

**FORMATIVE NARRATIVES OF TRANSEXUAL STUDENTS
FROM FEDERAL UNIVERSITY OF SERGIPE**
**NARRATIVAS FORMATIVAS DE ESTUDANTES TRANSEXUAIS
DA UNIVERSIDADE FEDERAL DE SERGIPE**
**NARRATIVAS DE FORMACIÓN DE LOS ESTUDIANTES TRANSGÉNERO
DE LA UNIVERSIDADE FEDERAL DE SERGIPE**

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Abstract: The purpose of this text, influenced by post-critical studies, is to reflect on the formative process of transsexual students at Federal University of Sergipe. From the idea of curriculum as a cultural artifact involved in relations of power and in the production of graduated individuals, we ask: does the presence of transsexual students generate questions and destabilization of gender norms, triggering new forms of learning and negotiation regarding gender and sexuality discussions in higher education? Has the inclusion of transsexual students in higher education provoked curricular changes and methods of subjectivation? Methodologically, we use a qualitative post-critical approach, through of carrying out narratives interviews. It can be implied that the inclusion of transsexual students in the university is contributing to the beginning and development of the deconstruction of educational practices marked by the principle of normative regulation, since the university can also be a field of (un)learning of gender regulations, through the inclusion, permanence and the destabilizations that transsexual people bring about.

Keywords: Curriculum. Gender Identity. Transsexuality.

Resumo: O propósito deste texto, influenciado pelos estudos pós-críticos, é refletir sobre o processo formativo de estudantes transexuais na Universidade Federal de Sergipe. A partir da ideia de currículo como um artefato cultural envolvido em relações de poder e na produção dos sujeitos, questiona-se: a presença de estudantes transexuais gera questionamentos e desestabilizações às normas de gênero, desencadeando novas formas de aprendizagens e de negociações no que se refere às discussões de gênero e sexualidades no ensino superior? A inserção de estudantes transexuais no ensino superior tem provocado mudanças curriculares e modos de subjetivação? Metodologicamente, utilizamos uma abordagem qualitativa pós-crítica, através da realização de entrevistas narrativas. Infere-se que a inserção de estudantes transexuais na universidade está contribuindo para o início e o desenvolvimento da desconstrução de práticas educativas marcadas pelo princípio da regulação normativa, visto que a universidade também pode ser um campo de

(des)aprendizagens das regulações de gênero, mediante a inserção, a permanência e as desestabilizações que essas pessoas realizam.

Palavras-chave: Currículo. Identidade de Gênero. Transexualidade.

Resumen: El propósito de este texto, influenciado por los estudios post-críticos, es reflexionar sobre el proceso formativo de los estudiantes transgénero en la Universidad Federal de Sergipe. A partir de la idea de currículo como un artefacto cultural involucrado en las relaciones de poder y en la producción de los sujetos, se cuestiona: la presencia de estudiantes transexuales generar preguntas y desestabilizaciones a las normas desestabilización de género, lo que provocó nuevas formas de aprendizajes y negociaciones en lo que se refiere a discusiones de género y sexualidad en la educación superior? La inclusión de los estudiantes transexuales en la educación superior ha dado lugar a cambios en los programas y formas de subjetividad? Metodológicamente, se utilizó un enfoque, cualitativo post crítico mediante la realización de entrevistas narrativas. Se infiere que la inclusión de estudiantes transexuales en la universidad está contribuyendo a la aparición y desarrollo de la deconstrucción de las prácticas educativas marcadas por el principio de regulación normativa, ya que la universidad también puede ser una (des) aprendizajes de las relaciones de género por inserción, permanencia y desestabilización que esas personas realizan.

Palabras clave: Curriculum. Identidad de Género. Transexualidad.

1 INTRODUCTION

The narratives that we intend to present at the end of this fieldwork could approach several others already presented by researchers who seek to reflect on the field of education, the processes of teaching, the construction of knowledge. However, it is not our intention. We chose to go beyond in order to include and tell the stories of transsexuals, their meanings, their representations and senses about how transsexual college students perceive themselves as transsexuals. This way it also would be possible to investigate the way the formative process of a transsexual in face of transphobia happens; as well as perceive how the body of a transsexual is seen, lived, faced, questioned, persecuted and sometimes injured in the school/university/work trinity.

