

# Rap and rhyme duel at school: experiences based on hip-hop pedagogy\*<sup>1</sup>

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## Abstract

Based on elements of the so-called *hip-hop pedagogy* and the concept of *connective marginalities*, this article aims to present reflections about pedagogical experiences that had the *rap*, an oral expression of the *hip-hop* movement, as a central element in the classroom. This article aims to develop such discussion based on the experience of a workshop and a rhyme battle held in 2023 with elementary school students at the EMEF Professora Célia Regina Lekevicius Consolin school, an educational unit located in the north zone of São Paulo, SP, in order to dialogue with possible ways to work with *rap*, especially *raps* defined as socially engaged as didactic tool, mainly in a context of high social and economic vulnerability, as is the case of the aforementioned school students, of many residents who live in housing complexes and precarious housing near the school and also of young people all around the world. Through these activities, carried out in the school environment with 5th and 8th grade classes, it was possible to propose a space of valuing black culture and of anti-racist, critical and culturally relevant educational practices that can contribute to the implementation of laws nºs 10.639/03 and 11.645/08.

## Keywords

Rap – Education – Hip-hop pedagogy – Anti-racist education – Law nº 10.639/2003.

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\* English version by Iris Isis Rowena Campos. The authors take full responsibility for the translation of the text, including titles of books/articles and the quotations originally published in Portuguese.

**1-** The data that supports the results of this work are included in this article, available for consultation throughout the text.

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## Introduction

In view of the Law nº. 10.639/2003 implementation, we intend, throughout this article, to reflect about the potentiality of the so-called *hip-hop pedagogy* as a critical, creative and culturally relevant tool for all those involved in the teaching and learning processes, especially for young students in Brazilian schools.

The reflection will be based on practical actions developed in a public educational unit, from the experience of a workshop followed by a rhyme battle carried out with elementary school students, aged between 11 and 15 years old.

Such actions took place in 2023 at the EMEF Professora Célia Regina Lekevicus Consolin school, located in Parque Novo Mundo neighborhood, an area with many precarious housing and high social vulnerability, located in the north zone of São Paulo, in order to investigate possible ways to introduce *rap* at schools, inside and outside the classroom, with the support of the Study and research group Education and Afroperspectives<sup>3</sup>, from the USP School of Education, coordinated by Mônica do Amaral teacher, which uses as methodology the practice of *research in action*, in which the researcher is involved and is an active element on the studies conduction.

## The black diaspora

Through the centuries, thousands of Africans of different ethnicities, cultures, knowledge and practices were forcibly transplanted from their lands, towns and cities to the Americas.

The so-called African diaspora, or black diaspora, transformed social and economic relations, promoting ruptures but, despite the attempts to erase memory, cultural ties, traditions and family relations promoted by the nefarious institution of slavery, the populations transplanted to the forced labor reinvented and redefined themselves.

The oral literature and the Afrographics – often unwritten, present in bodies and manifestations – were one of the main ways of establishing a fusion and agglutination of the symbolic records brought by these enslaved bodies. Despite the multiple violences, the enslaved, through strategies engendered in their own way of being and interpreting the world, managed to preserve the cultural and textual signs and the entire complex symbolic constitution that founded their otherness, their cultures, their ethnic and linguistic diversity of their civilizations and history, as well as constituting aspects of Afro-American cultures – whether in South, Central or North America –, from the interaction with Western culture and its bearers (Martins, 2021). The blacks of the diaspora became, then, the cultural intermediaries between the native Africans and the blacks of the New World (Harris, 2010).

This reestablishment of enslaved Africans in the Americas was fundamental for the constitution of Afro-American cultures, including in aspects related to musical expression. Among the African characteristics present in African-American musicality, stand out the

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**3-** For more information about the study and research group, access: <https://afroperspectivas.com.br/>.

characteristics present in spoken singing, so important in societies on the West African coast, percussion and rhythm, among other elements.

Throughout this article, we will explore some of these characteristics, reflecting about their pedagogical potential, whether in form (orality), whether in content, promoting discussions on necessary and present topics in the school curriculum, especially on the formation of the society in which students are inserted.

