25 - PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE: THE IMAGINARY "BECOMING" OF PEOPLE WHO USE TO EXERCISE IN OUTDOOR GYMS FOR SENIOR CITIZENS IN LAGES/SC

ALEXANDRE VANZUITA
Universidade do Planalto Catarinense UNIPLAC; Lages; Santa Catarina (SC); Brasil
tiolexa@hotmail.com
CLEONIR COSTA
Universidade do Planalto Catarinense UNIPLAC; Lages; Santa Catarina (SC); Brasil
cleonirc@uniplac.net
ELISABETE STRADIOTTO SIQUEIRA
Universidade do Planalto Catarinense UNIPLAC; Lages; Santa Catarina (SC); Brasil
betebop@uol.com.br
VALDEMAR SIQUEIRA FILHO
Universidade do Planalto Catarinense UNIPLAC; Lages; Santa Catarina (SC); Brasil
dhemah@uol.com.br

INTRODUCTION

ATIs, or outdoor gyms for senior citizens, were introduced in Lages/SC after a visit made *in loco* in Maringá, PR, the Brazilian pioneer city in this model of outdoor physical activities, by the supervisor of Fundação Municipal de Esportes of Lages. However, this model was invented in China, and in Pequim there are 2,5 million practioners, according to Rev. Maringá Educa (2007) (In:http://www.ingainformatica.com.br/maringa_ensina/artigos/visualiza_artigos.php?id_artigo=184. Accessed in: Mar, 23, 2008). ATIs have made possible for all community of Lages the practice of physical exercises, not only for elderly people over 60 years-old according to Nahas, (2003); Faria Júnior; Ribeiro (1995). Physical practice through the equipments in ATIs, developed for increasing flexibility, strength and cardiorespiratory fitness, etc, has been incorporated to moving body culture in order to improve people's quality of life directly related to the benefits of regular physical activities, that is, according to Taffarel et al. (2003), physical practice as an aggregative social role.

With the objective of promoting a better quality of life of the elderly through regular physical activities, those sport and entertainment areas were made (REVISTA EXPRESSIVA, 2008). How the concept of quality of life is just not corporal performance, but there are factors as healthy feeding, social relationships, satisfaction with salary, health, etc, which denote the satisfaction of fundamental human needs in a larger concept. We state that those entertainment areas for physical activities can contribute on the improvement of people's quality of life.

This paper is developed under an epistemological view discussing the imaginary of elderly who use to work out in ATIs (Lages/SC) in order to approach the "becoming" logic (LEZAMA LIMA, 1988) of those elderly for a changing on their behavior in relation to the movement of their bodies and social relations which result from that social field.

Methodological resource used for data analysis was the comparation method as declared by Serres (1999, p.96) "while writing, he/she goes from a point to another one" by comparation, "approaching different things" (IDEM, 1999, p. 96). For data collection it was used audio interviews, from February to March, 2008, using "**non-probabilistic samples**" as criterion of selection, this way making sense that "[…] they attend to the sample objectives positively" by the method of "**convenience**" because "the researcher […] is free for choosing randomly" according to Cooper; Schindler (2003, p. 167-169). Another category for stopping interviews was the exhaustion criterion (BERTAUX, 1980 apud FREIRE JUNIOR; TAVARES, 2005) where, when accumulating a significant number of interviews, the researcher does not perceive alterations among differences or similarities of the studied subject, which renders nonessential the continuity of the interviews. In this study, 20 subjects were interviewed, 14 women and 6 men, and data collection was made considering the following criteria:

- Detecting the main objectives of those people in ATIs;
- Identifying if those people have health problems which need control;
- In which aspects physical activities in ATIS have improved their lives;
- How they feel making physical activities in ATIs;
- Identifying if they made new friends in ATIs.

GYM FOR SENIOR CITIZENS ATIs IN LAGES/SC

That project was intended in order to promote regular physical activities for the citizens of Lages. Maringá city, in Paraná State, was used as a reference for the construction of areas where the population of the Mountainous Area could work out. ATIs started to be constructed on the public squares of Lages.

