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**Playful methodology and curricular structuring in children's dance pedagogy: an analysis on psychomotor development and inclusion from a multidisciplinary perspective.**

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### Summary

This scientific article proposes a detailed analysis of the effectiveness of play-based methodology and rigorous curricular structuring in dance education for children. Based on curricular documents for teacher specialization, literature in educational psychology, and now enriched by expertise in Occupational Therapy and Neurology, it investigates how the integration of disciplines such as anatomy, creative movement, and early childhood pedagogy favors the student's integral development. The study addresses the importance of psychomotor skills in acquiring ballet and jazz techniques, the need for curricular adaptation for the inclusion of students with special needs, and the role of gentle discipline in classroom management. It argues that robust teacher training, combined with intentional play-based strategies and clinical knowledge of rehabilitation, is crucial for the formation of competent and healthy dancers, preventing injuries and promoting socialization and autonomy.

**Keywords:** Dance Pedagogy. Playful Methodology. Psychomotor Skills. School Inclusion. Curriculum Structure. Occupational Therapy.

### Abstract

This scientific article proposes a detailed analysis of the effectiveness of playful methodology and rigorous curricular structuring in dance teaching for children. Based on teacher specialization curricular documents, educational psychology literature, and clinical expertise in Neurology, it investigates how the integration of subjects such as anatomy, creative movement, and child pedagogy favors the student's integral development. The study addresses the importance of psychomotricity in acquiring ballet and jazz techniques, the need for curricular adaptation for the inclusion of students with special needs, and the role of gentle discipline in classroom management. It is argued that robust teacher training, combined with intentional playful strategies and rehabilitation knowledge, is decisive for training competent and healthy dancers, preventing injuries and promoting socialization.

**Keywords:** Dance Pedagogy. Playful Methodology. Psychomotor Skills. School Inclusion. Curriculum Structuring. Occupational Therapy.

### Introduction

The pedagogy of contemporary dance faces the challenge of reconciling the technical demands of... Classic and modern approaches tailored to the specific needs of child development. For decades, dance education was based on mechanical repetition and authoritarian discipline. often ignoring the cognitive and motor development stages of the child. However, curriculum analysis contemporary teacher training programs, which can total up to 810 hours of specialization,



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It reveals a paradigm shift.

The introduction of modules focused on "Child Development and Learning" and "Creative Movement" points towards a professionalization that values playfulness not as recreation, but also as an essential teaching tool. This study aims to explore theoretically how this... Curriculum structure impacts the quality of education. The central problem lies in understanding... including complex content such as "Dance Anatomy" and advanced Ballet and Jazz techniques, They can be transmitted to children in an effective and safe way.

The hypothesis put forward is that the playful methodology, when grounded in theoretical bases... Solid and rigorously planned, it allows the child to internalize abstract biomechanical concepts. through imagination and symbolic play. The inclusion of students with special needs, mentioned in several records of teaching practice, it also requires a repertoire from the educator extensive methodological approach. In this respect, multidisciplinary collaboration with Occupational Therapy becomes... if vital, offering rehabilitation and adaptation protocols that consider the clinical aspects and functional aspects of students, ensuring that teaching is accessible to different learning styles and physical limitations.

### **1. Psychomotor skills and creative movement as the foundations of teaching.**

Psychomotor skills are the science that studies humans through their bodies in motion and in relation to their inner and outer world, being fundamental in teaching children's dance. The module from "Creative Movement for Children," present in specialized training, it stands out as foundation for motor development. According to authors such as Henri Wallon and Jean Piaget, the Movement is the primary instrument of the psyche; therefore, when working on gross motor coordination... In short, the dance teacher directly influences the development of the child's intelligence.

From the perspective of Occupational Therapy in Neurology, this relationship is explored in greater depth: the Movement not only structures intelligence, but is essential for developing and improving it. Acquisition of cognitive and sensorimotor skills used in daily life. Dance is not just not just physical exercise, but an activity that integrates motor and mental functions, requiring Planning, execution, and evaluation of movement in real time. The psychomotor approach allows... that the child explores space, time, and their own body, creating the necessary neurological foundation for future technical learning of codified ballet or jazz steps.