We confess that this is not an easy task, since we speak from the comfort place of a “narrator”, who has never lived transphobic experiences or scenes, but who intends to do this with a lot of scientific respect and vitality. We also intend to bring, disseminate and give voice to those students who, for a long time, have been anonymous or excluded from the production of knowledge, both as producing agents and as object of research. This is one of our challenges: make those individuals visible.

To do so, in the first half of 2016, we joined other researchers from the Study Center of Interdisciplinary Research on Women and Social Relations of Gender (Núcleo de Estudos e Pesquisas Interdisciplinares sobre a Mulher e Relações Sociais de Gênero - NEPIMG), linked to Federal University of Sergipe, and we elaborated the research project titled: “Transsexuals’ Education: students narratives of Federal University of Sergipe/Brasil”. Months later, we obtained the financial support of the National Board of Scientific and Technological Development (Conselho Nacional de Desenvolvimento Científico e Tecnológico - CNPq), through the Universal Proposal MCTI/CNPq - N° 01/2016, which enabled the development of the research.

Through this research, we intend to analyze the formative process of transsexual students based on the policies of corporal subjectivity and gender inscribed in Federal University of Sergipe; identify and characterize the transsexuals enrolled at Federal University of Sergipe; reflect on the life trajectories of transsexual people in their formative process; analyze the existence of prejudice and discrimination suffered by transsexuals in higher education in Sergipe taking into consideration that these facts make it difficult for them to remain in the university; verify the alternatives used by transsexuals as a form of social resistance and permanence at Federal University of Sergipe.

In the methodology, a qualitative post-critical approach was used (MEYER; PARAÍSO, 2012) based on narrative interview (ANDRADE, 2012). We believe that

working with narratives in research in the field of education can contribute to “[...] research on professors and research with them or in the school and with the school, resulting in several studies [...]” (LIMA; GERALDI; GERALDI, 2015, p. 19), which means, research on transsexual students¹ with transsexual students.

Regarding this text, we present the first analysis of two interviews carried out with two transsexual students from UFS, one undergraduated and the other one in pos graduation, in the perspective that those first narratives may contribute to reflections about teacher education and the field of education.

2 TRANSEXUAL BODIES AT THE UNIVERSITY

The entrance and permanence of transsexual students in the academic environment of the universities are pointed out in the literature as an excluding process, permeated by difficulties caused by heteronormative patterns found in the curricula that point out transsexual people as abnormal, presenting little possibility of hospitality and acceptance for coexistence in the universities. However, despite this prognosis, the purpose of this article is to question whether the presence of transsexual students in the university environment provokes fissures and/or destabilization in gender norms, triggering new forms of learning and negotiation regarding gender and sexuality discussions in higher education at Federal University of Sergipe. To do so, we used interviews with a transsexual undergraduate student and a Master transsexual student and qualitative analysis based on post-critical studies.

In this article, we understand curriculum as “[...] a cultural artefact involved in relations of power and in the production of graduated individuals” (CAMPOS; PARAÍSO, 2015, p. 1), which means a space of political dispute around gender and sexual identities, fought day to day. On one hand, the hegemonic discourse refers to the heterosexual, white, masculine and Christian norm; on the other hand, several plural discourses of non-hegemonic identities, historically silenced try to break the silence to which they were subjected. That historical silence around new identities is also a way of representing, marginalizing and delegitimizing them. Silence always strengthens the hegemonic discourse (LOURO, 2000).

Heteronormativity is a sexual order based on the heterosexual model imposed by physical and symbolic violence on people who break the gender norms (MISKOLCI, 2015). Gender identity, traditionally recognized as male and female, also implies other possibilities than those imposed by gender binarism, such as a transvestite woman, transsexual woman or man, intersexual woman or man, among others (LOURO, 1997; BENTO, 2014a). Different from the sexual identity, that is the manifestation of the affective and sexual desire, there are people who identify themselves as heterosexual (attraction for a person of opposite gender), homosexual (attraction for people of the same gender), bisexual (attraction for both genders) and asexual (not attracted to any gender), heterosexuality is the hegemonic identity and enforced as correct by gender regulations.