## **Rap, hip-hop and orality: connective marginalities**

The practice of spoken singing, present in many cultural manifestations throughout the American continent, notably in Brazil, such as *repente* and *embolada*, also printed strong marks on Jamaican music since before the 1950s, developing at the Caribbean Island throughout the 20th century with musical genres such as *ska*, *reggae*, *dancehall* and *rocksteady*, reaching the entire world.

Given the socioeconomic context and amid the struggle for independence from British colonial oppression, many Central American immigrants, mainly from Jamaica, began to move to the United States, and there they mixed the practice of spoken singing with the black music that was played on the radio and in American ghettos.

This spoken singing, combined with *soul*, *funk*, *blues*, *jazz* and *disco music*, would start its own format, which began to integrate the artistic expressions that happened simultaneously at parties in neighborhoods inhabited by black and Latin American populations, giving rise to what was later called the *hip-hop* movement.

Emerging on the cultural scene in the 1970s, in a context of unemployment, economic crisis, industrialization, increased violence, and amid counterculture movements, *hip-hop* emerged in an urban environment, created by young black people and Caribbean immigrants as a form of cultural expression (Silva, 1999).

Three main names are directly linked to the emergence of the first street parties: the *disc jockeys* – better known as DJs – Afrika Bambaataa, Grandmaster Flash and Kool Herc.

Herc was a young Jamaican immigrant known for organizing the first *hip-hop party* in the Bronx, a New York neighborhood (Souza, 2005). Aiming to combat the gangs violence, Afrika Bambaataa – one of the main organizers of street parties – began to organizing such parties in order to convert disputes between outskirts gangs of New York, into duels that involving artistic expressions divided into four elements: the *MC* (who writes the rhymes), the *DJ* (who plays the music), the *breaking* (the dance) and *graffiti* (visual arts).

The fusion between *MC* and *DJ* gave rise to *rap* – *rhythm and poetry* (Souza; Nista-Piccolo, 2006). The rap is a manifestation of spoken language incorporated into a melody that works on a repetitive rhythmic base, presenting chronicles of the inhabitants of a certain social group (Rosa, 2004).

It is important to highlight that *rap*, beyond more complex definitions, is a musical genre that, regardless of originating from the *hip-hop* movement, is renowned worldwide, conceived as a symbol of black youth, but also of other youth around the world.



Based on the concept of *connective marginalities*, defined by Osumaré (2015), *hip-hop* brings together people who have been historically disadvantaged and marginalized in capitalist societies, excluded from consumer society.

For the author, the “global youth culture of *hip-hop* is the most recent manifestation of the exportation history of black North American cultural production from the USA” (Osumaré, 2015, p. 63), a tradition that begins with the minstrels of the 19th century, passing through *rock and roll* in the 1950s, *soul music* artists in the 1960s, the fight for civil rights, the *black power* cultural revolution and, in recent decades, also the *hip-hop* movement.

Osumaré (2015) discusses about the cultural and sociopolitical connections of the African diaspora and about how young people linked to the *hip-hop* movement denounce specific issues of social marginality, which are at the same time local and territorial, but also find an echo in other outskirts around the world, in other contexts.

Still according to the author, the *hip-hop* movement promotes criticism of the social inequalities that exist in the favelas of Brazil, in poor Afro-Cuban neighborhoods and in the ghettos of the United States, “mixing with other national issues of social marginalization, particularly in regard to the African diaspora in the Americas” (Osumaré, 2015, p. 64).

The *hip-hop* movement promotes an articulation between people, especially young people, from different nations and socioeconomic contexts, decoding and reinventing urban culture. As the author says, “these echoes are known internationally by young people with a culture of black expression, [...] similar regions where rap, breakdancing and graffiti soon established their strongholds and shelter the poor working classes” (Osumaré, 2015, p. 66).

In other words, the *hip-hop*, whether in its oral manifestation, as in rap, or in its physical manifestation, as in *breaking*, generates a possibility of dialogue between different realities, between the local and the international, between problems, but also between solutions, found in the life experiences of people in São Paulo, Piracicaba, Paris, New York and in the most varied cities and contexts.