The teaching of "Basic Dance Techniques" should be preceded and accompanied by a Intensive work on body awareness. The child needs to understand their joints and weight. of its members and the functioning of its balance axis before being subjected to the rigidity of classical technique. The creative movement offers a safe laboratory for this exploration, where the Mistakes are not punished, but used as part of the discovery process. Through playful approaches.



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Through activities involving rolling, jumping, spinning, and balancing, the child develops body awareness, which is the... mental representation of one's own body.

Without a well-structured body scheme, technical execution becomes mechanical and lacking quality, increasing the risk of injuries and early frustrations that can lead to Abandonment of the practice. The relationship between music and movement, addressed in disciplines such as "Music and "Rhythm for Children" is another vital component of psychomotor skills. The ability to synchronize the Body movement in response to an external auditory stimulus is a complex skill that involves... Auditory perception, temporal processing, and motor response. Rhythm organizes movement. over time, giving it fluidity and dynamism.

In dance pedagogy, the use of percussion instruments, clapping, and musical counting. Verbalized expressions help the child internalize the pulse. Playfulness is the vehicle through which... Psychomotor skills are evident in children's dance classes. Games of imitation, statues, and obstacle courses. Motors are not hobbies, but exercises disguised as play that work muscle tone. Muscular control, inhibitory control, and agility. This methodology reduces anxiety and creates an environment of... Positive learning.

The expressiveness and affective dimension of psychomotor skills should also be considered. The psychomotor therapist uses dance to help the child process their emotions, offering a safe space for the expression of subjectivity. Dance thus becomes a tool for Emotional regulation, where excess energy is channeled into artistic creation. Finally, the Psychomotor skills prepare the ground for formal technique. Teacher training, enriched by Neurological knowledge ensures that this transition is made at the right time, avoiding... Early specialization can be detrimental to musculoskeletal development.

## **2. Anatomy and health: injury prevention and body awareness**

In-depth study of anatomy is a key differentiator in the training of dance teachers. as evidenced by the inclusion of the "Anatomy of Dance and Health" course in the curriculum specialization. Knowledge of bone, muscle, and joint structures is essential. for those who work with developing bodies. The teacher must understand the windows of growth, the closure of the epiphyseal plates, and the physiological limitations of each age group.

The perspective of physical rehabilitation reinforces the idea that dance education should aim not only at... aesthetics, but also the "prevention and correction of deformities." Teaching dance without this Knowledge is an ethical and physical risk, as the incorrect repetition of technical movements can cause Permanent damage. Anatomy applied to dance provides the educator with the necessary knowledge to understand even... where it can demand range of motion and strength from its students, while respecting individuality. biological.



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Body awareness, or proprioception, is the ultimate goal of teaching anatomy in dance.

It is not enough for the teacher to know the names of the muscles; he must teach the student to feel and control them.

These muscles. Pedagogical strategies that utilize touch, visualization, and explanation.

Simple biomechanics helps children understand how their bodies work. This somatic education

It empowers the student, who then becomes responsible for their own body.

Injury prevention is a cross-cutting theme that should be present in all classes.

Proper warm-up, cool-down, and mindful stretching are habits that should be...

instilled from an early age. In addition, knowledge of first aid and exercise physiology.

It allows the teacher to act promptly in case of accidents. Posture is one of the cornerstones of the technique.

dance and also long-term health.

The dance class acts as a form of corrective exercise, strengthening the paravertebral muscles.

and promoting axial alignment. The development of muscle strength is another crucial aspect.

For children, strength training should be done primarily using their own body weight.

Avoiding external overload. Isometric and dynamic exercises strengthen the lower limbs.

and the *core*. The instructor must know how to balance the intensity and volume of exercises to avoid...

*overtraining*.

It is concluded that the interface between dance and health is inseparable. Academic training

The professor's robust approach, combined with specialized occupational therapy consulting, guarantees that...

The classroom is a safe environment. Dance, when taught with scientific responsibility, becomes...

if it is a factor in promoting public health, combating sedentary lifestyles and promoting healthy habits.

Healthy habits that last a lifetime.

### **3. Playful methodology: engagement and learning strategies**

The playful methodology, highlighted in the "Playful Methodology for Children" course, is not...