It is not the intention of this article to deepen the debate of the conceptual differences between transvestites and transsexuals, due to the belief that such concepts present weaknesses in their meanings when they focus on the difference in the desire or not of the removal of the genitalia. Transsexuality is an identity experience, a conflict with the norms of feminine and masculine, and cannot be reduced to a purely sexual matter, as understood by Medicine and society, in defining it as fundamental in people who demand surgery to change gender and civil identity (BENTO, 2014a).

Transsexual students, who are the focus of this article, were born with male biological sex, but in the course of their lives constituted a feminine identity, forming an

¹ We also emphasize that the research was approved by the Research Ethics Committee of the Federal University of Sergipe, with protocol No. CAAE 46779715.6.0000.5546, in compliance with the legal procedures determined by Resolution 196/96 of the National Health Council on the ethics of research with human beings. Participants also signed the Term of Free and Informed Consent and use of name and image, according to Resolution No. 466 of December 12, 2012, of the National Health Council.

identity expression that breaks the limits established for the gender. Their trajectories were marked by resistance to malicious remarks, crossed eyes, moral, psychological and physical harassment experienced in everyday life, “since we know that those people who do not live their genders in intelligible ways are at marked risk of harassment, pathologization and violence” (BUTLER, 2016, p. 34). Each person is unique, however, society imposes gender norms to make them “normal”, that is, that they follow the binary logic of gender (man-woman) and compulsory heterosexuality.

In the process of gender normalization, several institutions are responsible for maintaining hegemonic culture in society, especially the school, where the sometimes-implicit norms of becoming men and women are naturalized in educational practices. According to them everything that departs from that model is considered abnormal and is repressed. This way, “abnormal” practices, such as transsexuality, are being allocated on the sidelines at school.

Based on this principle we can perceive how transsexuals are at the margin of society, excluded by various sexist mechanisms and discursive practices that arbitrarily link sex and gender, with a belief in the binary division of genders that make unfeasible the existence of trans bodies as they escape from the dominant regulation to show their inconsistencies and to question the matrix of heteronormative intelligibility. Thus, it is common to say that transsexual people were born men and became women, or were born women, and became men, but Jesus (2015) warns against this fallacious reasoning, since all human beings are born with a biological gender, as someone of a gender that may or may not meet expectations about gender. For the author, a great challenge is to show that gender is not reduced to sex and is not deduced from it. Many statements cluster (man has penis, woman has vagina) to naturalize the binary logic and turn it into predetermined, immutable, normal.

To reveal the arbitrariness of this discursive practice, would be like to take the ground under someone’s feet, so ingrained these “truths” are in us. The idea that trans people are abnormal comes not from the nature of their identity, but from the idea that gender is natural and biological (JESUS, 2015). As a result, transsexuals experience exclusion as they do not participate equally in political decision-making processes, and even less have access to goods and services such as education.

Based on previous studies, such as Franco’s (2014) and Bohr’s (2009), we can see how the school environment, like other sectors of society, reflects the heteronormative discourse, denying identities that erase gender norms, such as the transsexuals’. Thus, colleagues, teachers, employees reproduce the discourse that marginalizes trans bodies, which can lead to difficulties in learning and exclusion. The first difficulties arise from seemingly simple things like the freedom to wear clothes, accessories, hairstyles, nails and reach other situations, such as the use of the women’s restroom and a social name.

The difference is usually perceived as a transgression and subversive character of the trans body comes into conflict with the behavior expected for each gender, and can lead to even violent (physical, psychological, social, sexual) responses. It should be remembered that, paradoxically, transsexuals share the same symbolic system of gender as the others, and therefore end up reiterating the current order of heteronormativity, even if the mere presence of their bodies is a challenge to the binary norm of gender (MISKOLCI; PELÚCIO, 2007).

