Games and pranks in literacy as teaching strategies

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ABSTRACT
The present work presents an academic research that investigated the use of games and games as didactic resources in literacy. The transition from the Early Years to Elementary School implies changes in teaching approaches, moving from playful experiences to a more structured curricular organization, considering that students continue to be children and, therefore, playing continues to be an important learning strategy. Games and games during the literacy process promote curiosity, fun, engagement and inclusion, stimulating cognitive and creative aspects of students. The methodology adopted in the research combined quantitative and qualitative approaches, in order to examine the application of games and games as teaching strategies, as well as the teachers' perception of this practice, the resources used and the skills developed. Thus, the results of a questionnaire carried out with teachers on the theme and the observation of a teaching practice were presented. The research participants were teachers who work in 1st and 2nd grade classes of Elementary School, specifically in literacy classes. The theoretical foundation was supported by authors such as: Valls (2021), Soares, (2022), Kishimoto (2009), Macedo (1995), Benjamin (2009) and Vygotsky (1998), in addition to mandatory documents such as the BNCC (2018) and the National Commitment to Literate Children (2023). The research and data analysis showed that games and games are efficient strategies that help in the literacy process, contributing to several areas of child development.

Keywords: Games and Play, Literacy, Early Years, Creativity, Strategies.

1 INTRODUCTION

According to the National Common Curriculum Base (BNCC, 2018), when students enter Elementary School, they experience a transition from a curriculum structured by fields of experiences of Early Childhood Education, where interactions, games and games guide the learning and development process, to a curricular organization structured by areas of knowledge and curricular components.

This transition, marked by the different literate practices experienced by the student, in their social life and in Early Childhood Education, "[...] such as singing songs and reciting legends and comic strips, listening to and retelling tales, following rules of games and recipes, playing games, reporting experiences and experiments, will be progressively intensified and complexified [...]" (Brasil, 2018, p. 89) in the Early Years during the literacy process.

Even during the transition from Early Childhood Education to Early Years, it is crucial to recognize that they are still children and therefore the importance of play as a fundamental part of their learning process cannot be underestimated.

Playful activities, represented by games, provide curiosity, fun, motivation, engagement, learning and promote inclusion, interaction and socialization. By using these playful strategies in children's daily lives, students' interests can be explored as a valuable tool to stimulate cognitive and creative skills.

For Tizuko M. Kishimoto, a pedagogue with experience in teacher training, a researcher linked to the game and the integrated contexts of early childhood education focused on the praxis of playing, "The use of the toy/educational game for pedagogical purposes leads us to the relevance of this instrument for teaching-learning and development situations [...]" (Kishimoto, 2017, p. 25). The author argues that if children learn intuitively, through spontaneous actions and interactive processes, play assumes a role of great relevance and emphasizes that when these experiences are intentionally created in order to enhance a learning situation, the construction of knowledge is maximized.

This student-centered, experience-based approach is critical to the all-round development of children at this stage. Acknowledging and valuing students' prior experiences and knowledge is essential for creating a strong foundation for learning. This also helps to make teaching more relevant and meaningful to them, this approach also has the potential to stimulate students' interest in learning.

As stated by Fuckner and Cruz: "[...] the school exists so that the student has learning experiences and so that these result in knowledge [...] the child's universe is playful, because he learns better what has immediate meaning" (Fuckner; Cruz, 2019, p. 406).

In this scenario, both the school and the teacher have the responsibility to promote welcoming actions and teaching strategies that respect the cultural diversity, difficulties and possible disabilities of each student. The goal is to promote individual development while encouraging group work. In this way, students learn not only the academic content, but also understand the limits, rules, and characteristics of their peers.

The main objective of the research is to investigate how games are being used in the Early Years as a teaching strategy for literacy.

1.1 CREATIVITY AND PLAYFULNESS

Creativity is a valuable skill for teachers, especially in an ever-evolving learning environment. "Introducing some habits into the routine and rethinking lesson planning are actions that help enhance creativity, in addition to stimulating innovative thinking in the class" (Calixto, 2023, n.p.).

The document of the National Common Curriculum Base (BNCC), which determines the fundamental knowledge for all students during their Basic Education, also emphasizes the relevance of creativity. This is evidenced in the description of the second general competency as follows:

> Exercise intellectual curiosity and use the approach of the sciences, including research, reflection, critical analysis, imagination and creativity, to investigate causes, develop and test hypotheses, formulate and solve problems and create solutions (including technological) based on knowledge from different areas (Brasil, 2018, p. 9).

This recognition highlights the need to cultivate creativity as an integral part of educational development, preparing students to face challenges in an innovative and constructive manner.

In his article on Nova Escola's website, Calixto (2023) highlights the need to expand the repertoire through observation and curiosity, providing opportunities for new experiences, while encouraging experimenting with different ways of doing the same things, starting with small modifications, accepting to take risks, and managing uncertainties. Finally, the author suggests that creativity is favored by moments of lightness and relaxation, so she challenges you to play and have fun during the process.

In addition, for Calixto (2023), it is important to understand that creativity is not a gift, but rather a skill that can be developed and improved by stimulating the brain to think of multiple options and generate innovative alternatives, strengthening mental flexibility. By following these strategies, teachers can stimulate creativity in themselves and, consequently, in their students, demanding from the student more than their brain is willing to spontaneously deliver, challenging known neural patterns and pathways.

In his book, Valls (2021), points out that creativity plays a fundamental role in building society and in the ability to deal with the challenges of today's world. The author argues that school plays a crucial role in promoting creativity, being a primary environment for nurturing creative thinking, which, in turn, contributes to a more diverse, empathetic, sustainable, and inclusive society.

Valls (2021, p.23) also discusses how schools and educators can foster student creativity by focusing on meaningful learning, preparing students not only cognitively but also emotionally, valuing the uniqueness of each student, and promoting the well-being of all involved.

The author believes that creativity plays a key role in transforming the world and emphasizes the need to prepare students not only for success in school but also for success in the ever-evolving world.

"Despite the criticism of the current educational model, the school maintains its essential role in education. The school exists so that the student has learning experiences and so that these result in knowledge" (Fuckner; Cruz, 2019, p. 406). The idea that these meaningful learning experiences should

result in knowledge is key, since the ultimate goal of education is to empower students with the necessary tools and resources that prepare them for life and future challenges.

The authors cite the idea of "a series of meaningful choices" (Fuckner; Cruz, 2019, p. 406) proposed by game designer Sid Meier, which can be applied not only to games, but also to professional choices. The importance of making students' choices meaningful to the educational context is emphasized, particularly with regard to children's learning, which benefits from a playful environment. It is possible to make learning fun by using elements of games, such as emotions that can be applied to promote school activities that are more aligned with digital culture and thus improve the learning experience.

Creativity is a valuable skill in today's world, where complex problem-solving and innovation play an essential role. Games and play encourage creativity as they challenge students to find creative solutions to win, imagine scenarios, and explore new approaches. Teachers play a crucial role in promoting creativity by integrating educational games and playful activities into the curriculum, creating an educational environment conducive to it.

Games and games are related to playfulness because they are educational and help in student learning, as well as in social interaction. It is through interaction that children develop their confidence and autonomy.

Playful, according to Menezes (2001, n.p.), in the Interactive Dictionary of Brazilian Education, is "[...] of that which stimulates through fantasy, amusement or play." It is a concept widely used in education, which defends playfulness through games and games mediated by the teacher and influences the child's development and stimulates action, curiosity, initiative, self-confidence and provides the development of language, thinking and concentration.

