual platforms, in times of crisis and pandemic, and systematize some methodological procedures used on the virtual platform.

Research Methodological Procedures

The research was designed based on the cartography method, which is characterized not by representation, but by monitoring processes, enabling the researcher to capture the field of forces present in ongoing experiences (Martines et al., 2013). The researcher remains in the field in direct contact with people and their existential territory (Alvarez & Passos, 2009).

Based on this methodology, the student-researcher actively participated in all the meetings analyzed. Through the identification given by the power of what was experienced, a “state of research” was established, in order to be able to analyze, think and, later, publicize the intensity of that entire process.

To analyze the data, we chose to divide it into three moments, named “breathers”, taking the timeline as a criterion for discussing some aspects investigated. In the first, second and third breath, the narratives elaborated in the student-researcher's field diaries were analyzed. The diary contains descriptive notes, reflective notes and intensive notes².

It is important to highlight that the field diaries were made based on the establishment of a “state research”³, when the student-researcher's perception began to have a new dimension regarding the group's experiences. The records of eighteen group meetings made in the student-researcher's field diary were used as an analysis resource, ten made in the first breath and eight in the second breath. The records were created based on memories, experiences and reports.

At the time of the first breath, and in some initial meetings of the second breath, recordings of the meetings were not made because the process of establishing academic research had not begun. In the third and final “breath”, the recordings of the module's online classes were analyzed, in addition to the field diaries.

Regarding the ethical conduct of the necessary methodological procedures related to students and teachers, the Free and Informed Consent Form (TCLE) was prepared, in accordance with Resolution no. 466/2012, so that photographs, reports, field diaries and their images could be used. Due to the pandemic, the term was adapted and made available online, through the Google Docs platform, via a link for research participants. Participating students consented and approved the publication of the study.

In addition, conversations on online platforms (*WhatsApp* and *Google Meet*) and images from the period were consulted to provide another way of giving visibility to the experience; to the productions made in group meetings by group participants, students and teachers; and the anonymous productions of the students in the dynamics proposed in the synchronous meetings.

²The descriptive notes bring the concrete, that is, what was observed in the meetings; reflective notes concern the connections between experience and theoretical discussions; and, finally, intensive notes express the sensations and feelings experienced during the meetings (Goulart et al., 2018).

³This article presents part of a scientific initiation research entitled “Delicated formative experiences: a study at the interface of body, art and education”, a subproject of a thematic research coordinated by Prof. Dr. Flávia Liberman, which is entitled “Delicated Choreography: artistic practices and bodily aspects as the production of subjectivity”, submitted and approved by the UNIFESP Research Ethics Committee under number CAAE: 65961417.4.0000.5505.

In particular, we will emphasize the proposals that involved inventive and creative writing as part of the artistic propositions to give body and words to the experiences lived and reported here.

Sensitive writing is, therefore, more open and risky to every student, insofar as it admits a subjective making of language, so typical of the previously mentioned artistic, corporal and humanistic cultures, with a degree of exposure and affective-intellectual “intimacy”. still little experienced in the university environment (Guzzo et al., 2019, p. 3).

The texts were written anonymously, assuming a free writing style. Thus, in addition to bringing a feeling of security, it also favored the amplification of sharing and exchanges with all participants involved (Fróis, 2005).

The “Three Breaths” Experience

First breath

The first breather began between March and April of 2020, when those responsible for the module decided to organize conversation circles to welcome students, at this initial moment of social distancing. The teachers contacted the class representatives enrolled in the module, who created a group on the WhatsApp platform, bringing together the teachers and students.

With the initial contact through messages, the teachers proposed a virtual meeting, aiming at welcoming, attentive listening and sustaining bonds with the group. The first meeting took place on March 30, 2020, with the participation of fifteen students, with the aim of sharing and exchanging experiences in these first days of physical and social distancing.

After the initial participation of the students, new dates were established for the next meetings, which took place on the 9th and 16th of April, respectively, through the online platform *Google Meet*, with the participation of, on average, 15 students. These meetings worked in a dynamic and purposeful way, in order to welcome, support, exchange sensibilities and propose a new way of being together with the collective. The first action-movement to elaborate what was happening to us was the act of verbalizing (Quarente et al., 2020).