They subvert the very idea they share of being the biological gender the definer. On the other hand, they reinforce binarism from a set of moral precepts that determine and demarcate what it is to be male and female, respectively: being active / passive; having strength / softness; guided by the head / heart. From this view, they expect the “real men” to be masculine, active, enterprising, penetrating. They are not “real men”, they are “fagots”, “monas”. Neither are they women, nor do they want to be. They are “something else”, a “thing” difficult to explain, because, having been born “men”,

they want to look like women, without actually being one, that is, having a uterus and reproducing. (MISKOLCI; PELÚCIO, 2007, p. 261)

Another aspect that reinforces the difficulty of entering and staying in formal education is the lack of representativeness of sexual diversity in the curriculum, especially of transsexuals who live in invisibility and are not part of the category that can enjoy the privileges of education. In other words, they are unauthorized to be part of the community, humiliated and exposed to violence (BOHM, 2009). In her research, Bohm (2009) found that all transsexuals who went through formal schooling reported having suffered discrimination from colleagues and teachers, with only 5% having completed higher education.

Faced with such a statistic, even though it is regional, we realize that access to higher education is denied to trans bodies, as they find many difficulties and barriers to remain in basic education, and few can reach graduation, let alone post-graduation courses. For this reason, it is also one of the objectives of this article to think about the mechanisms used by students to complete basic education and to reach university.

The data we have just mentioned is very relevant because it refers to the following question: where are the majority of the transsexuals who could not complete regular studies? One of the possible answers is that, because of the hostile environment when they begin to rebuild their gender, many are forced to enter this world of prostitution because they are marginalized. In this respect, Student 1 comments that before entering the current undergraduate course, she needed to become a prostitute to maintain herself. Student 2 comments that she did not have to sell her body, but that in the imaginary of many people, transsexuals become prostitutes because they like:

[...] what it is good about not going to prostitution, what it is good that you did not prostitute yourself is the fact that other people could follow this same example... people do not understand that often the space of prostitution is a path... It's that I didn't need to be thrown into this environment, but that others did, but not because they wanted to, but that it is often a means of survival [...]. (Student 2).

It is important to remember that, like other marginalized groups, transsexual people experience many situations of oppression, harassment and violence, facing numerous difficulties to obtain employment, housing, education and health services. In addition, they are physically abused in many situations by close associates such as colleagues, parents and teachers. The transsexual person, when initiating bodily changes in adulthood, greatly reduces the ability to work and generate income, reducing self-confidence and determination to face problems and cope with life's challenges (SAMPAIO; COELHO, 2013).

Prostitution happens to be one of the only possible destinations, because in the majority of the literature there is a history of rejection, both from the family as well as from school and society, so for some transsexuals, prostitution remains the only way out. Nevertheless, it is also in prostitution that those rejected ones find a space of recognition of their gender identities, in which they can express themselves freely. In most of the studies cited in this research (QUIRINO; ROCHA, 2012; SEFFNER, 2011; DIAS; AMORIM, 2015; DIAS et al., 2017) we can see the high frequency with which transgender people report difficulties in studying and practicing a profession without having to resort to prostitution. In general, prostitution is portrayed as a factor of disqualification of the subject and justification for the denial of rights.

For both students interviewed in this research the formal primary and secondary schooling process was a painful time, a period when they had not yet declared the trans identity, but in which they already had performative characteristics that were not part of the heterosexual norm.

[...] there were many verbal aggressions, the persecutions were very strong, because there wasn't, and there isn't this awareness until now, but on the issue of

respect for differences, because of course I did not declare my identity because it was in adolescence and it is difficult, we no longer fit the standards of the genders and because of that there were very strong persecutions; It was so much that there were cases that I had days I [...] and I had a bicycle that practically every day the bullies would put a hole in the tires of the bicycle, and I had to come back crying, dragging it and so on [...]. (Student 1).

I would be hit by my classmates, they would say that I was a “little fag”, that I was a little girl; they even put my head in the toilet. I remember that in high school a boy always lowered his pants to show his sex organs. (Student 2).