By adopting engaging strategies, such as implementing games and play, educators create an environment where error is encouraged and seen as a learning opportunity, which is vital for the development of creativity. This challenges students to think unconventionally, to come up with innovative solutions, and to explore different approaches to solving problems creatively, preparing them to meet real-world challenges, since creativity is a valuable skill at all stages of life.

Both teachers and educational institutions have a responsibility to integrate these elements effectively into the teaching-learning process by incorporating games, creative activities, and classroom projects. These strategies can be tailored to meet the individual needs of students in order to cater to different learning styles and skill levels. This promotes personalized learning and helps students progress at their own pace.

Many games and frolics involve social interaction, collaboration, and communication. This helps students develop interpersonal skills such as teamwork, conflict resolution, and empathy and

encourages students to explore, experiment, and question, creating a learning environment that prepares students to meet the challenges of modern society.

Literacy is an essential stage that should be highly valued in this process of school education, so that the student has possibilities to stimulate his body, his skills and knowledge. In view of this, the BNCC stimulates and values playful learning situations, pointing to the necessary articulation with the experiences lived in Early Childhood Education, so that they acquire new ways of relating to the world in an active attitude in the construction of knowledge. "In this period of life, children are experiencing important changes in their development process that have repercussions on their relationships with themselves, with others, and with the world" (Brasil, 2018, p. 58). Therefore, it is important to have a work that is organized around the interests expressed by the children and, from there, progressively expand their experiences and understandings of the world with more complex activities that arouse interest, participation and consequently learning.

According to the National Common Curriculum Base:

> The characteristics of this age group demand a work in the school environment that is organized around the interests manifested by the children, their most immediate experiences so that, based on these experiences, they can progressively expand this understanding, which occurs through the mobilization of increasingly complex cognitive operations and the sensitivity to apprehend the world. express oneself on it and act on it (Brasil, 2018, p. 58).

The development of these practical skills, facilitate theoretical knowledge and develop essential practical skills such as effective communication, critical observation and logical reasoning. The school, in turn, should support and empower educators in this approach by providing necessary resources and training. In addition, the school can create suitable spaces for games and play, providing social interaction and creativity.

1.2 LITERACY ISSUES

Literacy and literacy are learning processes in which the comprehension and production of written texts take place, which is essential for communication and social participation. The two skills are essential and complement each other. For Magda Soares, these processes are individual, distinct, simultaneous, and interdependent, so that literacy does not precede and is not a prerequisite for literacy, the child learns to read and write by engaging in literacy practices (Soares, 2022, p.27).

Literacy, according to the National Literacy Policy (PNA),[1] is the "teaching of reading and writing skills in an alphabetic system, so that the literacy student becomes able to read and write words and texts with autonomy and comprehension" (Brasil, 2019, p.1) and the National Commitment to Literate Children recognizes that "literacy is a human right" (Brasil, 2023, p.17).

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[1] The National Literacy Policy (Decree No. 9,765/2019) was repealed by Decree No. 11,556, of 2023, which institutes the National Literate Child Commitment.

The National Commitment to Literate Children (2023) also highlights the premise of recognizing "affectivity and playfulness as central aspects of pedagogical practices with children and of the teacher's intentional attention" (Brasil, 2023, p.18). This vision reflects an understanding of the importance of play and interactions as essential pillars in a curriculum that values childhood, the student, and learning. In this way, the training of educators should promote an expansion of the teacher's awareness about the interconnection between emotions, thoughts, actions and movements, highlighting how the proposals of learning situations find in play a solid basis for the creation of deeper meanings and understandings.

The student has a learning process that begins in childhood, but this learning becomes organized and systematized when he begins to attend school. It is important to emphasize that literacy and literacy are not processes completed after elementary school, they are continuous and are present throughout a person's life.

Soares brings the concept of literacy as a "Process of appropriation of 'writing technology', that is, of the set of techniques - procedures, skills - necessary for the practice of reading and writing [...]" and literacy is the "ability to use writing to insert oneself in the social and personal practices that involve the written language [...]" (Soares, 2022, p. 27). Both are important processes for cultural formation and the acquisition of knowledge and skills that are essential for social and professional participation.

Still on literacy, through it the student will develop reading and writing, developing their communication and expression, their ability to reason logically through play where the student learns and develops their own way of communicating with the world. This experience is amplified when combined with other competencies.

The beginning of the Basic Education stage is a period that requires greater attention in relation to the integration and continuity of the learning processes of children who attended Early Childhood Education, so that the teacher mediates and creates strategies for welcoming and adapting to students and identifying what the child is already capable of doing. According to the National Common Curriculum Base (Brasil, 2018, p. 59):

> In the first two years of elementary school, pedagogical action should focus on literacy, in order to ensure ample opportunities for students to appropriate the alphabetic writing system in an articulated way with the development of other reading and writing skills and their involvement in diversified literacy practices.

For the Early Years teacher, the challenge is to carry out planned, updated, contextualized and attractive activities for students, so a diagnosis to identify the students' writing hypotheses, carried out at the beginning and during the year, is essential to evaluate and investigate effective pedagogical

practices to meet the needs of students, this will allow the student to consolidate previous learning and expand their new knowledge.

Today we find a very dynamic scenario in school, in which children have easy access to technologies from an early age, so that access to information and knowledge is essential for the child to understand the current world, composed of knowledge networks and new forms of technologies, so "[...] it is important to value and problematize the individual and family experiences brought by students, through play, exchanges, listening and sensitive speech, in the various educational environments" (Brasil, 2018, p. 355).

According to the National Curriculum Guidelines for Basic Education (DCNEs), literacy should occur in the first years of elementary school. The document highlights that some children become literate after only a few months, while others require two to three years to consolidate their basic reading and writing skills (Brasil, 2013, p.123). This variation is related to several factors, including "[...] living in environments where the social uses of reading and writing are intense or scarce [...]" (Brasil, 2013, p.121), whether in the family or in other contexts. For this reason, when planning the work, it is important not to take languages in isolation or discipline, but rather contextualized, in the service of significant learning (Brasil, 2013, p.96).

In this sense, literacy should be understood as a process of progressive development, in which the subject appropriates reading and writing, becoming capable of using them autonomously and critically. This action requires a pedagogical approach that considers the reality of the learners and respects their cognitive, cultural and linguistic possibilities. These methodologies should be focused on reading, writing and literacy, with a view to forming critical and autonomous citizens capable of understanding and transforming the social and cultural reality in which they live.

For Frade (2005, p. 48)

> [...] Even if some strategies are subject to criticism, there are teaching procedures that are the result of pedagogical knowledge, produced within school practices. This knowledge is constructed because it is necessary to transform certain knowledges into teachable knowledge. In literacy, this implies everything from practices to encourage reading to the production of exercises, games, materials and content organization.

In this way, literacy is understood as a fundamental stage for the integral development of students, favoring the critical and broad formation of the subjects.

Thus, it is necessary for schools, educators and managers to adopt an inclusive posture that respects diversity and values meaningful learning to leverage the full development of students.

1.3 GAMES & GAMES

Games and games can be excellent allies in the literacy process, as they provide a playful and relaxed environment that facilitates learning, stimulates creativity and helps in the development of children's cognitive and motor skills.