At this point, Osumaré turns to the term *glocal*, used by the scholar of popular music Tony Mitchell, based on Roland Robertson (1995), to capture the relationships between the global and local dimensions that exist in contemporary society. For the author, “at the extreme of the local-global paradigm, it is the international economic policy, with the mechanisms invented by multinational companies, that acts as a supplier of pop culture” (Osumaré, 2015, p. 64), mentioning as examples of this cultural industry MTV, Warner, Microsoft, EMI, BMG, among other capitalist companies that, in a certain way, manipulate cultural elements, creating virtualized desires defined by the author as postmodern global culture. But, on the other hand,

[...] at the other extreme of the local-global problem, there are independent environments for the exchange of information in *hip hop*, of aesthetics, pleasure and sociopolitical perspectives within the scope of local independent production. The local-global exchange is truly complex and is in continuous metamorphosis (Osumaré, 2015, p. 64).

Daniel Garnet is an example of this potentiality of the *hip-hop* movement in promoting glocal and independent culture. A *rapper* with extensive experience in organizing rhyme battles in the interior of São Paulo, Garnet, together with PeqnoH, has an independently produced album whose theme seeks to value the achievements and beauty of the black population, as well as to present a critical view of the formation of Brazilian society, in songs such as “Serviço de preto”, which deals with the work of the black population since the times of slavery, redefining this term, which can be pejorative, depending on its use, and also the “Não toque nesse meu cabelo” lyrics, which discusses about prejudices and the beauty of Afro aesthetics (Avisé..., 2015).

The *rappers* not only elaborated the lyrics, but also the album and the music videos in independent form, presenting, as we have seen, discussions that are echoed with African-American populations, whether in the South Bronx, in poor Afro-Cuban neighborhoods or in the favelas and outskirts of Brazil, promoting a rap that we call, inspired by the *rapper* Mellie Mel, *socially engaged rap* (Hip-Hop Evolution, 2016), or, in the words of Osumaré (2015, p. 65), the artists promote critical lyrics “with greater social awareness”. For the author, there are

[...] four major connective marginalities that seem to unify the hip hop generation internationally. Connections or echoes can take the form of culture (Jamaica and Cuba), classes (North African Arabs living in France), historical oppression (Native Americans living in North and South America) or simply the discursive construction of a youth with peripheral status (Japan) (Osumaré, 2015, p. 67).

Among the groups marginalized by contemporary capitalist society, the young people who suffer historical oppression, being discriminated against due to social class, race, gender, among other issues, found support and strength to fight in *hip-hop* culture, a movement worldwide recognized and shared by different groups.

Rap, a musical manifestation of the *hip-hop* movement, is a musical style that uses the voice as its main factor of expression (Pires, 2007). It presents a strong contesting character, a characteristic that comes not only from the strength of the North American black movement that was occurring at that historical moment, but also from the Afro-diasporic and indigenous struggles around the world, as we can observe in the examples from representatives of the Guarani Kaiowá culture, such as the group Brô MC's, from Dourados, MS, or the *rapper* Kunumi MC, from the outskirts of São Paulo, SP.

Rap is a musical genre that originated from the spoken singing of West Africa, a place where orality is one of the central elements in the transmission of knowledge and education. Its content is full of denunciations about social and economic inequalities that exist in capitalist society, in addition to presenting historical demands, not only for social rights, but also for visibility, respect and solidarity towards the less favored (Souza, 2006).

It is through words that the people of West Africa preserve and transmit their stories. Western African societies, in their oral practices, narrated and still narrate everyday facts and chronicle events, just as currently happens in *rap* (Souza, 2006).

## The *rap* at school: rhyme battles and pedagogical practices

At São Paulo public schools – especially those located in outskirts areas –, there are many students who find themselves in a state of exclusion and social vulnerability. Among these young people, a taste for *rap*, for *funk* and other music that we can consider Afro-diasporic is very common, and the school needs to appropriate itself from this musicality in their pedagogical actions. It is necessary to dialogue with the cultures and territories of the students.