In the first proposal taken to the group, called “Appreciation”, the aim was to recognize and qualify what is little, highlighting how it can receive new dimensions when perceived in the movement of everyday life. The activity was fundamental to understanding the reality experienced by each participant, based on the exploration of artistic and/or “banal” activities carried out during the quarantine period. The act of appreciating and receiving appreciation, in addition to being a form of personal artistic expression, served to warm and awaken sensations and feelings that, at times, remained stagnant in routine. The focus of the activity was the contemplation of different artistic expressions, such as photographs, videos, drawings, poems, recipes, among others.

The meetings were developed with a focus on the moment experienced and their new discoveries. Since the first virtual meeting, the sharing of everyday experiences was

encouraged to exchange knowledge between participants. Among these activities brought by the group, different forms of art production were described.

Some people show things they are doing, like drawings, sculptures, music. Others talk about what they are feeling, which varies greatly between “being well” and “being bad”. We have reports in which people return to the idea of seeing the positive and taking advantage of the situation they are experiencing, but also those who say they are feeling unproductive because they are not doing “anything”, once there has been a disruption in their daily lives (Field diary, student researcher).

Second breath

The second breath was marked, mainly, by the formalization of synchronous meetings. The meetings began to form what was called Unidade Curricular (UC) Optativa Emergencial (in open translation, Emergency Optional Curricular Unit), recognizing the formative nature of the experience and formalizing it. A fixed weekly time was designated for the meetings, which took place from April to June 2020.

The Emergency Optional Curricular Unit was named “Occupational and everyday therapy in Pandemic contexts: Art and Body in times of social distancing”, and had 32 people formally enrolled, but maintained an average of 20 active participating students. In total, in this second breath, seven meetings were held, which were inspired by the ideas proposed in the texts “Roteiro Poético”, of the author Martha Medeiros⁴, and “Mapa de Visitação da sua Casa”, of André Gravatá and Serena Labate⁵.

The activities were diverse and previously chosen by the teachers responsible for the module, but they had in common the capacity for creation and imagination, by bringing dynamics that explored artistic expression through the production of “small poetic texts”, which we later called poetic narratives. The meetings followed the same methodological proposal: 1) reading the proposal together; 2) time to write poetic texts; 3) sending the text to a meeting participant via private message; 4) anonymous reading for the collective of the text received. As highlighted by Fróis (2005), the reasons for the existence of anonymity are more than security, they are also a necessity, and enable an amplification of sharing and exchanges between all participants involved.

Poetic narratives developed as expressive activities that encouraged the ability to create and explore playfulness. The texts covered topics such as writing letters to herself, biography of objects, observation through windows and new ways of describing herself.

To exemplify and illustrate the potential of artistic expressions, we chose two *poetic narratives* presented anonymously in the dynamics. The first was intended to exercise the gaze through the window, based on a different view than usual. Imagining what it would be like to observe through the window and notice different things as someone else or experiencing being an animal, an object or a natural phenomenon, mobilizing the imagination to further reveal feelings, perceptions and sensations.

I will look at this window like a painter. I look at the window and observe the amount of shades of green behind the window. The delicacy of nature showing me

⁴Poetic Script or Experiment for a poetic gesture of virtual collective presence (Federici & Guzzo, 2020).

⁵Visitation map of your home. Artistic/poetic creation by authors Gravatá & Labate (2023).

that everything changes, that nothing is the same. Right now, I see the cold coming past my window, the light is less strong, the sky is grayer. There are flowers behind the window and I, with the eyes of a painter, try to observe and appreciate what I see. Looking out the window brings me stillness. Time telling me to take it easy. Time and the window (Text taken from the dynamics of May 7th).

The second narrative, described below, was taken from the dynamics of June 4, 2020, in the last meeting of the second breath. The students were invited to write a “letter” based on some questions: what did you like? What didn't you like? What expanded in this process? What did you invent? What did you stop doing?