The students' account translates a hostile environment to bodies that do not follow the sex-gender-sexuality logic, which assumes that sex determines gender, and thus a persistent work is put into practice to inscribe femininity or masculinity in bodies. These sociocultural-linguistic-historical constructions come to be seen as natural. However, even if the gender regulatory norms try to delimit, even if they cannot abide by them or do not want them, this citizen, not necessarily, has the obligation to obey them. For Louro (2015), the visibility of transsexual serves to show the invented character of the norms and the instability of the identities, and still they suggest the possibilities of different genders and sexuality multiplication.

Butler (2014) adds that gender permutations that do not fit into the binarism (male and female) also belong to it as much as normative models. Therefore, the norm itself attributes intelligibility to the social field and normalizes it, but creates a paradox, because when something is outside the norm, it remains with its meaning within its parameters. It is important to note that this norm produces individuals who reproduce it naturally in their daily lives. The author further remarks: “Turning away from the gender norm is to produce the aberrant example that regulatory (medical, psychiatric and legal powers, just to name a few) can quickly exploit to leverage the rationality of their own continued regulatory zeal” (BUTLER, 2014, p. 267).

Heteronormativity is present in the behavior of people and that person who is considered different can only be tolerated as long as they complies with the obligatory rituals accepted by the dominant culture. It is in this attempt that Student 1 reports that, in order to complete basic education, she had to adapt to the rules of behavior that were expected for the male gender, which was attributed to her at birth “[...] *for this we try to adapt some behaviors to try to fit in [...]*”. Yet, Student 2 says that she has always tried to confront her aggressors, denouncing them to the coordination of the school. However, over time, she realized that they were never punished, and she felt it was like if the school ratified the violent behavior of her classmates.

This naturalization of violence they both have faced in basic education is a common fact before the bodies that disobey the rules of gender, perpetrated by most institutions, including the school that tries to normalize all the bodies. Their classmates, teachers and others are constituted as vehicles of the normative power over gender, “[...] which disseminates knowledge and regulates the production of bodies” (REIS; PARAÍSO, 2014, p. 245). This pattern of behavior, in general, teaches that it is bad to get away from the accepted model, to be different, for the individual will be treated with contempt and disrespectfully.

Practices in formal education have not yet followed the logic of tolerance to diversity proposed by Brazilian legislation, let alone the theoretical proposal produced in academia that proposes recognition and transformation in power relations towards “the different”. One does not learn to recognize the other in oneself, only diminishes the difference and treats it as if it was something that did not exist in the experience (MISKOLCI, 2015).

3 TRANS EXPERIENCE AT THE UNIVERSITY

For Student 1, the university seemed a distant dream, a space that she could not reach: “[...] trans people end up reproducing the idea they cannot enter certain spaces, they cannot do that right, because they put you in little boxes”. As for Student 2, she imagined that the university would be a different space from school, so she entered in two undergraduate majors, one distance learning in Languages and another in Social Work, and, at the moment, she is studying the Master’s degree at the Federal University of Sergipe. Both encountered the first barrier: the social name.

Yes, the first day I had three classes, in the beginning of the class I talked to the professors saying that I wanted to be called after my middle name and when the professor called I did not answer. I went there and said I did not answer because my name was not that one. It was X² and I pointed to my name in the rollcall because for us to speak our names is already a matter of violence for us. As for the two first professors it was okay, they put an observation [...]. But the third one, when he took the attendance and then when he assigned an activity, I went to talk to him very softly and explained why I had not answered. He shouted loudly saying that if your name is like this, then he repeated the name X, how am I going to call you Y? I have nothing to do with that, it has to be resolved at the Department of Academic Activities because it’s not me. Then he loudly repeated, then I said there was no need for such a fuzz and so on, that I went there to speak quietly and he repeated the role thing again and it was very embarrassing for me. (Student 1).

Student 2 sought the dean of the private college she was studying Social Service and informed the direction that she would like to be called by her social name, but her request was denied, since, according to the rules, this would be impossible since in her official documents there was the name of her ID. The social name, despite being an achievement for trans people, is also a form of precarious citizenship, through which the state, dominated by elite³ discourse, tries to prevent the expansion of the rights of excluded populations. In Brazil there is no law that definitively solves the precarious existence of trans people. The current legislation only guarantees the right to gender identity, through a medical report attesting a disorder. The right to the social name is restricted to educational institutions and, more recently, to other places of the public administration and must be accompanied by the ID’s name. However, even this right, which is not yet ideal, represents an achievement for trans people and it was denied to both students.