When they are not exclusively listening to these genres, the students often listen to other rhythms, which are also permeated by those already mentioned, such as Korean *k-pop*, for example, which uses a large base of the American *hip-hop* music format in the construction of its aesthetics.

In this sense, we identify in the *hip-hop* cultural movement a means of establishing a connection, especially with this profile of young people, something so important for the full development of teaching and learning processes, mainly in teaching proposals that consider students as active subjects in the construction of knowledge, endowed with wisdoms and experiences that can and should be mobilized in the teaching environment.

In addition to this fundamental aspect for critical pedagogical proposals and based on active methodologies, *hip-hop pedagogy* makes it possible to value the life experience of students themselves by emphasizing on the importance of outskirts popular culture, promoting the self-esteem of these historically excluded groups.

*Hip-hop* and its universal appeal by the ethnic affirmation, allies with the combination of local cultures based on connective marginalities and the social valorization of those who have historically been the object of oppression and discrimination, have played an important role in the education of young people around the world, in particular of the poor, black young people living on the outskirts of large cities.

As shown, in addition of being an art educator and researcher at the USP School of Education, Daniel Garnet is also a *rapper* and an organizer of rhyme battles and, based on this experience, has been promoting pedagogical actions inside and out the classroom, working, above all, with *raps* of an ethnic-racial nature, or *socially engaged raps*, with which the educators can promote reflections about the construction of the ethnic and territorial identity from the students who participate in the activities, correlating them with the construction of identity of other possible youth.

In relation to young black people in the capital of São Paulo, *hip-hop* was fundamental in the reconstruction of the history and culture of Afro-descendants, since that the school curriculums, according to the *rappers* themselves, reproduce a reading of history from the perspective of slavery. Through *hip-hop*, *rappers* from São Paulo returned themselves to racial themes, rediscovering it through the North American context (Lima, 2005), but attentive to the history and socioeconomic Brazilian context.

Thinking about other experiences with this youth cultural movement in schools, Neves (1999) reports her personal experience of rap in Portuguese classes. Let us look at two examples: first, a teacher tried to teach a certain subject using traditional teaching methods and did not obtain positive results. The teacher in question, making a self-



criticism in relation to the teaching strategies adopted, concluded that the content of the textbooks did not arouse interest in the students, because they were texts far away from their reality. So, she proposed a challenge to herself: to teach activities that would interest the students in order to motivate learning.

In conversations with the students, Neves (1999) identified which were their musical preferences and introduced *rap* lyrics that interested them in order to work on the same content that would previously have been covered in the textbook. Despite the critical playfulness, the author was careful to present the activity not as a mere moment of recreation, but as a class, although in a different format. The project was approved by the teaching supervisor, who monitored the classes and made positive observations regarding the performances and results, both in terms of the use of the content and in the students' behavior in their daily lives.

In another experience, a young teacher who included practical *breakdancing* classes in his physical education content, used the occasion as a bridge to the theoretical part, introducing the history of black music from the African diaspora, contextualizing it based on the history of black people after their arrival in the Americas. According to the teacher, using *hip-hop* ended up facilitating the implementation of Law nº. 10.639/2003, which deals with the implementation of Afro-Brazilian and indigenous history in public and private educational institutions (Brazil, 2003). More than that, for him, being able to talk about this cultural movement, or through it, was a way of valuing the youth's own cultural identity, which is devalued by the dominant culture (Tejera; Aguiar; Pacheco, 2012).

Based on these and other experiences, mainly in the field research developed by the authors and colleagues from the Education and Afroperspectives study and research group, we can state that working pedagogically with *hip-hop* and *rap* at school, regardless of the subject or curricular content, is a search by the construction of an integral educational model that promotes interaction between teaching, culture and society, generating ideas, values and ways of interpreting life, other than exclusively those conveyed by Western European culture (Aguiar, 1999).

In this sense, *hip-hop pedagogy* is plural, multicultural, valuing local knowledge and the context in which students are inserted, but also allowing achievement of connections with experiences from all around the world, providing them not only with a critical view about the formation of society, but also with creative means of expression and reflection.

*Hip-hop pedagogy* seeks to go beyond a technical, "banking" education, based only on the professional needs of students, placing them at the center of the teaching and learning process.