You know, during this period, I was very attentive to each person present at the meeting. Something I already did before, so I think I actually continued doing it and paying attention in the same way here at these meetings. There are things that don't change, they just change clothes. I think what happened in these meetings is that my thinking was renewed, I started asking new questions, my thinking became very activated in this experience. For example: how to relate to this machine in a creative way and that is not through a bureaucratic and protocol relationship, although I think this question is always in me in relation to all things and activities, but now directed to this tool. I learned very quickly to approach the virtual tool, at first a little insecure, but braver and in company, which made all the difference in my learning. Yesterday I saw an Almodóvar film - Talk to her. And there was the character of a bullfighter. It's true that bullfighting is absurd, it has nothing to do with it, but sometimes this machine in front of me seems like an untamed bull, but also a box of secrets, an infinite black hole. This despairs me, but here in these meetings I think we experience what is possible, what is beautiful, what is basic, what is simple. There were letters and more love letters written during these meetings. There was a sensitive production that went through the meetings. I often felt like I was in the middle of a bookstore, pure literature. From the classroom to a bookstore. Imagine how cool it was to fly between these two spaces! I would like to continue writing, because I think it was good for everyone. Moments of elaboration and connection with myself, with others, with the participants in this experience. I would like to expand, experiment even more with other modes of communication. This all goes through the arts. You know... I learned a little more about time and patience. Valuing processes and enduring uncertainty. But I didn't feel alone. I liked writing thinking about someone and knowing that my words would somehow find a place, be heard. Sometimes I have dreams where I talk and no one listens to me. It's very distressing. I wondered, a few times, if it was possible to understand that we were imbued with presence and a lot of art. You know, I also realized that my time here [virtual] is different. Face-to-face time is very different. Time in front of the screen requires less contact time. When I leave the screen, I feel like doing a “very face-to-face” activity. Cooking or doing gymnastics or just lying down, looking at things. Being in front of a screen tires me, but our time here was very pleasant and comfortable for me. Even though I don't believe in distance learning, with the certainty that the face-to-face presence and even the presence of the teacher at graduation is fundamental, I think we can learn a lot here, in this time of Pandemic. Going far, inventing, taking care of each other in this other way, so I'm taking advantage of this time to learn and

recognize the delicacy and beauty of this experience (Text taken from the dynamics of June 4th).

All strategies provoked different sensations and feelings in the group and ways of exploring art. Sharing one's own texts in anonymous ways illustrated emotions and generated identification of shared feelings. The students' speech demonstrated that, even virtually, it was possible to perceive affections and different bodily perceptions in moments of sharing.

Today I am someone I don't like. Maybe I've been that way for a while, but today I'm the one who decides to deal with who I am. Today I am that flower in my garden that was once very cared for and the subject of many photos, but time decided to add thorns, and tell me, who likes thorns? I'm the one I don't like being, I'm the scolding that a mother gives her son and believes she's doing better, while the one who listens takes it to the heart and gets hurt. I'm the mess room, they put me in, they throw me in, and they see me as a deposit for what's not useful. And so, I become useful by keeping useless things. I am the forgotten clothes in the drawer, dirty and moldy. But here I see a light, I see someone touching me, looking at me with affection and deciding to use it tonight. I am the washing machine that receives the dirty and delivers the clean. I'm the one who wears it. Who takes it? I'm a confused person, and mostly someone. I don't know who I really am, how difficult... I am someone. Someone's daughter. Someone's friend. Someone's love. There are days when I feel like the most delicious pillow, there are days when I feel like Tereza Cristina and there are days when I feel like nothing. In the end, it's something, right? (Text taken from the discussion held on May 14th).

Furthermore, it was possible to notice, through the students' shared texts and spoken reports, the suffering related to physical distancing and the need to maintain bonds through virtualization.

It's as if the feeling of emptiness that consumes me during this period of social distancing is being filled with each moment provided in these classes. Without a doubt, I feel better when entering and leaving the meeting (Student speech on May 14, 2020).

The experience demonstrated that the use of artistic and expressive activities favored the group's bond and the elaboration of the new daily life. In addition, activities were also used that tensioned the group's experiences, which brought new ways of recognizing, verbalizing and dealing with the different sensations and feelings that permeated that moment.