Follow all 22 ATIS installed in Lages from 2007 to 2008: on October, 06, 2007, in Praça dos Motoristas; on November, 22, 2007, in Parque Jonas Ramos (Tanque); on January, 29, 2008,in Coral suburb (beside Nossa Senhora do Rosario Church); in Guarujá suburb on March, 13, 2008, beside Associação de Moradores (this one starting the ATI construction in suburbs away from downtown); on May, 20, 2008, in Penha suburb (beside Godofin Nunes de Souza School); in Penha suburb, on May, 21, 2008 in Melvin Jones Square; in June, 2008, more two ATIs were inaugurated in Petrópolis suburb (in front of the communitarian center) and in Vila Nova suburb (in front of Visconde de Cairú School); in July, 2008, four ATIS were installed in Popular, Santa Helena, São Carlos and Frei Rogério suburbs; in September and October more 10 gyms were inaugurated in Santa Mônica, Ferrovia, Tributo, Araucária, Centenário, São Judas, Sagrado Coração de Jesus, Jardim Panorâmico, Bela Vista, Pró-Morar and Habitação suburbs.

In all those areas where ATIS were installed there is a Physical Education teacher supervising from 8 to 10 in the morning and from 5 to 7 in the evening (from Monday to Friday) during the winter, and in summertime it is from 6 to 8 in the evening. All people who want to work out in ATIs are oriented to do a clinical checkup before starting to work out. However, those ones who want to begin their physical activity program without medical certificate need to undersign a responsibility term paper with the Physical Education teacher. When elderly come to ATIs, they are interviewed according to the Questionário de Prontidão para Atividade Física model (PAR-Q) (In: http://www.saudeemmovimento.com.br/saude/avaliation_fisica_i.htm. Accessed in: Sep, 20, 2007), in order to detect possible diseases and information on age, height and weight for posterior Body Mass Index calculation (BMI). After interview, teachers are able to develop a personal training program, written on a program sheet, which can be modified according to the person's needs.

Our proposal establishes learning through moving body, that is, physical activity for a perspective of behavior change

looking for knowledge production that occurs by moving body. We understand that our body learns instigated by the context in which it is inserted and the necessity of get elements that can improve our performance and quality of life.

THE IMAGINARY OF BODY-IN-MOVING

Body care is directly related to the people's identity and history of life construction, even a healthy life is a recent fact, because agreeing with Benjamin (1994, p. 224) "joining historically the past does not means know it 'how it really was'. It means to appropriate a remembrance as it highlights in a dangerous moment". The imaginary of "becoming" (LEZAMA LIMA, 1988, p. 47) means to reconstruct our ways of life and experiences constantly, and, in this case, the movement that our body makes for improving life quality and surpassing several challenges that life brings through the years.

For both groups, men and women, a strong factor to work out in ATIs is to get a better health and control of diseases, as verified during the interviews. When questioned about her interest in practicing regular physical activities in ATIs, a woman said:

My goal is getting welfare and a better health. I come here to control my diabetes and cholesterol, and to maintain a good health, not just for that, but for all. I am feeling better, my levels of glucose and cholesterol decreased, and I stopped to take medicines for diabetes just taking care of my feeding and doing exercises (Female, 59 years-old, ATI Tanque).

Relation between disease control and searching for ATIS in order to improve the quality of life through working out was strongly highlighted during the interviews, as follow:

My principal objective is to improve my health and take care of my disease, neuropathy. I've got for 10 years and a half. I had no more life. But I'm getting better. I'm feeling stronger. Before I could not walk, but now I can, I'm feeling lighter (Male, 59 years-old, ATI dos Motoristas).

The matter of health and disease improvement are directed linked to the social relations which the subjects can develop during their physical activities and the construction of friendships in the gym area, that is, have responsibility on himself/herself and on the group. In general, all the interviewers related the improvement of their body performance with welfare through the establishment of new friendships, attitudes, dressing and self-satisfaction for a good quality of life. Those social groups are established as areas of learning, meeting, identity construction, knowledge, information and complicity in the imaginary of the elderly.