## **The importance of anti-racist education**

Gomes (2022) warns about the importance of remembering, retaking, analyzing and emphasizing with pride the wisdoms/knowledges that are part of our history of fighting against racism and in favor of racial equality and democracy, stating that black men and women who fight against racism are producers of important knowledge in the identity, political and aesthetic-corporeal fields.

Beyond the Law nº. 10.639/2003, according to which in “primary and secondary education, official and private, teaching about Afro-Brazilian History and Culture becomes mandatory” (Brazil, 2003), and Law nº. 11.645/2008, which added the history of indigenous people (Brazil, 2008), extensive ongoing training is necessary, both for teachers and students, on the importance of this knowledge for the formation of the identity of Brazilian people.

After all, what is in vogue is not just the reparation of a subalternized or historically harmed group, but a wisdom that is part of the constitution of our people, wisdom that has been systematically excluded, depriving us of unfulfilled potential, because we do not recognize this part of the strength of our people. In short, we are talking about ancestral knowledge

[...] condensed, accumulated, and reinterpreted over the centuries by black men and women in movement and by the Black Movement which contribute to the necessary epistemological and political rupture not only in the academic field, but in everyday life, culture, education, the media, and politics. This process has the potency to educate and re-educate black and non-black people in the fight against racism, for racial equality, and for emancipatory human rights. This rupture will allow something new to emerge: new epistemologies, policies, practices, relationships, exchanges and affections, even in such an unequal society. It can help us not to lose focus on fighting so that everyone is respected in their differences and can live a more dignified life. Living with dignity is urgent in our country (Gomes, 2022, p. 35).

When the author brings the concept of *ubuntu* from other authors to the text, affirming it as a possibility of dialogue with the power of African ancestry, intersubjectivity and collective existence (Gomes, 2022), it shows the potential of *hip-hop* and *rap* as manifestations that promote a powerful and anti-racist education, in the measure that, as in a rhyme battle in which there are two opponents dueling, it is only possible to see the glow of one when perceiving, together, the glow of the other; it is a poetic dialogue, a construction of meaning that occurs in interpersonal relationships, being necessary another-of-one for communication to exist.

And to advance in battles, it needs resources. *Rap* means rhythm and poetry and, above all in *rhyme battles*, it demands lyrical knowledge to construct phrases and verses, creativity and quick thinking to duel against another opponent, but it also requires a refined world view to mobilize references in a contextualized and poetic way.

Based on the reflections presented, we will see two experiences developed with students in the final years of elementary school at EMEF Professora Célia Regina Lekevicius Consolin school, whose pedagogical strategy was the rhymes battles and the promotion of critical historical studies, based on *hip-hop pedagogy*.

The school caters to many low-income young people, whose financial and social situation was aggravated during the Covid-19 pandemic, which increased the difficulties of families, amplified already existing social inequalities and, unfortunately, worsened educational deficits. After all, many students, residents of the housing complex next to the school, the Baracela community and other nearby locations, did not have access to remote classes, suffering the consequences of almost two years of precarious education.



## From research to the action: experiences with *rap* at classroom

The project developed through shared teaching with teachers from the municipal education network of São Paulo as part of the research conducted by the Education and Afroperspective study group made possible to work with the *rap* musical genre within the school on a more in-depth level.

The field research, which consisted of given classes to public elementary school students in the outskirts of São Paulo, SP, aimed to address the history of *hip-hop* according to a historical-cultural and aesthetic perspective and, at the same time, encourage and stimulate cultural engagement and the construction of knowledge from the part of the students, so that they could also recognize their Afro-Brazilian identity at some level.

Based on Daniel Garnet's experience as a *rapper*, art educator and researcher of *rap* and *hip-hop* as a teaching tool, as well as on the knowledge in *history* and *philosophy* of professor «S.», who was a great partner in this endeavor, a pedagogical practice was established that allowed the construction of classes based on reflection about the construction of the ethnic and territorial identity of the youth present in the subject.