Third breath

To begin the third breath, the students and teachers took a break from their activities, which took place over consecutive weeks. After that, the last breath analyzed began from August to October 2020. At this time, the module was designed and formalized as a formal Curricular Unit within the third semester of the Occupational

Therapy course at Unifesp, as well as the other semesters of the University's courses. Graduation activities resumed one hundred percent virtually, mandatory being part of the curriculum.

The module's synchronous meetings began to take place every fortnight, with the possibility of recording, authorized by the participating students and teachers. Among the synchronous meetings, there were asynchronous activities to be carried out by the students, such as reading texts, research, manual activities, body experiments, exercises of observation of oneself, space, one's own body and its surroundings, among many propositions that sought the moving away from the body of computers and exploring other experiences possible for each person at that moment. The participating students were also asked to write field diaries about the classes, in order to be able to express the moment they were experiencing. The number of participants in this respite increased significantly, with an average of 37 participants.

In this breath, more theoretical contents were indicated, bibliographies to be read, listened to, watched and discussed together, exploring other ways of connecting and learning with the suggested materials, always taking into account the states expressed by the students, their personal difficulties interfering in carrying out tasks and also a permanent and demanding listening to what could be happening "behind the screens". It is important to highlight the power of the group and collective work to sustain bonds and face individual and social issues, therefore common, caused by the pandemic.

The experience, like other artistic and bodily experiences (Lieberman et al., 2018), promoted a space for group creation and interaction, expressing the uniqueness of each participant's processes in the midst of collective production, moving between poetics and clinical, theories and practices, between the reflection of the therapist and their personal experiences, between analyzes and awareness.

The Arts and Their Possibilities of Expression and Creation in the Pandemic Training Context

During social distancing, it was noticeable that virtual media had a lot of importance in everyday life. Initially, technology appeared to limit the experience, but, little by little, we were able to realize that it was possible to configure itself as a way of boosting pedagogical and artistic practices, the production of techno-mediated presences, establishing events that escaped the protocols expected in the class environment (Lieberman et al., 2022b).

Furthermore, recognizing that feeling-thinking-doing activities are fundamental elements for the training process of professionals, as they contribute to raising awareness and building the professional repertoire (Oliveira et al., 2021), it is possible to state that the reported experience facilitated the creation of a new environment for learning, expression and awareness; maintaining bonds with colleagues, teachers and the university; and the elaboration of the moment experienced.

Even though in the virtual space and far from each other, it was evident that there were bodies present there, with their stories, discomforts and concerns, who were looking for a place of anchorage, exchange and belonging in a situation that caused fear, loneliness and separation. In addition to learning techniques adapted to the virtual space, sensitizing our bodies to face and care for the effects of the pandemic on each of

us and on the group seemed, at the time, to be a fundamental learning experience for professional practice.

As we indicated previously, it was not an adaptation understood as a submission of bodies to events, but a challenging and active search to compose and build another body with the capacity to make connections with virtual tools, in this other environment (now virtual), at the service of our communication, creation, maintenance of bonds and, therefore, at the service of the continuity of life.

Borges (2003) reflects on the metamorphoses of the body, which, at times, erase the subjective experiences of the lived body to organize itself into the cultural codes that shape us. Based on this, it is important not to reduce our way of being in the world through the condition of what is given and, rather, to allow ourselves to create, invent and give new meanings to the multiplicities of the state of being.

The idea explored by the author portrays the ability to access what affects us and allow a reverberation in others, implying the activation of the living body that pulsates, stretches, shrinks and organizes itself in different ways. We need to activate this state of vitality of being able to suffer through life, giving meaning to “being alive” (Borges, 2003). The aspect of activating vitality was something we sought to cultivate in experience through bodily and artistic practices.

During the meetings, techniques were used that also aimed at experimenting with self-care, through artistic and expressive practices in relation to one's own body, other bodies and the machine that allowed the virtual meeting. The telepresence circles and the sharing of *poetic narratives* proved to be relevant for this understanding of the self, the other and the new contact with the virtual environment.

