

Pnaic's literacy games: contributions and limitations from the teachers' perspectives

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ABSTRACT. This article analyses how female literacy teachers who took part in the 2013 National Pact for Literacy at the Correct Age - Pnaic formation understand the contribution of the programme's games to literacy, discussing the relation there is between inserting the resources in a classroom and the teacher's formation directed towards this subject. Taking into account the relevance of systematic teaching for linguistic contents, and the researches on the specificities of the educators' formation, the discussion aimed to relate how the specific formation on PNAIC can foster the understanding of how relevant it is to make use of literacy games. To do so, we carried out a bibliographic and documentary research on the subject, including Pnaic's formation materials and the games' analysis. We also interviewed ten female educators who took part in Pnaic, in order to investigate how the discussion on the games took place at the formation and how the teachers evaluated the material. We could infer that it is necessary to invest in formations on playfulness and specifically on the games and their possibilities and limitations in the education context. The participants regard the games as contributing resources for literacy, but point at failures when the subject is discussed at the formation. We reiterate the formation processes need to work as spaces for discussions and reflections of the educators' actions.

Keywords: educator formation; playfulness; teaching practice.

Jogos de alfabetização do Pnaic PNAIC: contribuições e limitações nas perspectivas das professoras

RESUMO. Este artigo analisa como professoras alfabetizadoras que participaram da formação do PNAIC, em 2013, compreendem a contribuição dos jogos do programa para a alfabetização, discutindo a relação que há entre a inserção dos recursos em sala de aula e a formação docente direcionada para essa temática. Considerando a relevância do ensino sistemático dos conteúdos linguísticos e as pesquisas sobre as especificidades da formação docente, a discussão buscou relacionar de que modo a formação específica do PNAIC pode fomentar a compreensão da relevância do uso dos jogos na alfabetização. Para isso, realizou-se uma pesquisa bibliográfica e documental sobre o tema, utilizando-se, inclusive, os materiais de formação do PNAIC e uma análise dos jogos. Também foram entrevistadas dez professoras que participaram do PNAIC, de modo a investigar como ocorreu a discussão dos jogos na formação e como elas avaliam esse material. Infere-se que é necessário o investimento nas formações sobre os jogos e suas possibilidades e limitações no contexto educacional. As participantes compreendem os jogos como recursos contributivos para a alfabetização, mas apontam falhas na discussão do tema na formação. Reitera-se que os processos formativos precisam ser espaços de discussão e de reflexão das ações docente.

Palavras-chave: formação docente; material didático; prática de ensino.

Juegos de alfabetización del PNAIC: contribuciones y limitaciones en las perspectivas de las profesoras

RESUMÉN. Este artículo analiza como las profesoras alfabetizadoras que participaron de la formación del PNAIC, en 2013, comprenden la contribución de los juegos del programa para la alfabetización, discutiendo la relación que hay entre la inserción de los recursos en sala de clase y la formación docente direccionada para esta temática. Considerando la relevancia de la enseñanza sistemática de los contenidos lingüísticos y las investigaciones sobre las especificidades de la formación docente, la discusión procuró relacionar de qué modo la formación específica del PNAIC puede fomentar la comprensión de la relevancia del uso de los

juegos en la alfabetización. Para esto, se realizó una investigación bibliográfica y documental sobre el tema, utilizando, incluso, los materiales de formación del PNAIC y un análisis de los juegos. También se entrevistaron a diez profesoras que participaron del PNAIC, de modo a investigar cómo ocurrió la discusión de los juegos en la formación y la evaluación que tienen sobre este material. Se infiere que es necesaria la inversión en las formaciones sobre la ludicidad y, en específico, sobre los juegos y sus posibilidades y limitaciones en el contexto educacional. Las participantes comprenden los juegos como recursos contributivos para la alfabetización, pero apuntan fallas en la discusión del tema en la formación. Se reitera que los procesos formativos precisan ser espacios de discusión y de reflexión docente de las acciones.

Palabras clave: formación docente; ludicidad; práctica de enseñanza.

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Introduction

In 2012, the Federal Government created the National Pact for Literacy in the Right Age (PNAIC – Portuguese Initials). The program's main goal was to guarantee children's literacy up to the 3rd grade of Elementary School. Several actions were developed and implemented by the time of the proposal creation. The program takes place in a partnership between the Federal Government, States and Municipalities, as well as involving, in support of training, Higher Education Institutions (IES) at the federal and state level. Thus, two of the program's actions consisted of i) conducting a face-to-face continuing education course for literacy teachers (1st to 3rd grade), two years classroom course, with 120 hours per year workload and ii) distributing didactic books and teaching materials, including a box with ten games.

The teachers, during training, discussed multiple topics and were supported by training notebooks divided into eight units. The course was offered to teachers from the 1st to the 3rd grade and twenty-four notebooks were prepared, eight for each year of the literacy cycle. In these notebooks, one for each year was designated for the discussion about playfulness in the context of literacy, also addressing questions about the use of the game box. This theme is also verified in other notebooks, but playfulness is the main subject in these three.

The training was designed to encourage discussions and, among the themes related to teaching the native language, one of them is the inclusion of literacy games in teaching practices. The notebooks for literacy teachers have standard sections, such as: 'Starting the conversation,' 'Going deep into the topic,' 'Sharing,' and 'To know more. Generally, in the item 'Sharing', literacy teachers present texts and expose practices linked to the topic addressed by the material, such as using literacy games to work on specific content. The PNAIC addresses, in its training process, the playfulness and its relevance in the educational context, as well as the possibilities of its use, through games and other resources, in literacy. Therefore, the discussion on teacher training and on the opportunities of using games becomes relevant in this context, considering a process of continuing education as comprehensive as the PNAIC.