By playing and playing, children learn to interact socially, develop imagination, memory, attention, concentration, as well as work on psychomotor skills and logical reasoning. When these games and games are used appropriately, they can be powerful tools for the formation of competent readers and writers.

According to Benjamin (2009), one of the great benefits of using games in the literacy process is the fact that children learn in a playful and practical way, without realizing that they are studying. As a result, students' motivation and interest in studying increase significantly, facilitating the development of important skills for students' academic and personal success.

In the Early Years of Elementary School, play is sometimes disregarded as a teaching strategy and is restricted to Physical Education classes or the free moments that students have during the break. However, despite the fact that such moments are increasingly restricted in the Early Years, the official National General Curriculum Guidelines for Education highlight their importance:

> From the point of view of the approach, the importance of play in school life is reaffirmed, and its presence is not restricted only to Art and Physical Education. Today it is known that in the learning process the cognitive area is inseparably linked to the affective and the emotional (Brasil, 2013, p.116).

Games and games, through playful and fun learning, contribute to the function of stimulating children's protagonism, in addition to stimulating broader communication and interaction/socialization skills. The child gains a repertoire of feelings, experiences, and experiences that broaden his or her ideas and forms of expression.

The proposals involving games and games in which students have contact with letters, words, numbers and that they need to calculate, compare, are opportunities to develop cognitive and motor skills and enhance logical reasoning, as well as to assist in the resolution of problem situations. Experiencing and experiencing practical situations encourages, attracts, and stimulates more meaningful learning.

In the early years, "[...] it is important to value and problematize the individual and family experiences brought by students, through play, exchanges, listening and sensitive speech, in the various educational environments" (Brasil, 2018, p. 355).

Some considerations highlight the complexity in the definition of play. For Kishimoto (2017), the definition of game is not an easy task, as each game has its specificity and its meaning depends on each social context, "In this way, as a social fact, the game takes on the image, the meaning that each

society attributes to it" (Kishimoto, 2017, p.12), which varies according to the values and way of life of that society, as well as its structure, the system of rules and the material used.

On the other hand, Crepaldi (2010) points out that "[...] There is almost a consensus among scholars: the definition of what is a game and/or a game is made by those who play and/or play [...]" (Crepaldi, 2010, p.11).

For Kishimoto, play "is the action that the child performs when concretizing the rules of the game, when immersing himself in the playful action" (Kishimoto, 2017, p. 15). The relationship between these concepts is dynamic, varying according to the social and cultural context, while at the same time being influenced by individual or group experience, as pointed out by Kishimoto and Crepaldi.

Regarding the concept of toy, Kishimoto points out that, "Differing from the game, the toy supposes an intimate relationship with the child and an indeterminacy regarding use, that is, the absence of a system of rules that organize its use" (Kishimoto, 2017, p. 13). Crepaldi agrees, stating that in relation to the toy, "[...] its use is most commonly linked to an object, industrialized or not, but which supports the action of playing and/or playing" (Crepaldi, 2010, p.11). These perspectives highlight the intimate nature of the toy with the child and its function as a facilitator of playful activity, whether it is structured by rules or more free and spontaneous.

Kishimoto (2017) closes the discussion of these concepts as follows:

> And the joke? It is the action that the child performs when concretizing the rules of the game, when immersing himself in the playful action. You could say it's playfulness in action. In this way, toys and play are directly related to the child and are not confused with the game (Kishimoto, 2017, p.15).

The author establishes a direct relationship between play and toy, emphasizing that these elements are intimately connected with the child and the imagination, but are not to be confused with play.

This connection is linked to the child's active participation in the playful activity, allowing a more complete and detailed view of the various ways in which children engage in playful activities, whether through specific objects (toys), concrete action (play) or participation in structured activities, by following rules (game). The child plays while playing.

Some games will stimulate the imagination, others will have to respect the standardized rules, the mental representation of the object to be built, manual and cognitive skill, such as logical reasoning, flexibility, sociability, competition, the stimulation of pleasure and satisfaction and also uncertainty, defeat and loss.

According to Piaget, cited by Macedo (1995), the games, according to their typical form of assimilation, are structured into: Exercise Games, Symbolic Games and Rules Games. Exercise Games

involve functional repetition, forming habits that are essential for learning, as habits are considered to be "the main form of learning (...) and constitute the basis for future mental operations" (Macedo, 1995, p. 6).

Symbolic Games, on the other hand, are characterized by the assimilation of forms, where the child applies analogies to understand the world, attributing meanings to the contents of their actions. According to the author, "(...) this favors the child's integration into an increasingly complex social world" (Macedo, 1995, p. 7).

Finally, Rules Games have a democratic structure of social exchange and are collective, involving reciprocal actions and conventions of what is allowed or not in the context of the game. The author highlights the playful value of actions and the importance of conventions present in rule games. Competition is central to these games, they value the challenge of being better than themselves or their opponents, challenges that are essential for the construction of knowledge in school.

These concepts provide a foundation for understanding what a game is, its reasons, and purposes. In summary, exercise games establish the basis for "how" actions are performed, while symbolic games establish the basis for the "why" of these actions, helping the child to understand, attribute meaning and formulate theories about the world around him.

For the child (the student) the structural function of the school is abstract. "On the other hand, knowledge treated as a game can make sense to the child" (Macedo, 1995, p.10). To the extent that the school attributes meaning to pedagogical relations, through play, it attributes meaning and value to the school as a space for the construction of knowledge.

1.4 PLAYFUL CONTEXT IN LITERACY

Human beings learn from the moment they are born and live in the process of construction. These processes occur through experiences in sociocultural and family contexts. According to Soares, "[...] it is through the interaction between their development of cognitive and linguistic processes and the learning provided in a systematic and explicit way in the school context that the child progressively understands alphabetic writing [...]" (Soares, 2022, p. 51).

Writing is a human exercise, which requires physical preparation, sensitivity, discipline. "[...] We must not forget that writing, in its origin, was associated with play, with playful drawing" (Claver, 2005, p. 9). These skills can be acquired during play and individual or collective games. Writing and playing can go hand in hand.

Playing is a sensitive experience, when we look closely at a group of children or students, we will see that they are all the time playing, inventing games or toys. It is up to us teachers to value these creative gestures and provide conditions to expand them, whether by making materials available,

sharing knowledge or enabling the various playful elements to come together to stimulate learning. To use games as a strategy is to consider the educational cultural potential of play.

As described by Tereza Cristina Rego, toys and imagination are instruments that children use to interact with the world, seeking to represent the actions observed in adults as a reality that may be beyond their reach.

According to Vygotsky (1998), play and play are activities that allow children to develop their mental capacities in a playful and pleasurable way. This is because, during play, the child is able to imagine situations and objects that do not exist in the real world, which contributes to the construction of new knowledge and skills.

As far as play and games are concerned, Vygotsky addresses the following:

> During play all aspects of the child's life become themes of play at school, both the content of what is being taught and the role of the specially trained adult who teaches are carefully planned and more precisely analyzed (Vygotsky, 1998, p. 173).

The author highlights the social importance of play and play. For him, playful activities allow children to develop their social interaction skills, as well as learn about the rules and norms that govern life in society. Vygotsky (1998) believed that play plays a central role in the development of imagination and in the formation of skills that prepare children for school learning.

Thus, games are important for Vygotsky (1998) because they allow the child to develop both cognitive and social skills in a playful and pleasurable way. The author mentions that cognitive and social development are interrelated, and that it is important for the child to develop both skills for a healthy and complete development.