When asked if mental and physical aspects have got better with activities in ATI, all interviewers agreed positively, as follow: "Physical exercises are really good. Just the fact you know where you go, you get up early and you know where you need to go. And the more I can stay here, the better for me."(Male, 62 years-old, ATI Motoristas).

That affirmation "having where to go" make possible to people who work out in ATIs the identification with the area, with the social group which constructs knowledge and reference and participation notions. According to Ferrara (2007, p. 46) when he approaches the process of public area appropriation by the community:

It is inverted the role of the Square by the changing of the receptor's register: the user is replaced by the crowd, who use it as point where they can fix themselves, where people are constructed and justified as a crowd; the user pass by the Square, the crowd is on the Square, and, moreover, the Square does the crowd while is a physical area of concentration; a kind of topographic justification from the inversion of its functional meaning (IDEM, 2007, p. 46).

Another report on better physical and mental aspects comes together with the improvement of body health, but indicates the importance of an area as a place of population's appropriation for their project of life, that is, the notion of ATI directed for a new sense, the "becoming" of the body-in-moving:

I've perceived that, after intensifying my physical activity here in ATI, my problems with Parkinson disease really decreased. I feel really good here. When I can not come to work out, I miss it. I'd like to do it everyday, never stopping even for one day (Male, 58 years-old, ATI Motoristas).

Notwithstanding, that interviewer emphasized the decreasing of his problem in relation to his disease, in that he recognized that ATI makes him "feeling better" in that place. When asked how is his performance at the gym, he answered: "I feel really good. I have new friends now. All of them are very gentle. One stimulates another. One collaborates with another. It's fantastic. In conclusion, it's a family" (Idem). The identification by the relationships among the elderly does ATI a place where identity construction, respect, group union in symbolic aspects are visible and constant.

Identities (SERRES, 1993; VANZUITA, 2007) we found in ATIs, between the single one and the group, imbricate in the hybrid place that turns it, because "how is slippery, the hybrid place exposes who passes by it. But anything passes by without that slip. Anybody never modified himself/herself, not even anything in the world, without surpassing of a fall" (SERRES, 1993, p. 19). People identify theirselves with that place, because ATIs are constructed by their learning, by the conservation of social relationships, and, at the same time, by their pleasure and difficulty in incorporating new habits and, sometimes, surpass or live better with their diseases and pain, in that the imaginary of transformation through moving is the possibility of advance, reconstructing new actions and experiences in order to have a better quality of life.

In this context, when we asked about the aspects which improved their lives, we had several answers. Factors are: inclination for developing diary activities, make friends, memory improvement, physical and emotional aspects, sexual desire, family relation, disease prevention, disease control (as Parkinson, fibromyalgia, neuropathy, stress control, and mood and self-esteem improvement.

The diversity on the aspects that made better people's life in ATIs by relations established with those places and with the practice of regular physical activities are in agreement with the literature (RECHIA, 2007; FERRARA, 2007).

On the perspective about how they feel working out ATIs, in general, the interviewers related they feel really good in ATIs, because there they can make new friends, can talk about life, change ideas, tell jokes and interact with the teachers. For example:

I feel great here. I like everybody, and I talk to everybody here. Stay here is a healing for me, the healing of my spirit, the healing of my stress, the healing of everything, the healing of my mind. At home I feel completely upset (Female, 70 years-old, ATI Coral).

This way, the subject and the place develop aspects of knowledge production; it turns into a place of reference and passage, conserves the image of welfare and health through physical activity, and produces in the imaginary (LEZAMA LIMA, 1988) of that group a body-in-moving culture (TAFFAREL et al. 2003).

CONCLUSION

The construction of imaginary "becoming" of elderly who work out in ATIs symbolizes to form a new body-in-moving awareness, that, according to Serres (2004, p. 68), "[…] It is not possible to know anybody or anything before the body had got a shape, appearance, movement, *habitus*, before he/she/it start to act", that is, a place where relations are established by the movement, between movement and place, constructing identities through learning and teaching, at the same time, in this "changing ideas" (Female, 48 years-old, ATI Tanque).