A simplification of teaching, but a complex pedagogical strategy to ensure engagement.

Student engagement and meaningful learning. Playfulness operates within the zone of proximal development.

allowing the child to perform tasks beyond their current capacity through the support of

imaginary. By transforming repetitive "bar" or "center" exercises into adventure narratives, the

The teacher maintains the students' attention and motivation.

"Storytelling through dance" connects movement to meaning. The use of

"Accessories and games" is a fundamental tactic within the playful methodology to achieve

abstract concepts. From the perspective of Occupational Therapy, the use of these objects and playfulness also

It serves to "stimulate the improvement of sensorimotor function" and increase occupational performance.

of the child. Scarves, balls, hoops, and other objects serve as extensions of the body and points of reference.

Space.

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For example, holding a ball can teach the correct arm position in first position.

from ballet, offering immediate tactile feedback. These mediating objects facilitate understanding.

The physics of motion is taught intuitively. The game, with its rules and objectives, also teaches...

Discipline and respect for boundaries prepare the child for the rigorous structure of a dance class.

formal.

Creativity is stimulated through "Creative Movement" and "Basic Concepts of" classes.

"Choreography." Instead of simply copying the teacher, the child becomes a co-author of the process of...

Learning. This develops autonomy and the ability to solve bodily problems. The

The teacher proposes playful challenges that require the student to access different qualities of movement.

and to expand their motor vocabulary.

Playful methodology also plays a crucial role in content retention.

Episodic memory, linked to emotional and experiential experiences, is more lasting than...

Pure semantic memory. "Performance planning" and recitals become big games.

Groups where the ultimate goal is the performance. The inclusion of "Dance Pedagogy" in the curriculum.

Training ensures that the teacher knows how to balance playfulness with technique. Playfulness is the bridge, the

Technique is the path, and artistic training is the destination.

#### **4. School inclusion and adaptation for special needs**

The democratization of access to dance imposes the urgent need for inclusive practices, a

A recurring theme in the experience and training analyzed. Inclusion in dance goes beyond simple

The student's physical presence in the classroom requires a methodological restructuring that guarantees participation.

Full and effective learning. Technical collaboration with Occupational Therapy enriches this.

process, bringing the practical experience of institutions like APAE in the development of

skills for daily living and promoting independence.

The social model of disability understands that the barrier is not in the student, but in the environment and in the method. Therefore, the specialist teacher, with multidisciplinary support, must master techniques.

of differentiated teaching methods to meet the needs of students with autism, Down syndrome, and cerebral palsy.

or learning difficulties. Curriculum adaptation involves modifying the instructions, the

execution time and, sometimes, the time of the movements themselves.

The use of clear and segmented "step-by-step instructions" benefits students with learning difficulties.

Auditory or cognitive processing. The co-author's clinical experience in "prescribing and

"Making custom-made orthotics" and using "assistive technology" offers valuable support for

To physically adapt the practice of dance, allowing students with motor limitations to participate.

with greater autonomy. For students with visual impairments, touch and detailed verbal description are essential.



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The teacher must be an attentive observer, identifying the potential of each individual's body, and valuing the "appropriate pace" of learning for each individual. Inclusive dance challenges the normative aesthetics of ballet, celebrating body diversity. The "gentle discipline" is the approach. The more appropriate behavior, especially when dealing with students who may exhibit sensory or behavioral regulation difficulties, common in neurological conditions.

Dance, with its rhythmic and repetitive structure, can have an organizing and therapeutic effect, helping to improve "overall emotional condition, reducing depressive and anxious states". The impact of inclusion benefits the entire class, developing empathy and solidarity in the children. The curriculum that includes "Child Development and Learning" prepares the teacher to mediate these interactions.

Practical experience in neurological rehabilitation demonstrates that expressive activities and motor skills promote "adequate overall development of the individual." Inclusion is not a destination, but an ongoing process of breaking down barriers. By adapting education to accommodate the needs of students with special needs, the teacher and occupational therapist enrich the learning experience and broaden the artistic horizons of everyone involved.