Rego (2000) also mentions that Vygotsky's contributions emphasize that in the school context, games should be valued for having an important pedagogical function and mentions the importance of the educator's role as a mediating agent in the use of time, space, materials and "the interactions between students and children with objects of knowledge" (Rego, 2000, p.115).

According to Penteado (2017), among the essential competencies of a teacher, the ability to develop a "teacher-student relationship conducive to the teaching-learning process" stands out (Penteado, 2017, p. 106). In this process, according to the author, the teacher acts as a mediator, playing the role of facilitator. This means that the teacher is not just a transmitter of information, but someone who facilitates students' access, understanding, and application of knowledge. The teacher-student relationship is, therefore, built around the teacher's mediation, which seeks to make learning more effective and meaningful for students, encouraging their active participation in this process.

Penteado also proposes the use of games both in teacher training courses and in continuing education programs, emphasizing the characteristics of the game as a way to provide more enriching educational encounters. "From this perspective, play ceases to be a 'child's thing' and becomes a

'serious thing', worthy of being present among didactic resources capable of composing a teaching action committed to the goals of the teaching-learning process that is intended to be achieved." (Penteado, 2017, p.107)

In this context, it is up to educators to value children's creative gestures, stimulate learning through playful approaches, and recognize the cultural educational potential of play. It is essential to understand that play is used by the child to interact with the world.

The teacher's role as a mediating and facilitating agent becomes indispensable, as it provides an environment in which games are transformed into educational opportunities. These activities not only stimulate the development of cognitive skills, but also promote socialization in a playful and pleasurable way.

In short, Penteado's (2017) considerations highlight the change in perspective on play, which is no longer associated only with childhood to become a serious and significant didactic resource. The proposal to incorporate games in teacher training and continuing education programs also emerges as a strategy to enrich the teacher-student relationship, enabling more meaningful educational encounters aligned with the objectives of the educational process. Thus, by adopting this more comprehensive and dynamic vision, the teacher positions himself not only as a transmitter of knowledge, but as an agent that promotes student engagement and participation.

2 METHODOLOGICAL PATHS

The methodology adopted combined quantitative and qualitative approaches, in order to examine the application of games as teaching strategies, as well as the perception of teachers about this practice, the resources used and the skills developed. In this way, the results of a questionnaire directed to teachers and the observation of a teaching practice with games are presented. The methodology used by these teachers, the organization of the materials used, the layout of the physical space, the time of application, adaptations for the inclusion of activities and the response of the students were analyzed.

The technique used to collect data consisted of the use of a questionnaire that can be described as a series of carefully organized questions, "which are intended to collect written information from the subjects researched, with a view to knowing their opinion on the subjects under study" (Severino, 2013, p.109).

The questionnaire was created using the *Google Forms* platform and consisted of a set of twenty questions, six questions to create a profile of the participant and the remaining questions formed by ten open questions (discursive) and four closed questions (with multiple choice) with information about the research theme: Games and Play.

This questionnaire was distributed to teachers working in the Initial Years of Elementary School (1st and 2nd year) in two schools in the municipality of Palhoça, in the state of Santa Catarina, one public and the other private. They were previously invited to participate in the research, with the agreement of all of them. The questionnaire was later sent through the WhatsApp messaging application and was available for a period of ten days, resulting in a total of seven responses, however, one of the invited teachers did not respond to the survey.

The first six questions refer to the profile of the participants, in which the following were identified: age, gender, education, time of training, class in which they work and type of institution in which they work. The other questions (14) refer to the teachers' perspective in relation to the application of games and games as a didactic methodology for literacy purposes.

2.1 QUESTIONNAIRE ANALYSIS

2.1.1 Profile of two Teachers

Seven teachers participated in this research, who work in classes of 1st and 2nd year of Elementary School I, considering the content of the research involving the literacy process, being two teachers from a private school and five teachers from a public school. Professors will be identified with the acronym P at random, to safeguard the confidentiality and ethics of the research. They will be named by the initials P1, P2, P3, P4, P5, P6 and P7 respectively.

In this context, an analysis was carried out focused on the information related to the profile of the seven teachers who participated in the research, investigating their professional qualifications and trajectories in education. Regarding the profile, it was observed that six of them are female (85.7%), while one is male (14.3%). Regarding the age group, it was found that three of them (42.9%) are between 30 and 39 years old, two (28.6%) are between 40 and 49 years old, and two others (28.6%) are over 50 years old.
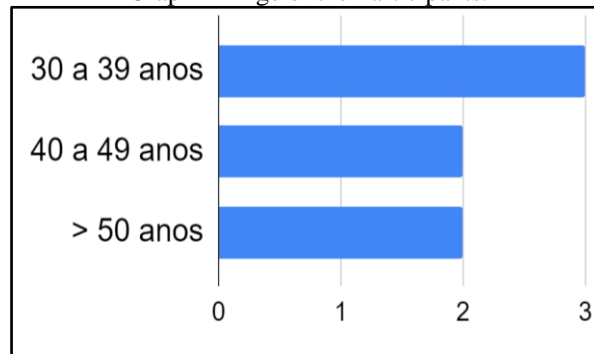
Graph 1 - Gender of the Participants.
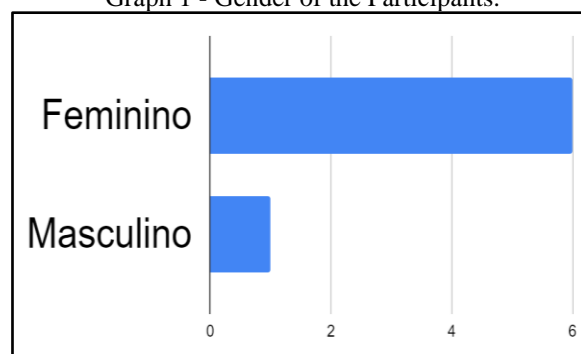
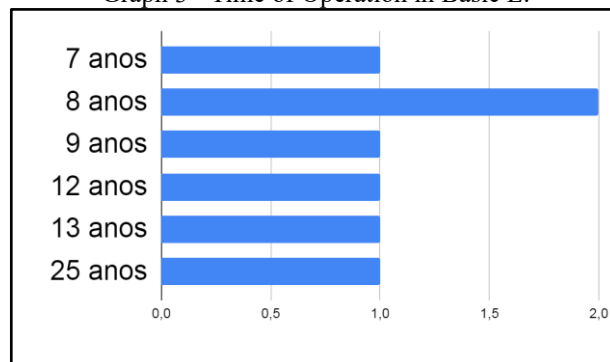Source: Prepared by the authors (2023)

Graph 2 - Age of the Participants.
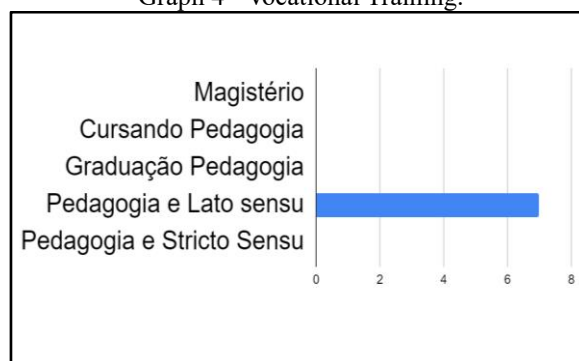

Source: Prepared by the authors (2023)

Regarding the professional training of teachers, it was observed that all participants (100%) have a degree in Pedagogy, as well as a Lato Sensu postgraduate degree. With regard to experience in Basic Education, the data show that teachers have heterogeneous experience time, as shown in the following graph:

Graph 3 - Time of Operation in Basic E.