As for the social name at Federal University of Sergipe, Student 2 still comments she believes that, although there is an ordinance regulating the right to the social name, it is still not a routine, since she knows other students who have been waiting for months for this right. Besides, UFS employees are not prepared to deal with trans people. All the difficulties presented by the institution in order to assure such a simple act that is to be called by the name that corresponds to their gender identity, it is covered by the goal of diminishing and excluding trans bodies.

There are several situations in which students experience embarrassment in their experiences at Federal University of Sergipe. Student 2 reports on what she felt about herself: “[...] looks of criticism and astonishment of people having a trans person in that place, the same looks that I had in Social Service. I also had in the first days of the Master’s classes”. There are also some clashes with professors in the classroom,

Specifically, with one of the instrutors, I noticed a tone of prejudice and invisibility, actually from two professors, male and female, ok? But it was noticed that the professors see trans people as a foreign body in the classroom, treat us as if there was a person who needed differential treatment many times, as if we were that troubled child of early childhood education or that high school boy who needs more attention. I do not know the

² We used the X to keep the real name of the participant in secret.

³ We used the concept, not in the sense of a homogenous and coherent category, as an individual can belong to a racial elite, but be excluded due to their gender (BENTO, 2014b).

reason why but, often, the attention was diverted, but the looks were mainly of awe, and especially the looks that that space was not mine. (Student 2).

The two students said that the experience became more difficult because the professors were not prepared for that specific situation as they saw them as foreign bodies, bringing an awkward feeling because their bodies escaped the expectation of “normality”. Thus, the university, through its individuals, shows there is difficulty in recognizing them as citizens, or even as human, reinforcing patterns of heteronormativity, in an attempt to prevent the visibility of new identities, or to show them as aberrations that should be denied in that place. These episodes bring examples of processes of regulation and humiliation before trans identities, which are considered to be disproportionate from the educational environment, because they present themselves at the border of gender, which, as a rule, keep under surveillance what is male and female. The institution uses the regulatory norms of bio-power to govern the bodies in its space. Bio-power, according to Foucault (2015), is exercised in the flesh, in the body using disciplinary mechanisms, in the regulation of habits, in the garment, in the prohibition of the social name.

4 GENDER SUBVERSIONS IN CURRICULUM

We must not lose sight of the fact that for every relation of power arises an opposing force, which is resistance, subversion, insubordination to the prevailing order, in which, despite all the obstacles and humiliations undergone by the students object of this research, they did not surrender, they did not give up, instead they empowered themselves to guarantee their permanence at the University. In this respect, Student 1 comments that it was after the episode of the social name with the professor, who motivated her to fight for her rights,

[...] but it was also the reason that, from that fact, I ended up starting an administrative process, this process created a resolution at Federal University of Sergipe and awoke my need to fight for those things not to happen again, right? If in a university that kind of thing happens even though we have the idea that it is a more open environment, with more enlightened people. You wonder in elementary and high school, right? In addition, it was from those situations that I became aware of this struggle, the importance of facing the situation and trying to bring awareness among professors and university students on the matter of the social name. I am not only the name that portrays our identity, but also the way people deal with us the way we present ourselves socially. (Student 1).

In this space of reiteration of the gender norms, materialized in the attitude of the professor, with the refusal to use the social name, there is also a place to face the control of the bodies, showing that the University is a field of dispute in which we can, consciously, subvert the norms. It is necessary to show that those normative actions can be questioned and confronted. We also point out that the mere presence of the trans bodies of these students already constitutes a confrontation of norms, bodies that erase gender demarcations, which transgress the norms imposed by heteronormativity (BUTLER, 2010). In this respect Student 2 says that her presence in the Master

[...] it is important for my training as a teacher, but for all my history of prejudice and discrimination even in my workplace. Institutional prejudice that I suffered as a teacher this rather represents my presence much more as a political act. It is a social movement but also a political act of demonstration to society that the body can transgress and go beyond what society poses. The body can go beyond the lane, that body can go beyond the motel, that body can go beyond the inner part of a car that we can be much more than people knocking doors⁴. (Student 2).