Identities constructed through the contact with another one and place converge for the convention of thinking, thins, movements, constructions and reconstructions of the self and the imaginary that change through the history. Those identities constructed by the movement are changing the place of ATIs for the formation of a new hybrid identity which is modified and remained on people's identities who are fighting for their lives.

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PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE: THE IMAGINARY "BECOMING" OF PEOPLE WHO USE TO EXERCISE IN OUTDOOR GYMS FOR SENIOR CITIZENS IN LAGES/SC

ABSTRACT

This paper has as objective to discuss the imaginary matter of people who use to work out in outdoor Gyms for Senior Citizens ATIs, in order to approach the "becoming" perspective for a behavior changing through physical activities and relations which are established in that social field. Interviews with those subjects have submitted to the construction of the image of their bodies in which both, subject and body, are modified and, this way, other perspectives are opened. Knowledge reconstruction in relation to body which is moving can be changed while the "becoming" of that imaginary is configured in a new initiative of people from ATIs. **KEY-WORDS**: Gym for Senior Citizens; imaginary; body.

PASSÉ, CADEAU ET AVENIR: LE DEVENIR DE L'IMAGINAIRE DES ADEPTES DES ACADÉMIE D'GYMNASTIQUE DU PERSONNE âGéE DANS LAGES/SC

RESUMÉ

Ce travail objectif discuter la question de l'imaginaire des adeptes des Académies D'Gymnastique du Personne Âgée - ATIs dans le but d'approcher à perspective le devenir pour le changement de comportement à travers les exercices physiques et des relations qui s'établissent à l'intérieur de cet espace social. Les paroles de freqüentadores envoient pour la construction d'un imaginaire de leur corps dans lequel se modifient les deux ils, cherchent autres perspectives. La reconstruction de la connaissance concernant le corps qui se meut se transforme au fur et à mesure que le devenir de cet imaginaire se configure dans une nouvelle action des utilisateurs de l'ATIs.

MOTS-CLEFS: Académies D'Gymnastique du Personne Âgée; imaginaire; corps.

PASADO, REGALO Y FUTURO: EL DEVIR DE LO IMAGINARIO DE LOS ADEPTOS DE LAS ACADEMIAS DE GIMNASIA DE LA TERCERA EDAD EN LAGES/SC

RESUMEN

Este trabajo objetiva discutir la cuestión de lo imaginario de los adeptos de las Academias de Gimnasia de la Tercera Edad - ATIs en la dirección para acercar la perspectiva del devir para el cambio del comportamiento con los ejercicios físicos y de las relaciones que si establezca el interior de esto espacio social. La habla de los freqüentadores envían para la construcción de lo imaginario de su cuerpo en el cual se modifiquen ambos, ellos buscan otras perspectivas. La reconstrucción de lo conocimiento en lo referente al cuerpo que si lo pone en movimiento changeds la medida que en el futuro de éste imaginario está configurado en una nueva acción de los usuarios del ATIs.

PALABRAS-CLAVE: Academias de Gimnasia de la Tercera Edad; imaginario; cuerpo.

PASSADO, PRESENTE E FUTURO: O DEVIR DO IMAGINÁRIO DOS ADEPTOS DAS ACADEMIAS DA TERCEIRA IDADE EM LAGES/SC

RESUMO

Este trabalho objetiva discutir a questão do imaginário dos adeptos das Academias da Terceira Idade - ATIs no sentido de aproximar a perspectiva do devir para a mudança de comportamento através dos exercícios físicos e das relações que se estabelecem dentro deste espaço social. As falas dos freqüentadores remetem para a construção de um imaginário do seu corpo no qual modificam-se ambos, buscam outras perspectivas. A reconstrução do conhecimento em relação ao corpo que se movimenta transforma-se à medida que o devir deste imaginário configura-se numa nova ação dos usuários das ATIs.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: Academias da Terceira Idade; imaginário; corpo.