This action of teaching in pairs involving elements of *hip-hop* culture, combined with subjects from the traditional curriculum, was inspired by the concept of *hip-hop pedagogy* by Marc L. Hill (2014). In *hip-hop pedagogy*, the combination of a *hip-hop* researcher/artist, in partnership with a teacher responsible for a specific school subject, was called *shared teaching*.

This proposal emerged from the authors' research, based on his work at a public school in the United States with a literature teacher. The teacher-researcher Hill and the literature teacher, Mr. Colombo, addressed topics that were sensitive to the students' reality – such as pregnancy, police violence, and life perspectives – through *rap* lyrics and conversation circles.

By the fact that the artists' lyrics speak of pains that are very similar to those of the most socioeconomically vulnerable young people, the author defined the *rappers* as *wounded healers*, since the lyrics they interpreted revealed wounds that the students were also going through. This experience took place at Howard High School, a high school in Philadelphia, United States (Hill, 2014).

Based on such inspiration, the proposal, together with Professor «S», was to give students a voice through *rap*, to know about their stories and to bring to light another bias of the African, Afro-American and Afro-Brazilian history that rarely appears in books, using street art as an instrument of ethnic and social affirmation and as a pedagogical tool, guided by the intention of offering students moments to act as researchers of a history that is part of their ancestry and, thus, directly contribute to the self-construction of their ethnic and territorial identities, while also promoting a contemporary poetic construction, by the development of sensitivity, aesthetic and social expressiveness among students.

To this end, a variety of activities were carried out, such as text production, musical lyrics analysis, presentation and exhibition of works in artistic format. We also promoted debates about the representation and history of Zumbi dos Palmares, the abolition of

slavery, the study of *rap* songs that address racism and even the reading of tales and legends that implicitly or explicitly addressed ethnic-racial issues, etc.

All this work also served as a basis for students to produce their texts in the form of verses and stanzas, in addition to presenting their work to the class in the form of *rap*.

## Workshop and rhyme battle at school

One of the most significant teaching experiences based on *hip-hop pedagogy* was, without a doubt, the rhyme battle held at EMEF Professora Célia Regina Lekevicius Consolin school. The activity was organized to take place in the courtyard, with chairs positioned in a cinema style and Daniel Garnet on stage, with two wireless microphones. Teacher “Z” was responsible for controlling the school’s *laptop*, which would be responsible for playing the beats. The children and young people were arriving and settled in, with the 5th graders at the front and the 8th graders in the back.

At the beginning, the teacher was asked to play a sequence of beats with different speeds and aesthetics. As the beats played, Garnet encouraged the group to count the four beats per measure, which is the configuration of the selected beats and of the most rap songs in the world. When the chairs were positioned, the students were asked to leave a hall in the middle – in cinema style – so that it would be possible to move between them, as well as to distribute the roles of the classes during the activity.

After counting from 1 to 4 – four beats per measure –, the roles were divided, giving the responsibility for counting odd numbers to the chairs on the left from the hall and counting pair numbers to the chairs on the right side of the hall, ensuring that the counting was divided and synchronized.

The next exercise was to ask someone on the left to say a word that matched with our day, and one of the young people present volunteered and said:

– *Harmony!*

Then, Garnet went to the right side and asked someone to say a word that rhymes with *harmony*, and it also had to be related to our context. A girl called out and said:

– *Happiness!*

Still on the right side, we asked for a word that no longer needed to rhyme, but that still had something to do with our day. Another girl said:

– *Hip-hop!*

Then, returning to the left side, someone was asked to say a word that now matched the previous one, and a boy said:

– *Luck!*

From there, our word list looked like this: *harmony / happiness / hip-hop / luck*. With the words listed, we asked each column to imagine themselves as a group.

Garnet asked Professor “Z” to play the beat again and told everyone that however long the beat lasts it would be the time that each column – or group – would have to create a four-line verse with the final words: *harmony, happiness, hip-hop* and *luck*.

– *Teacher, can I change the order of the words?* – asked a young woman from the group on the left, who, obviously, was rewarded with a “yes”.