The processes experienced by the students were marked by the difficulties of verbalizing orally what was felt. In this way, the dynamics were intended to prepare and build a presence for the production of narratives based on experience, they functioned as moments for connection with one's own body, for perception and contact with what they felt and perceived – an embodied observation –, this that is, bodies present in the present. We understood propositions as ways to exercise and promote expressiveness through poetic and subjective language. Language, which was often close to literary texts, seemed to be a way of putting into words some aspects of that intensive and very demanding experience for each of us.

Virtual spaces involved orality and writing, and the virtualization of different modes of communication and human interaction, producing profound changes in the way we think, make sense of the world, relate to each other and produce knowledge (Ferigato et al., 2019). From this perspective, the lived experience was configured as a locus of extreme importance and relevance for analyzing the potential, reflections and concerns that were provoked by the pedagogical, expressive and delicate actions.

Writing produces in the world that is not written, but rather experienced, an interference in which we educate ourselves to write about the other and about ourselves, making us perceptible to what the other says, does and how other forms of language and expressions mean (Guzzo et al., 2019). For the body to truly understand and feel the changes and contributions of the moment, it is very important to have a notion of the body's experience, based on how the body positions itself in the world, enhances itself, strengthens itself and learns to position itself in other spaces (Medeiros, 2019).

The entire experience marked a moment in which confused feelings began to find paths to new reflections and an opportunity to create ways of coping with what was experienced.

From the beginning, the process was marked by encouraging dialogue and new propositions, understanding that the moment that was experienced there happened in a unique way for each of the students. The new configuration also marked forms of evaluation resulting from the graduation system, which also generated dialogues, proposals and agreements. Some students, who had participated in the first and second breath, commented on the desire to continue using poetic narratives as a way of learning and creating group bonds, also demarcating the attribution of maintenance and power of artistic writings.

As mentioned in the speeches of Vitor and Claudio in the documentary *Jogo de cena*, by director Coutinho (2007), self-narratives demonstrate symbolic and non-symbolic meanings, in which the narrator recalls the paths taken so that he can share them. In this sharing, when we talk about the non-symbolism of words, we relate the idea that the body, even without words, expresses and carries out a form of communication. We consider the act of writing an artistic and expressive activity, in which we can use words to express the different subjectivities present in the subject.

In addition to self-narratives, it was evident that creating narratives about others was also essential, as we were able to reflect, ask questions, observe and experience experiences of self-recognition in others. The experience of listening and writing referred to life, opportunities and the exercise of increasingly seeing others, their needs and their difficulties. One of the powers of narrative, precisely, was being able to make the story told a way of being present. Artistic languages, in turn, were a means of empowerment, of participation, in addition to enabling new social experiences (Castro & Silva, 2002).

To conclude, in one of the discussions, through the guiding question “What are your places of presence?”, one of the poetic narratives made and presented to the group anonymously represents the potential of the bodily and artistic experiences of the three moments lived by the group.

Observing my places of presence, I notice that these places are actually the same place: my room. For me, it's the coziest place I have at home, not just because it's my sleeping space, but because I built it as if it were a studio: next to it I have my paints, my biscuit tools, papers of different colors, textures and purposes, my drawings and my sewing lines, in front of me the brushes, markers, colored pencils and photos that bring me good memories. In addition to these elements, I have my altar of stones and incense and my shelves with books. All of this composing my space of presence, my refuge, made entirely of everything that is good for me. Here time passes quickly, I get lost in my little universe of colors and textures, where I study, read, paint, dance, sing and explore myself. Here I allow myself, I feel, I express myself, I am me. Even though today it is also my place of study, I don't mind mixing purposes, especially because I meet, express myself and experience intense classes that change my body with each encounter. My universe gained more purpose, more affection (Text from the dynamics of August 21, 2020).

Who would have thought that we would live through a pandemic, right? Spending months without leaving the house and not realizing any of our plans for the year...