## **5. Curriculum structuring and lesson planning**

The effectiveness of dance education intrinsically depends on a logical curriculum structure, and progressive, as demonstrated in the 810-hour course plan. The content is divided into modules. The semester-long courses, ranging from "Fundamentals of Dance" to "Advanced Techniques," reflect an organization of rigorous academic planning. Curriculum planning avoids improvisation and ensures that all aspects are covered. The training – technical, historical, anatomical and artistic – should encompass all aspects.

Each level should have clear learning objectives, skills to be acquired, and... Defined evaluation criteria. Lesson planning is the operationalization of the curriculum on a daily basis. The teacher should prepare "carefully crafted" lessons to introduce the techniques appropriate for each age group. A well-planned class follows a physiological intensity curve and cognitive: it begins with warm-up and mobility exercises, moves on to technical exercises, and explores the... creativity.

The diversity of styles in the curriculum – "Ballet, Jazz, Contemporary" – is essential for the formation of a versatile dancer. Classical technique provides the postural foundation; jazz works on the... Dynamics and rhythm; contemporary art explores fluidity and improvisation. The integration of these styles enriches the student's motor vocabulary and prevents stylistic rigidity.

"Choreography" and "Performance Planning" are curricular components that synthesize technical learning. Planning a show requires organization. The choreography should not only be a display of virtuosity, but an opportunity

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pedagogical. The curriculum prepares the teacher to create works that respect the dignity and age of the child. Assessment and administrative record keeping, such as "maintaining attendance records and "Progress" ensures the order and continuity of the educational process.

## **6. The role of the teacher as a mentor and manager of knowledge.**

The dance teacher plays a multifaceted role that goes beyond instruction. Technically, he is a mentor, a role model, and a manager of the learning process. The description of a "hardworking and reliable teacher" and "patient" highlights human qualities necessary for teaching. The teacher-student relationship in dance is marked by a closeness unique physical and emotional state.

The ethical training and personal integrity of the teacher are as important as their... Technical competence. Ongoing training and the pursuit of excellence, evidenced by the courses. international recognition is due to the extensive specialization and certification in *Systemic Integral Coaching* that has been acquired. According to the co-author, these are the duties of the teacher-mentor. The field of dance and pedagogy is in constant evolution. Evolution, and the teacher must keep up-to-date on new techniques and methodologies.

Classroom management through "gentle discipline" and "respect" defines the climate of Learning. The teacher must be able to establish clear boundaries without resorting to methods. Authoritarians. Positive leadership involves active listening and empathy, skills reinforced by... I work in multidisciplinary health and education teams. The classroom environment should be a A "safe space" where the student feels encouraged to take risks and to fail.

In addition to the classroom, the teacher often acts in the "coordination and administration of "Dance program." This requires management, organizational, and strategic planning skills. The ability to work in a team, to communicate with parents, and to organize events demonstrates... Professionalism is essential. The dance teacher is an agent of cultural and human transformation. shaping the physical body and character of the student.

## **Conclusion**

In-depth analysis of curricular and pedagogical documents and experience reports. Professional expertise allows us to consolidate the thesis that teaching dance to children is a complex science. which requires much more than just the ability to dance. Structuring a specialization course. with 810 hours, now expanded through collaboration with Occupational Therapy and Neurology, reflects The need for holistic training for educators.

It became evident that psychomotor skills and creative movement are the foundations upon which All dance technique must be built up. Ignoring the stages of neurological development and The child's motor skills are a serious pedagogical error. The playful methodology has proven to be the most effective strategy.



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sophisticated language to access a child's intelligence, translating complex concepts into language accessible.

The issue of health, anatomy, and rehabilitation proved central. Injury prevention and the Developing age-appropriate strength is a non-negotiable responsibility. School inclusion and The ability to adapt teaching for students with special needs, supported by expertise. Clinical expertise in neurology and assistive technology emerged as indicators of quality and humanity. The "gentle discipline" and pedagogical differentiation allow dance to be, in fact, For everyone.

Rigorous curriculum planning and professional classroom management underpin the... The credibility of arts education. The role of the teacher as mentor, role model, and manager of... Knowledge became evident. The relationship of trust and respect built in the classroom is the foundation. of the entire educational process. Finally, this study reaffirms that dance pedagogy, when Integrated with the health sciences, it is a powerful tool for cognitive and emotional development. Physical and social development, preparing the child for life.

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