Garnet reinforced to the class:

– *Guys, whoever wants to, can change the order of the words!*

Although everyone murmured when they heard that they would only have the time of execution of the beat to build their verses, they soon began to call out to show the finished verses:

– *Teacher, is it okay like this?*

One of the most interesting things that was noticed in this type of activity is that, when the number of words or verses are limited, the first perception that students have is that they will not be able to fulfill the proposal. However, in most cases they exceed the goal and meet the request in a creative way, writing more than was requested.

After the agreed time, the first group was called to exhibit their creation on stage, starting with the first columns, that is, the 5th grades, and then inviting the 8th grades.

Even though many groups had done the work collectively, it was common for just one person from the group to perform. Even so, we asked the entire group to come on stage. Here is one of the compositions:

Today I'm at school and I'm in harmony  
Not to mention that I feel a lot of happiness.  
Today my class is about hip-hop  
I think I have so much luck!<sup>4</sup>  
(“M”, 5th grade, field report, 2023).

As the teachers said, the 5th graders were actually more uninhibited, while the 8th graders were somewhat shy and afraid of being judged. In this sense, in addition to preparing more for the activity in order to write their creations – something that the 5th graders did not do –, even with the verses written, no one from the 8th grade performed.

In the second part of the activity, the possibility of signing up for battles was opened and, at that moment, in addition to many boys and girls from the 5th grade, at the contrary to the first part of the activity, an 8th grade boy took courage and signed up. The battle was organized in a team versus team format, with each group composed of four students, totaling eight people. Each student had the right to make a rhyme of two to four verses, alternating one person from one team with one person from another, until everyone rhymed.

At this moment, the students created typical rhyme battles, so as not to *annihilate* the opponent, but to show who was the “authority” in the rhyme at that moment. At a certain point in the battle, a girl was unable to finish the verse and the audience began to boo. That was when Garnet intervened, interrupted the event and asked:

– *Did anyone who is booing have the courage to come here and participate?*

No one answered. Resuming:

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**4-** As it is possible to verify in the example, whether perfectly or imperfectly formed, the words harmony/happiness, hip-hop/luck, rhyme in Portuguese, being: harmonia/alegria, hip-hop/sorte.

– *You guys in the audience did not have the courage to expose yourself on the stage. I will not allow you to boo your colleagues who had the courage to be here. If this happens again, we will end the event.*

This moment was a bit extreme, but necessary – and pedagogical –, because the booed girl felt very diminished, when, in fact, she was performing one of the greatest acts: exposing herself and participating in a public challenge, even without mastering the expertise of rhyming.

The event was resumed, and we noticed that some students who had no experience with rhyming felt more relaxed and could try without pressure. So, all those who had not managed to rhyme were able to try again, and the mood in the audience changed.

The energy, which at the beginning was being used to boo the colleagues who were having more difficulty, started to be used to encourage the beginners, and this was so positive that, even after the end of the activity, two people continued to battle even without the beat, being one of them the girl who was booed at the beginning.

In the third and final part of the event, at the request of Professor “M”, Daniel Garnet sang part of the song “Serviço de preto”, featured on the album *Avise o mundo* (2015), by the duo Daniel Garnet and PeqnoH.

An interesting factor was that the teacher, in other school proposals with the objective of complying with Law nº. 10.639/2003, already used the same music in the classroom without knowing that it was written by the person teaching the activity, so that her students were already prepared for that moment.

Daniel Garnet sang the first part of the song, and the students joined in singing the chorus along with him. The students were invited and summoned to put their clenched fists up and sing the chorus, without the beat. Without a doubt, it was a remarkable moment for all the people present, pedagogically anti-racist, culturally relevant and historically critical.

At the end of the event, many students approached to take photos and ask questions. After some students went to the next class, Professor “M” commented a little more about the work done with the song “Serviço de preto”, saying that the final moment of the event with the entire audience with their fists raised had everything to do with what they had worked on in class, since she had established connections between the song and the story of Nelson Mandela.