The transsexuals have bodies and speeches that question gender norms, facing the control of the bodies exercised by the institution. The confrontation and the search for visibility are strategies to deal with the imposition of regulatory norms of bio-power and body governance, used by UFS and many other educational institutions (DIAS,

⁴ The student clarifies that the expression “knocking doors” refers to prostitution when they go out with their clients and close their cars’ doors.

2014; DIAS; CRUZ, 2015; DIAS; AMORIM, 2015). The fact that there are transsexual undergraduates is an act of resistance, since the educational system has been trying to expel them since an early age (RATTO; GRESPLAN; LACERDA, 2016). In the Masters, since it is a level of study reached by few people, especially when they undergo subjective evaluations to reach it, students consciously use their transgressing bodies to show that they can also occupy those spaces and that they have the right to be in UFS as much as any other student (DONOSO-VÁZQUEZ; CARVALHO, 2016; DIAS; CRUZ ; AMORIM, 2016).

Visibility also operates transformations in the encounter with the other, since it is a way of deconstructing the stereotypes formed around the trans bodies. In this sense, we bring the following account:

There is this person I realized he was looking at me in a different way and he said, after talking to me, that he was scared when he saw me for the first time. Because the view he had of a transvestite, because he is from an evangelical church that he heard from the others that we are freaks, monsters and that he was not supposed to look at people like us. He told me he had problems of acceptance because of the education he had and when he saw a transvestite, he wasn't supposed to look and the person could even be possessed by a demon and such [she said that emotionally, almost crying]. He apologized for that, but I understand the situation because we are in a culture that is so chauvinist, so transphobic, LGBT phobic and people reproduce that idea. (Student 1).

Thus, we can understand the need, not to tolerate the other, but to learn, to know and to value the encounter with the different and to transform ourselves, as happened with the classmate of Student 1, who, at first, used as a tool the Religious discourse to justify the recognition of the different as an aberration, someone to be avoided even by looking. The religious discourse, socially fabricated, had a status of truth and helped in the construction of the subjectivity of this student who abhorred trans bodies. However, Silva (2008) comments that the presence of the different is inevitable in a heterogeneous world, the “[...] other is the other gender, the other is the different color, the other is the other sexuality, the other is the other race, the other is the other nationality, the other is the different body” (SILVA, 2008, p. 97). Moreover, the encounter with the other should be seen as a moment of social production, and in this case, the student could verify that the gender norms he knew were not natural and universal, as he believed (DIAS; CRUZ, 2015; FONTES et al., 2016).

It is precisely the actions of subversion, presented by transsexual students that contribute to the weakening and deconstruction of gender norms. At such moments, the UFS becomes a territory of dispute, in which transsexual bodies also want to secure their places, showing the invented character of gender norms, disturbing the senses and meanings they had about what it is to be a woman and what it is to be man.

That is why we need to bring in this article those unsupported behaviors, in order to contribute to the unlearning of gender and seek new meanings and possibilities to this area of knowledge, beyond the male and female, to propose and know new ways of living gender and sexuality.

5 FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

By reflecting on the process of inclusion of transsexual university students, we can see how the “tans” body becomes a “strange” body in the university, which proposes to the school agents’ mobility, fluidity and fragmentation in the representations and imaginaries of masculinities and hegemonic feminisms.

Reflecting on the narratives of transsexual students is also making it possible to understand that the issues of gender and sexuality in curricula and in training practices have been a challenge for education professionals, since those themes propose debate, deconstructions and the destabilization of male and female images, based mainly on heteronormativity.

Transsexual bodies in the university contribute to the beginning and development of the deconstruction of educational practices marked by the principle of normative regulation of gender, and enlighten that the university can also be a field of (dis) learning of these regulations, from inclusion, permanence and frictions that transgender people perform. With this, we understand the importance of the theme to expand and foment discussions about it, as well as to produce a collection for future research, since the bibliography on the subject is still scarce.

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