Source: Prepared by the authors (2023)

Graph 4 - Vocational Training.

Source: Prepared by the authors (2023)

Regarding the classes in which they work, three teachers (42.9%) teach classes for the 1st year, while four (57.1%) work with classes for the 2nd year. Regarding the educational institution in which
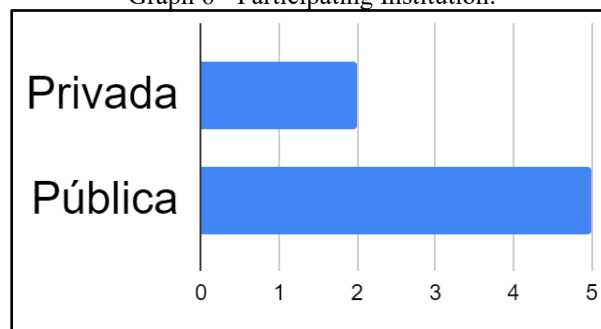
they perform their activities, the majority, five teachers (71.4%), work in public institutions, while two (28.6%) teach in private schools.

Graph 5 - Acting class.
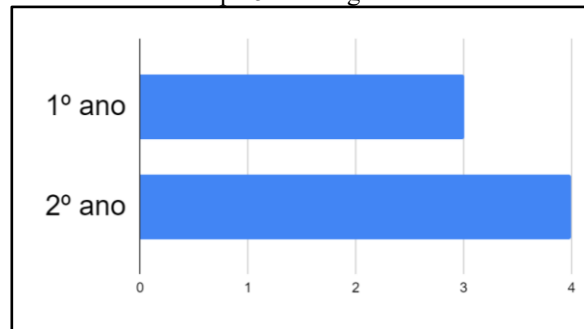
Source: Prepared by the authors (2023)

Graph 6 - Participating Institution.

Source: Prepared by the authors (2023)

Such information is relevant to understand the different perspectives and approaches that can influence the implementation of games in the classroom, such as age group and professional experience. Younger teachers can bring innovation and familiarity with technologies, while more experienced ones can offer wisdom and consolidated practices.

The fact that all participants have a degree in Pedagogy and a postgraduate degree (Lato Sensu) and experience in Basic Education, with a difference between 7 and 25 years of experience in Education, shows that teachers must have theoretical knowledge and significant pedagogical practice for the creative and intentional use of games and games in literacy and that they are prepared to adapt playful strategies to the specific context of the classroom. considering the class size, available resources, and the diversity of students.

The distinction between public and private institutions can affect the implementation of strategies, considering the infrastructure, available resources, and the specific context of each educational environment. This distinction will be mentioned in certain questions in the questionnaire.

2.1.2 Games and Games in the perception of teachers

In this second section of the questionnaire, the questions are focused on the objective of the research, starting from the teachers' conception of games, how these strategies are included in their planning, the resources used and how they perceive the application of games by students.

Next, the descriptive reports provided by the teachers will be examined:

Table 1 - Conception of play and play.

Participants	Question 1: In your conception, what is PLAY and what is GAME?
P1	The game is spontaneous using the imaginary, it can be individual or collective, the game has rules and usually a winner or a goal to be fulfilled.
P2	Games and games can be differentiated by the presence of rules. Games have a freer content, often without rules, students play freely, at will. The games, on the other hand, have specific rules.
P3	Play is something without a rule, and play is something that has a rule.
P4	Play is something free, while game is something with instructions and rules.
P5	Play is make-believe, and games involve activities that develop logical thinking
P6	The game is practices with rules. The game is no longer the same, it can be modified at the end, extended
P7	Playing for the child is something that elevates their imagination and fantasy. The game helps the child learn rules, challenges, creativity, in addition to stimulating knowledge and learning to compete, know how to lose and win.

Source: Prepared by the authors (2023)

All participants made a distinction between play and play based on the presence or absence of rules. The consensus is that games are perceived as freer, while games are related to rules. In this context, the conceptions presented by the teachers talk to the concepts presented by Kishimoto (2017) where play and play are distinct concepts, although both are related to the children's playful universe. Some participants mention the benefits of the game, such as developing logical reasoning, learning rules and social skills (such as knowing how to lose and win) and play is associated with imagination.

The second question becomes a complement to the previous question: Do you consider it important to use games and games for literacy purposes with your class? Why?

The seven answers of the participants reveal a positive and conscious view of the importance of the use of games as a literacy strategy, according to Frade (2005) who considers that practices to encourage reading, using games are valid as a literacy strategy. Among the teachers' answers, the following stand out: "... ends up instigating the student's interest in the content and providing interaction with the group..." (P1), "... stimulate creativity and concentration" (P2), "... children become more excited and learn easily" (P3).

These notes reflect that play makes the literacy process more pleasurable, as well as facilitating learning and contributing to emotional and social development. This approach is in line with what is determined by the National Common Curricular Base (BNCC):

> In addition, in order for children to successfully overcome the challenges of transition, it is essential to have a balance between the changes introduced, the continuity of learning and affective acceptance, so that the new stage is built on the basis of what the students know and are capable of doing, avoiding fragmentation and discontinuity of pedagogical work (Brasil, 2018, p. 53).

The following question: In your opinion, do children show interest in games? I had 3 choices: Yes, sometimes; Yes, a lot and no. The answers show interest. In this case, the answer was unanimous, that all students show a lot of interest in games. This understanding is important because the teacher's planning must be organized around the interests expressed by the children, as highlighted in the BNCC (Brasil, 2018, p. 58).

The next question: Have you participated in any specific continuing education on the theme of games? Four teachers answered that they received training on games, and only one reported that the training did not involve literacy; Three reported that they had never received specific training on games, as shown in the following graph:

Graph 7 - Specific training.
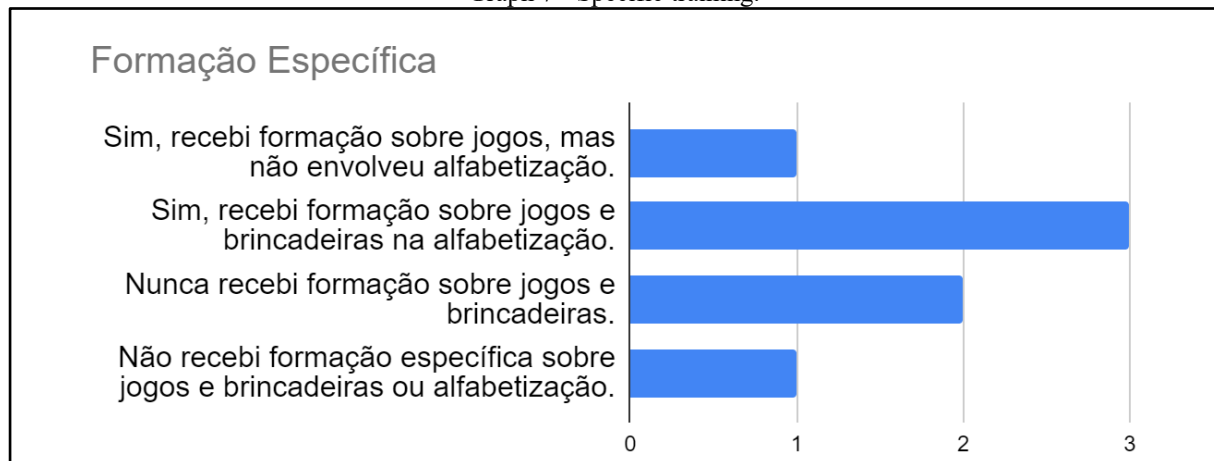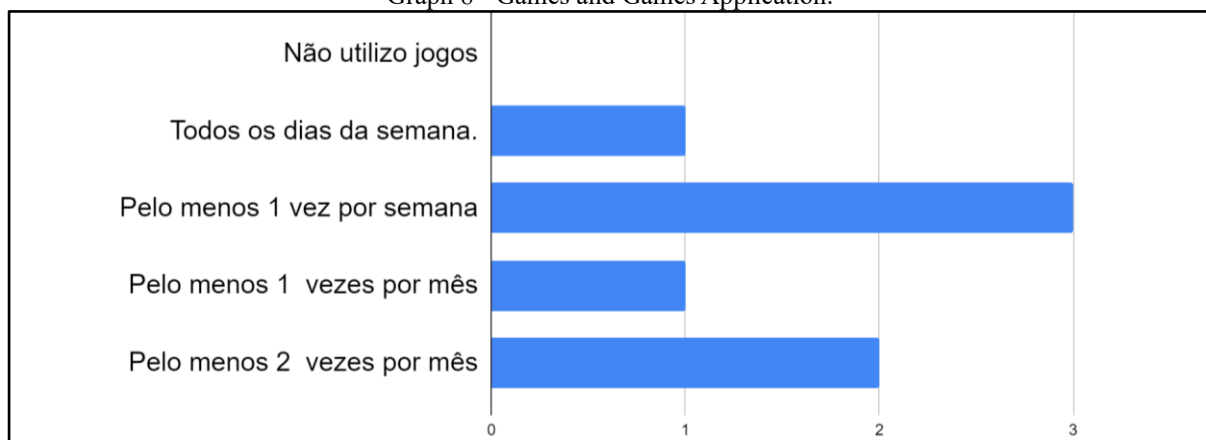

Source: Prepared by the authors (2023)

These responses reflect different levels of experience and knowledge of teachers in relation to the use of games and play in the context of literacy. It is interesting to note that one of the specific actions of the National Common Curriculum Base (BNCC) to meet its commitment to integral education is to "create and make available guidance materials for teachers, as well as to maintain permanent training processes that enable continuous improvement of teaching and learning processes" (Brasil, 2018, p. 17).

In addition, the National Literate Child Commitment (2023) consists of a set of guidelines for the formulation and implementation of continuing education strategies, in order to promote an expansion of the teacher's awareness of the interconnection between emotions, thoughts, actions, and movements, highlighting how the proposals of learning situations find in play a solid basis for the creation of deeper meanings and understandings.

And in the question: How often do you provide practices and/or pedagogical proposals related to games? It shows that teachers are aware of the importance of these playful activities, but as their practices vary in terms of regularity, it is believed that the frequency depends on the context of each classroom and also on the needs of each class.

Graph 8 - Games and Games Application.

Source: Prepared by the authors (2023)

Continuing the questionnaire, the following questions were asked: Do you consider the infrastructure (physical/material space) of the school adequate for the realization of games? They were asked to justify the yes or no alternatives. In addition, it was asked: Does your school have a collection of games that help in the literacy process? What?

The answers of the participants reveal different opinions in relation to the school infrastructure for the realization of games and games, in this item it is highlighted that the two teachers who work in a private school and one of the teachers who work in a public school (total of 42.9%) answered that they consider the infrastructure adequate for the application of games and games, the others (57.1%) do not consider the space adequate, justifying the lack of physical space and didactic material, which can impact outdoor activities that require a larger space for activity with a large group.

As for the collection with games that help in the literacy process, the same three teachers who claimed to have infrastructure, inform that the school has materials such as bingo, letters, letter puzzles, physical education games and the PNAIC (National Pact for Literacy at the Right Age) and the other teachers (four) informed that there is no material available. despite the fact that all public school teachers work in the same school. The mismatch of this information can be attributed to some

hypotheses such as: lack of internal communication among professionals, teachers may not be aware of the availability of these materials; materials may be given priority for a particular class due to specific needs; The materials may be or belong to the teacher's private collection or even incorrect interpretation of the question.

Complementing the previous questions, teachers were asked about the availability of materials that serve as games for students to explore without mediation. Two answers indicated the absence of materials in the room, while the others affirmed that they did. Among the positive responses, the following stand out: "A bookshelf with games. I spent a thousand reais to build it." (P4), "Strategy games." (P5), "Fantasies." (P6). I would especially like to highlight the answer from P1:

> We have the flash student's corner, in this place there is a word search, a reading sheet, a scrambled syllable sheet to form words, sentences with questions to practice interpreting what they are reading, as well as lego, a puzzle and a calculating machine.

Such initiatives demonstrate a personal interest of teachers in providing a playful and learning space, even if they have to bear personal investment, as in the case of P4. As mentioned by Fuckner; According to Cruz (2019), children's learning benefits from a playful environment, "the school exists for the student to have learning experiences and for these to result in knowledge" (Fuckner; Cruz, 2019, p.406).

These resources not only enrich the classroom environment but also stimulate students' reasoning and creativity, promote skills such as reading, interpretation, word construction, and problem-solving, encouraging student autonomy and exploration. As already mentioned, Soares states that it is through "learning provided in a systematic and explicit way in the school context that the child progressively understands alphabetic writing" (Soares, 2022, p. 51). In addition, playful activities, as highlighted by Vygotsky (1998), allow children to develop their social interaction skills, as well as learn about the rules and norms that govern life in society.

The teachers were asked if there were student(s) with disabilities or special educational needs in their classroom and, if so, how the games were adapted: "Yes, when I play games, I think of these students so that they feel included in the proposal, something that they can also accomplish, but not by creating something different" (P1), as well as "The student is encouraged to participate in free play with the other friends in the class" (P2) and also "Yes, we adapt it like any other activity so that they can participate with the class" (P6).

The teachers' answers reveal different approaches in relation to the inclusion of these students, the first consensus in the answers is that in all classes there is the presence of a student with disabilities and the second consensus is that the activities are adapted and that there is a collaboration between teachers (class teachers) and assistants and/or special education teachers, so that these students can actively participate in the proposals.

For Valls (2021), valuing the uniqueness of each student and the well-being of everyone involved is essential to promote student creativity and meaningful learning. In addition, Claver (2005) adds that the school is a place to discuss diversity and also to take care of the link between students, toys and games.

Therefore, taking care of this link is essential for creating an enriching and welcoming educational environment, not only limited to the diversity of abilities and characteristics of students, but ensuring that each student has equal access to learning opportunities while respecting their specific differences and needs.

Subsequently, the participants answered the following statement: "What games do you use or have you used as a literacy strategy?", following are the teachers' answers:

Table 2 - Games used in literacy.