Many students were unable to attend the event, but they worked on the song with that teacher and came to the classroom later to ask questions. The teacher revisited the topics covered in class with the children and young people, and they interacted, telling stories and reporting topics about black personalities they were studying. The student “E” in particular told some interesting stories. The girl spoke with great enthusiasm, authority and excitement; it seemed like she was giving a class. Here is one of her stories:

She grew up in a slum called Pendura Saia, because in the old days, black people had to wash clothes for white women. Her dream was to be a teacher, and she managed to make this dream come true, but she had to give up her career because she had a daughter and her daughter got a fever, so she had to drop out of school to take care of her and help her mother wash clothes. She became a mother, became a teacher, and became an excellent teacher.

“E” spoke about Conceição Evaristo, or rather, taught about one of her references – a black woman, author, researcher, teacher, born in the outskirts and who faced many difficulties in her career –, originating from the latent social and economic inequality that unfortunately afflicts many Brazilians.

The experience of the rap workshop and rhyme battles stimulated what Evaristo (2018) calls *writing-experiences* (in Portuguese, *escrevivências*), that is, the reporting, the writing of the experience of people whose social groups have been historically disadvantaged, which, in Brazil, concerns mainly the poor, black and indigenous populations.

## Final considerations

This study demonstrates how *hip-hop pedagogy* can promote an effective approximation between school education and the cultural experiences of outskirt youth, highlighting the relevance of incorporating such practices into the formal curriculum.

The idea of *connective marginalities*, as discussed by Osumaré (2015), points to the ways in which *hip-hop* transcends cultural and geographical boundaries, uniting communities through a common grammar of resistance and expression. This concept directly interacts with pedagogical proposals that integrate cultural and educational practices, offering students an opportunity to develop a critical awareness of their social reality.

*Hip-hop pedagogy*, by providing an educational experience more connected to the students' reality, also serves as a means of valuing cultural identity and promoting dialogue between the school and the community.

Rap, as an artistic expression of *hip-hop* culture, enables a teaching-learning process that goes beyond formal content, engaging young people in political, social and historical issues that are often neglected by traditional education.

In summary, *hip-hop pedagogy* not only fosters intellectual development, but also a sense of belonging, artistic sensitivity and the strengthening of community ties, rescuing narratives that have been historically marginalized and providing recognition of cultures that are fundamental to the formation of the Brazilian people.

In this context, Law nº. 10.639/2003, which makes the teaching of Afro-Brazilian and African history and culture mandatory, appears as an important milestone for integrating the contributions of black culture into the school curriculum. However, for this legislation to be effectively implemented, schools must consider not only the proposed content, but also the ways in which this content can be taught.

Some examples were presented throughout the text: during the workshop followed by the rhyme battle, it was possible to: organize the class without having to keep the students lined up at their desks, but occupying the pedagogical space with more freedom, without having to separate them by age, as was done with the 5th and 8th grade students, participating in the same class; encourage the presentation of the texts of the young people in the form of verses without having to write them down, as did the students sitting in columns, who went to stage to perform; finally, compete without “annihilating” the opponent, as was possible to witness among the students who battled. And, of course, have fun, without failing to learn deeply, as did the people in the audience.



Such experiences were very significant, highlighting the possibility of learning while teaching, as well as teaching while learning, how it was possible to see the excitement of student “E” when bringing us the content about Conceição Evaristo, the result of her interest in this important Brazilian author.

*Hip-hop pedagogy* when dialoguing with the reality of black and outskirts youth, becomes a powerful tool for the implementation of the aforementioned Law nº. 10.639/2003, as it promotes the teaching of themes that address the African diaspora and related social struggles, promoting reflections about the past, about the history of Africa and Afro-Brazilian history, and also on the present, reflecting about the construction of our society, its social and economic inequalities, its ills and its strengths, connecting old stories to the daily lives of students, opening space for reflections on the future, on the construction of the future and about the society we dream of.

In this way, teaching mediated by *hip-hop* culture promotes an education that recognizes and values students' multiple identities and stories, enabling the construction of a more inclusive and pluralistic school environment. Creating didactic paths that use elements of *hip-hop pedagogy* means not only recognizing the cultural relevance of the movement, but also putting it into practice as a transformative method in education.

In this way, it opens up space for students not only to learn about the history of various forms of oppression, but also about the cultural and artistic powers that emerge from the margins of society, making the school a territory of resistance, art and social transformation.

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