If someone had told me about this at the turn of 2019 to 2020, I would certainly laugh a lot, I would think it was a very creative invention and impossible to happen. But life surprises us and today we have had a unique experience. We live for tele-face meetings. The screen has become our window to the world. Now it brings us smiles and laughter, movement in the body, warmth in the heart. Now she tells us about sad news, expressions of a world that bleeds and hurts. Today, to cheer you up, I want to tell you about good things. In a mosaic of living squares, I meet loved ones every week, Thursdays, at 4pm. There are two hours in which we play creating, expressing and inventing together. Each week, we carry out feeling and imagining exercises. I was once my grandmother looking out the window at the grass flower that I got on the street one day (and I didn't even remember her – so she was the one who spent her days in front of me!). I saw my colleagues being hopes, joys and princesses in castles. I have always liked reading and writing, these encounters inspire me to sow and make these tastes flourish even more. These are encounters that make the window screen open even wider, sometimes even literally. I also write this because I had an idea: are we going to continue creating window screens with me in other spaces of life? He comes? I'll tell you how to do it! (Text of the dynamics of August 21, 2020).

Final Considerations

It can be concluded that the artistic strategies in the training process of the ART – Art and Body module through virtual platforms in times of pandemic, recorded and analyzed in the study, were essential for sustaining group bonds, elaboration of the moment experienced and continuity of training processes in occupational therapy.

Based on experience, we understand that this study, in addition to being an important record of the events experienced, is also a way of contributing to the theme of body and art in occupational therapy in times of need for physical and social distancing and, therefore, in situations of crises that mobilize, unbalance and produce complex, singular and collective effects on people's bodies and lives.

Experiences through virtual screens brought new possibilities for interactions with bodies, made us (and still do) rethink and problematize old and new issues related to pedagogical teaching-learning processes, taking the body as a guide for experiences, rethink contextualized evaluative forms, thinking of the arts as powerful devices in occupational therapy to promote encounters, care, affection, awareness of oneself and the worlds.

The module's virtual classes proved to be a moment of enhancing the sharing of these intensifications, consequently creating a space for elaborating the pandemic context and constituting affections. The narrated experience records and expresses the creation of a new training perspective based on the virtual environment, in which it was necessary to approach, accept and resignify. From this perspective, the arts have great relevance as devices for creating new ways of being, seeing the world, transforming everyday life and rethinking interpersonal relationships. The three moments, named as breaths, demonstrated the evolution of the entire process experienced by the students and teachers.

It was possible to observe the creation of a space for creation, interaction and expressiveness, in which we recognized the unique processes and the impact of

expressions through the arts on each participant, based on the three different moments that unfolded over time. Poetic language stood out among group analyzes and awareness, through anonymous narratives. The possibility of anonymity made it easier to express confusing feelings that were sometimes hidden, and this contributed to the participants feeling comfortable sharing them and generating an even greater force of contagion.

The use of the arts and all their possibilities were an invitation to organize presence for what was not expected and, through this, create and invent possible scenarios for coping with all the crossings of this situation. Thus, the field of activities within the training processes in occupational therapy needs to be thought about, taking into account the potential of the forces to create, invent, express and confront through the arts in all their forms. They form elements that build on each other and are essential for training processes, both in performance and in research formats.

The process reported here expresses different phases and challenges experienced during the pandemic, which provoked teachers and students to review the methodologies used for the training aspect. However, it was a moment experienced by a specific group, with unique characteristics and, therefore, it cannot be an easily replicated experience, but an important space for proposing reflections, producing new problematizations, and looking at what was experienced, appreciate what was powerful, bold and challenging.

Contextualizing, based on this experience, allowed us to rethink the methodological aspects, permanent reflections on what really makes sense in the moments lived and to activate processes of bodily artistic expression in learning environments. Experience demonstrates that the arts facilitated the process of learning, care, reflection during the pandemic period, as they were essential for the perception of what we experienced, how we change in moments of crisis and how we can learn from “what happens to us.” This allowed us to give visibility to what we were able to “grow in our backyards”, based on the real possibilities of the moment.

Thus, this article marks a process that took place, but has not yet ended, as we continue to capture and care for many of its consequences: physical, emotional, relational, existential. It constitutes a permanent record of the perception that the experience, posted here, gave the students and teachers the opportunity and opportunity to go through and elaborate that particular moment, collectively, giving visibility and allowing a glimpse of possible paths, through the experiences of the group in challenging times given new meaning by the power of arts and bodies in connection.

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