P1	At the beginning of the year we worked with the book "The Monster of Colors" and we had a monster in the room where we said he was hungry, so sometimes we hid the letters around the room and they had to find the letters that the monster wanted to eat or we would make a line and put the letters in the basket and make the sound of the letter and they had to find and give it to the monster. Hunting for syllables around the school, forming words with classmates, each student is given a syllable and must form the words by teaming up with another classmate. Reading tag: each student is given a list that they must read and pick up the object.
P2	Jigsaw puzzle, reading roulette, word formation dominoes, among others.
P3	Bingo, reading can, reading sheet, visual dictation and others.
P4	Word pop it, bingo, syllable games.
P5	Memory games, hopscotch with addition and subtraction, various literacy games.
P6	Bingo, pass or repass, puzzle, dominoes, memory game, two hands, hopscotch, old games, plus one, syllable game, etc.
P7	Memory game, bingo, dominoes of letters and picture, etc.

Source: Prepared by the authors (2023)

Teachers' responses reflect a variety of creative and engaging strategies used to promote literacy through play. The proposals mentioned are playful, collaborative, and integrate different skills.

This diversity demonstrates the flexibility of teachers in adapting traditional games and creating specific activities, making the literacy process more dynamic and effective. According to Benjamin (2009), one of the great benefits of using games in the literacy process is the fact that children learn in a playful and practical way, without realizing that they are studying.

The following question: "Do children express feelings/difficulties/facilities while playing or playing?". All of them answered yes, for example: "Yes, mainly related to exchanges, sharing, lending, division" (P2); "Absolutely" (P6). Again, I bring to the discussion the National Common Curriculum Base that emphasizes the importance of play in the learning process and that in this context "[...] it is important to value and problematize the individual and family experiences brought by students,

through play, exchanges, listening and sensitive speech, in the various educational environments" (Brasil, 2018, p. 355).

During play, children have the opportunity to externalize their feelings, face challenges and develop essential skills for their integral growth. Therefore, during the game it is important to observe the students, not only in terms of learning, but also to exercise active listening, providing during and after the playful moment, a moment of listening and reflection that will collaborate with the affective and emotional dimension of the students.

And then: "How do you measure the situation in which the students do not accept the result of the game?", the teachers highlight the importance of conversation at this moment: "With a lot of talking" (P4); "Instructing that the goal is to have fun" (P1), "Explaining through a lot of chit-chat that they won't always be the champions" (P2), "Through conversation. Explaining that we must accept the results and that the important thing is to participate" (P7).

These approaches show how teachers use communication as a tool to promote understanding, emphasizing the playful aspect and promoting understanding of the object of the proposal and the importance of participation regardless of the outcome. Rego (2000) describes that in the school context, according to Vygotsky's contributions, games should be valued for having an important pedagogical function and mentions the importance of the educator's role as a mediating agent in the use of time, space, materials and "the interactions between students and children with objects of knowledge" (Rego, 2000, p.115).

Finally, the question is: "In addition to literacy, where else do you consider the application of games and games with pedagogical intentionality to be valid?". Teachers' responses highlight the wide applicability of games and play in the classroom:

Table 3 - Contribution of Games and Play.

In addition to literacy, where else do you consider the application of games and games with pedagogical intentionality to be valid?
P1 - "In all disciplines, the evolution of students is clear when they learn in a pleasurable way, generating meaningful learning".
P2 - "I believe that through games and games, students stimulate their creativity, thus making them learn in a more assertive way. Consequently, they leave aside quantity, productivity for time and QUALITY activities. (Attendee highlight) In view of this, I believe that such (Playful) activities can be inserted in the entire teaching-learning process, regardless of age."
P3 - "Considers it very valid in all pedagogical areas".
P4 – "In the whole field of the child's life".
P5 – "In all disciplines".
P6 – "In any curricular component".
P7 – "In the playground at recess, in physical education classes, etc..."

Source: Prepared by the authors (2023)

These answers emphasize that the application of games and games is not limited to literacy, but can be effective in all areas of the curriculum, as they provide an environment conducive to stimulating creativity and cognitive development, according to Calixto (2023).

Macedo (1995) describes some benefits in the use of games with intentionality, such as: the formation of habits acquired in games that involve repetition. The author considers that habits are considered as "the main form of learning (...) and constitute the basis for future mental operations" (Macedo, 1995, p. 6-7), in addition to contributing to social interaction, where the student understands the world through analogies.

The answers of the teachers who participated in the research reinforce the importance of games as a versatile and valuable tool in the educational process, where its application is not limited to literacy, but permeates several dimensions of learning, promoting the interest and participation of students.

2.2 OBSERVATION OF TEACHING PRACTICE

On October 23, an observation of a teaching practice was carried out with the application of games and games as a literacy strategy with the 1st year class of Elementary School I.

The proposal was made at the beginning of the class, and upon entering the room, one noticed a meticulous organization: the tables and chairs were grouped to accommodate 5 or 6 students, and the materials were arranged on the tables. The students, upon arriving, had the freedom to choose where to sit.

Figure 1 - Organization of the Proposal

Source: Authors' collection (2023)

From the beginning, there were curious eyes about the organization of the room, and anxiously questioned what would be proposed. The teacher and the classroom assistant greeted the students as they arrived, instructing them to sit down, avoiding touching the box that was on the table and waiting for the game to be explained.

In the proposal entitled "Pega-Pega", each group of approximately five students had a box in the center of the table containing various objects. In addition, a set of printed sheets contained a list of 6 words, all containing complex syllables. These words were related to the objects inside the box. Each student was given a different list of their classmates.

Figure 2 - Handle

Source: Authors' collection (2023)

The object of the game was to read the words on the list and locate the corresponding object inside the box. When a student found the correct object, he would pick it up and place it next to his

list. In this way, all the objects found inside the box were separated in the group lists. Once all the students had identified the objects, they could return them to the box and exchange their lists with the rest of their classmates.

Figure 3 - Organization of the Groups

Source: Authors' collection (2023)

The proposal lasted approximately 40 minutes and during the development of the proposal, I was able to observe the concentration of the students while they read and located the objects. Some found it easier to read, while others struggled. There were also gestures of solidarity: some students offered to help classmates from other groups, and others asked their teachers for help.

Figure 4 - Interaction and Mediation

Source: Authors' collection (2023)

At the end of the first round, the students' satisfaction in being able to identify the letters and read the words was noticeable. The activity not only promoted the development of language skills, but also strengthened the collaborative spirit between them: in the course of the proposal, one of the students, observing the difficulty of his colleague in performing the reading, asked: "Can I help?" and was received by a look of complicity and a smile, he then helped his friend promptly.

The pedagogical proposal observed reveals a meticulous planning and organization of the room and materials, aiming to provide an environment conducive to interaction and learning, suggesting a strategy of collaboration and sharing. The freedom given to students to choose where to sit promotes autonomy and contributes to a more welcoming environment.

The game "Pega-Pega" integrated reading and associating words with concrete objects in a playful and educational way. The dynamics of placing and positioning the objects next to the list encourages the active participation of the students, in addition to favoring the interaction between them.

Throughout about 40 minutes of the development of the proposal, it was evident that the mediation of the teachers played an important role not only in conducting the activity itself, but also in stimulating interest and promoting the active participation of the students.

At the end of the first stage, when most of the students had completed reading and locating the objects, the teachers noticed that some students were facing difficulties. In view of this, they promptly launched the proposal that, at the end of the activity, the students exchange their lists of objects with colleagues who also completed the proposal. This initiative renewed the interest and participation of the class, demonstrating an adaptation of the activity to the different abilities of the students to ensure the continuous involvement of the students.

