

Brasilvision as a pedagogy of fantasy and symbolic displacement in Fashion Design education

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1 Introduction

In recent decades, Fashion Design education has been increasingly challenged to move beyond purely technical and product-oriented approaches, incorporating symbolic, cultural, and critical dimensions into the learning process. Fashion, understood as a visual language and a system of signification, requires pedagogical practices that integrate creation, research, and social reflection. Within this context, it becomes relevant to investigate methodologies capable of articulating aesthetic experimentation, conceptual development, and project-based learning, promoting formative experiences that transcend the mere reproduction of trends or technical skills.

At the same time, contemporary educational debates have emphasized the importance of imagination, play, and creativity as central elements of critical thinking and meaningful learning. In dialogue with Rodari (2001), imagination is not understood as an escape from reality, but as a way of reorganizing it symbolically. The pedagogy of imagination proposes that the encounter between distant elements, through chance, deviation, and recombination, activates cognitive and inventive processes capable of expanding one's perception of the world and its possibilities.

Within the field of performance and visual culture, costumes emerge as a privileged medium for such symbolic reorganization. As highlighted by Shukla (2016), Barbieri (2017), and Pan and Alizadeh (2024), costume functions as a narrative and semiotic system that communicates identity, belonging, and social positioning beyond verbal language. Thus, the articulation between conceptual fashion and performative costume design constitutes a fertile ground for pedagogical practices that integrate narrative, materiality, and aesthetic experimentation.

In this scenario, symbolic displacement is presented as a creative method capable of mediating processes of cultural translation and intersemiotic transposition. By converting territories, memories, and musical references into visual and performative language, a productive distance is created that enables critical and inventive reinterpretations of reality. The transposition between symbolic systems—from territory to stage or from music to

costume—mobilizes not only technical competencies but also structured imagination within the educational process.

Therefore, this study aims to analyze the pedagogical project *Brasilvision* as a pedagogy of imagination and symbolic displacement in Fashion Design education, demonstrating how the articulation between territory, music, and costume constitutes a formative exercise of applied imagination and symbolic transposition.

2 Development

The study is characterized as applied, qualitative, and exploratory research (Gil, 2008), centered on the analysis of a pedagogical practice developed in the undergraduate Fashion Design program at the State University of Minas Gerais. The project, titled *Brasilvision*, was carried out over one academic semester and integrated into two disciplines: Product Development II and Costume Design Laboratory.

Inspired by the structure of the Eurovision Song Contest (Yair, 2019), the activity proposed the random assignment of Brazilian states to student groups. Each group was responsible for selecting a representative musical artist and developing a conceptual costume and stage model based on a chosen song. This structure established a creative tension between territory, music, and performance, activating what Rodari (2001) conceptualizes as the “fantastic binomial,” understood as the forced relationship between heterogeneous elements that generates narrative and symbolic invention.

The use of randomness as a methodological device played a central role in the process. Rather than functioning merely as an organizational strategy, the random selection of states operated as a creative trigger, displacing students from their aesthetic comfort zones and compelling them to engage with unfamiliar cultural contexts. This dynamic aligns with Rodari’s (2001) notion that creativity emerges from the collision of distant elements, transforming estrangement into a productive condition for imagination.

The creative process was structured in iterative stages, including conceptual research, narrative development, material experimentation, and final presentation. Students produced visual panels, sketchbooks, costumes, and stage models, which were analyzed as part of the research corpus. The process was not linear; instead, it involved cycles of experimentation, reformulation, and validation, reflecting the exploratory nature of conceptual fashion design (Au; Au, 2018a; 2018b; Morley, 2013).

From an analytical perspective, the projects were examined through three main axes derived from the theoretical framework: imagination and play, costume as a narrative and symbolic language, and symbolic displacement as a creative method. These axes were operationalized into analytical categories, including the type of territorial reference mobilized, the strategies of intersemiotic translation employed (literal, metaphorical, or abstract), the level of integration between costume and scenography, and the presence of symbolic recombination processes associated with the fantastic binomial.

The results demonstrate that the initial estrangement generated by randomness was progressively transformed into structured aesthetic investigation. Students engaged in research on cultural, historical, and musical aspects of the assigned territories, producing visual and conceptual materials that informed their design decisions. Visual panels and sketchbooks functioned as intermediate spaces of symbolic mediation, enabling the translation of abstract references into visual language.

The developed projects revealed different strategies of intersemiotic translation. Some proposals operated through more literal representations, directly referencing elements associated with the selected songs or territories. Others adopted metaphorical or abstract approaches, intensifying the process of symbolic displacement and transforming territorial references into imaginative constructs. This variation indicates different levels of complexity in the students' creative processes and highlights the role of symbolic recombination in design thinking.

The costumes and stage models demonstrated an understanding of costumes as a narrative system integrated with scenography. As discussed by Shukla (2016) and Pan and Alizadeh (2024), costume does not function

merely as decoration but as a visual discourse that structures perception and contributes to the construction of meaning. In the analyzed projects, elements such as color, texture, silhouette, and spatial composition operated as signifiers articulating identity, memory, and performance.

The evaluation of the projects was conducted by faculty members using structured criteria, including creativity and originality, conceptual coherence, aesthetic and narrative integration, and quality of presentation. This evaluative process reinforced the professional dimension of the activity, positioning the academic exercise within a framework of public presentation and critical assessment.

Overall, the findings indicate that the *Brasilvision* project successfully mobilized imagination, play, and symbolic displacement as structuring principles of the creative process. The interaction between territory, music, and performance generated a dynamic environment in which students developed both technical and conceptual competencies, engaging in cultural research, narrative construction, and material experimentation.

3 Conclusion

The analysis of the *Brasilvision* project demonstrates that imagination, play, and symbolic displacement can function as powerful pedagogical tools in Fashion Design education. By structuring the creative process around randomness and the recombination of heterogeneous elements, the project operationalizes Rodari's (2001) concept of the fantastic binomial as a cognitive and methodological framework for design practice.

The results show that the random assignment of territories did not produce fragmentation or confusion but instead fostered structured investigation and creative engagement. The initial estrangement was transformed into a driver of research and experimentation, leading to the development of coherent visual systems that integrated costume and scenography.

Furthermore, the study reinforces the understanding of costume as a narrative and semiotic system capable of articulating identity, memory, and cultural meaning. The projects analyzed demonstrate that when costume design is approached as a process of symbolic translation, it expands

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beyond representation to become a space of conceptual and aesthetic experimentation.

From an educational perspective, the *Brasilvision* project contributes to ongoing discussions about creative pedagogies in design. It highlights the potential of methodologies that combine structured imagination, cultural research, and project-based learning to promote critical and inventive thinking. By incorporating symbolic displacement as a methodological principle, the project enables students to navigate complex relationships between culture, representation, and materiality.

Finally, it is important to acknowledge the contextual limitations of the study, which was conducted within a specific institutional and temporal setting. Future research may expand this investigation through comparative studies, longitudinal applications, or analyses of student perceptions regarding the impact of such methodologies.

In conclusion, *Brasilvision* exemplifies how a pedagogy of imagination can be effectively implemented in Fashion Design education, demonstrating that the integration of play, symbolic displacement, and intersemiotic translation can foster meaningful, critical, and innovative learning experiences.

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