In addition, solidarity gestures are highlighted, such as students helping colleagues from other groups and asking for help from teachers, evidencing an environment of interaction and collaboration. This social interaction strengthens not only learning but also the development of social-emotional skills such as empathy and cooperation.

The pedagogical proposal, well planned and organized, proved to be effective in creating an engaging learning environment, promoting not only cognitive development, but also social and emotional aspects among students.

The classroom was bright, clean and organized, which suggests an environment conducive to learning, with characteristics that encourage the active participation of students. A comfortable space creates an atmosphere conducive to concentration and well-being.

A special corner called "Activities for *Flash* Students" drew attention, an organized closet housed various pedagogical materials: Memory Game with words and images; Math Games; Building Blocks and Printed and Laminated Activities, which allowed writing with a marker and erasing later,

allowing reuse: they included text interpretation activities, syllable bingo to form words, reading cards and word searches. The inclusion of activities that allow you to write with marker and erase later, reusing the materials, is an interesting strategy to maximize the use of pedagogical resources.

Figure 5 - Organization of Materials

Source: Authors' collection (2023)

This space is primarily intended to store materials and proposals that students can explore independently, after completing an activity intended for the entire class. While waiting for the others to finish their tasks, the students who completed the activity first have the autonomy to choose and use the available resources, revealing a differentiated approach to meet the individual needs of the students who complete the activities more quickly, offering varied pedagogical resources, demonstrating a concern with the diversification of learning activities, stimulating learning and demonstrating sensitivity to meet the different learning speeds.

Figure 6 - Play Space
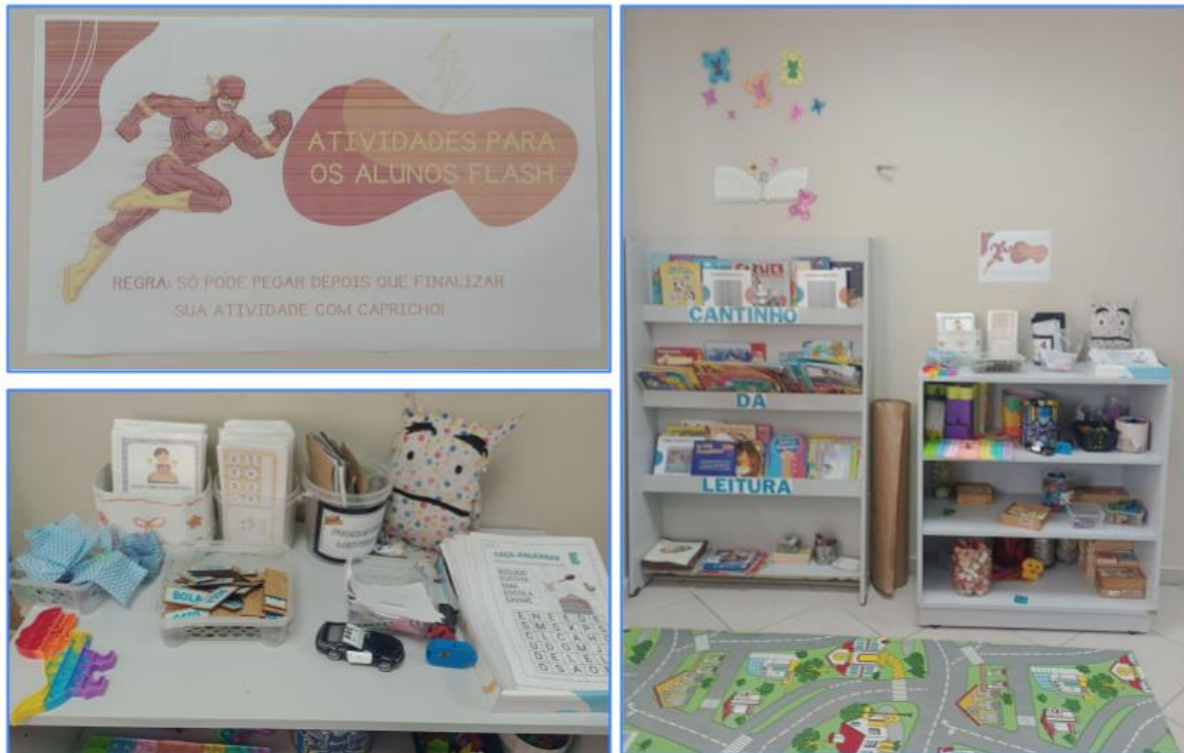
Source: Authors' collection (2023)

Next to it, a bookshelf with books for moments of reading and imagination is positioned, this space positively complements the environment, promoting an enriching educational experience, encouraging the pleasure of reading and imagination.

The materials arranged in the room play a key role in the students' experience. The presence of organized materials, such as the closet with games and activities, encourages students to maintain order and care with resources and to develop their autonomy, stimulate organization and creativity, turning moments that could be idle into playful learning opportunities.

By observing and analyzing this teaching strategy, which included playfulness, creativity, games and literacy, I highlight the contribution of Macedo (1995):

> It would be important to allow in the school that the means, at least for a time, be the very ends of the tasks; that children and teachers would be allowed to be creative, to have aesthetic pleasure and to know the joy of the construction of knowledge (Macedo, 1995, p.10).

Careful planning and an organized environment with resources allow for creative exploration and aesthetic pleasure, which are fundamental to create the ideal conditions that favor the type of learning described by Macedo (1995). A well-crafted plan takes into account the diversity of means and methods that can be used to achieve educational goals, ensuring that learning is not just a means to an end, but that the processes themselves become rich and meaningful experiences.

The strategic use of these resources provides children and teachers with the possible tools to explore, create and learn autonomously.

This environment invites students to explore all resources autonomously, reinforcing the idea that learning is not limited only to activities directed by the teacher. Showing that the classroom does not have to be just a physical space, but a welcoming environment rich in possibilities.

3 FINAL THOUGHTS

Throughout the text presented here, it was revealed that teachers use games and games as versatile pedagogical tools, and that these strategies favor learning throughout the educational process, regardless of age group and curricular component. These perceptions reflect the objective of seeking to explore teachers' perspectives on the use of games and games as a didactic resource in the literacy process and its impact on students' learning outcomes.

It is important to highlight that the game alone is not capable of promoting the intended learning, as evidenced, careful planning, organization, adaptation of the activity and constant mediation of the teacher are necessary. In order for games to be effectively used as didactic resources, it is important that there is a pedagogical intention on the part of teachers, considering the peculiarities of each class, such as cultural diversity and special needs.

However, it is believed that the use of games and games can be an efficient strategy to make the learning process more enjoyable and attractive. In addition, games enable more meaningful learning, involving children's participation and interaction, encouraging creativity and imagination.

The games must be planned according to the educational objectives, skills to be worked on and the level of knowledge of the students, for this it is necessary careful planning, an adequate selection of games and continuous evaluation, so the presence of the teacher is necessary to mediate the learning process, challenge the students and promote reflections.

Although games are tools that provide a motivating environment for learning, they can be regularly included in teaching practices so that children internalize rules and strategies.

It was also found that because it is very comprehensive, there are several directions that can explore the theme in order to deepen the understanding and application of games in the context of literacy, such as: Explore how digital technologies can be integrated into games to promote literacy: Investigate how elements of games (such as punctuation, Challenges and Rewards) can be applied to motivate and engage students in literacy, using strategies such as gamification or developing specific training proposals for professionals who work with literacy.

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