The central goal of the PNAIC is literacy at the right age, fostering discussions on several aspects of the initial process of learning to read and write, such as curriculum, didactic sequences, assessment, textual genres, and the meaning of alphabetizing from the perspective of the program: the alphabetize by lettering (Brazil, 2012b). According to Soares (2004), this implies recognizing the specificity of literacy – which consists of learning the alphabetic writing system – but in a literacy context, that is, inserted in various social practices of reading and writing. These two conceptions are inseparably addressed in the program materials, as suggested by Soares (2004). However, the specificities of literacy and the appropriation of the alphabetic writing system (SEA) are also forcefully addressed, and there is a notebook to discuss this specific topic (Year 1, Unit 3). According to Morais (2012), the appropriation of the writing system depends on explicit and systematized teaching since it involves conceptual and conventional aspects. That only intense contact with the varied writing materials may not guarantee learning. In this context that literacy games are pointed out as resources that can work with these specificities of SEA.

Given the above, this article aims to analyze how literacy teachers who participated in the PNAIC in 2013 understand the contribution of the program's games to literacy, articulating the relationship between the insertion of resources in the classroom and the teacher training directed to this theme. For this, we conducted a literature search on teacher training from the perspective of playfulness and documentary research, based on the training materials of the PNAIC on the conceptualizations of games and indications of use, as well as an analysis of the literacy games of the PNAIC. We also interviewed ten literacy teachers from an Elementary

School in the city of São Paulo, located at the mesoregion of Piracicaba, who took the PNAIC course in 2013, investigating how the playfulness and literacy games of the program were approached, as well as how they evaluate these materials.

First, we present a discussion on teacher training from the perspective of literacy and playfulness, followed by an explanation of the approach to ludic training in PNAIC. The analysis of the ten literacy PNAIC games, regarding the literacy skills and abilities mobilized, is also highlighted. Finally, the interview results of the literacy teachers are presented concerning the PNAIC training on the games and how they evaluate the material.

Games in the context of teacher education

Continuous teacher education has been discussed by some authors (Gatti, 2008; Imbernón, 2010) as a necessity due to problems and challenges encountered in the educational context, especially related to teaching and learning. On the one hand, Gatti (2008) points out that they may arise as a means of improving and delving into teaching practice. On the other hand, Imbernón (2010) emphasizes that it is necessary to overcome the view of continuing education as a solution to educational problems and considers that it should start from the needs and problems experienced by teachers in their context of performance, making them subjects, not objects of training.

It is understood, therefore, that the PNAIC is inserted in this context of continuing education to meet a demand or specific problem, such as literacy. The program encourages relevant discussions on particular themes, such as playfulness, since some studies point to the need to discuss this topic in teacher training processes.

Some research discusses the relationship between teacher training and the playful. For Afonso (2006), it is necessary that during teacher training, playful must be addressed, contributing to teaching practices, understanding it as a support for new practices: "[...] thus contributing to the construction of child development, seeking the child's autonomy and valuing the affection that involves the learning process" (Afonso, 2006, p. 132). Pereira (2006) advocates that the teacher must have ludic experiences and not just recognize, theoretically, the importance of working with ludic in schooling. Thus, he emphasizes the importance of a training process that incorporates the ludic since it covers not only the rational and intellectual aspects of the subjects but also their emotional side, "[...] promoting the learning of play and the contribution to its incorporation into teaching practice" (Pereira, 2006, p. 105).

Ludic is often associated with two ideas: one concerning activities involving fun and pleasure and another linked to childhood, in which games and play are proposed. Nevertheless, in agreement with Macedo, Petty, and Passos (2005), we understand that the ludic goes beyond these two perspectives and that other indicators can characterize it, such as the investment of time and energy of a subject to remain in each activity. Moreover, it also includes the understanding that the action represents a challenge or a problem situation, therefore, the interest in doing it. Therefore, games and play can be understood as an activity that involve playfulness, but not only are these proposals ludic.

Simili (2009) adds that teachers recognize the importance of the games, attributing to the several resource characteristics that validate their use. He also considers its reputation for developing students' reasoning, motivation and pleasure. In their research, the participating teachers indicated that the game contributes to the development of leadership and socialization and learning to better deal with frustration. It is worth pointing out that a game is understood as structured material, which contains an objective and, to accomplish it, has a system of rules previously defined and accepted by players.

Despite recognizing the possibilities of working with the game, Simili (2009) also found that teachers find it challenging to use it. This is due to the complexity of relating them to the syllabus. Another aspect is that the professors point out that the resource is explored more often in other subjects, such as Art and Physical Education; that is, the priority in the classroom is to work on the syllabus of the curricular issues, and the games are delegated to other spaces or moments. As an obstacle, there is also the problem of group work and the behavior of students, are also mentioned, which, according to the participants, hinders the development of this type of activity. Therefore, teachers recognize the contributions arising from using games in the classroom. However, due to many difficulties or factors that intervene in the development of activities that involve the syllabus, games end up being in the background and not included in the teacher's planning.

Pimentel (2005) also presents this contradiction in the teaching discourse, in which they value the game as a 'recreational' activity while not knowing how to link it to school goals. Therefore, teachers understand the game's contributions to their practice; however, they cannot mobilize actions to make its use feasible.

Hence, its use in the classroom depends not only on the recognition and awareness of its contribution and validity to the student's learning process, but also involves other factors, ranging from the teacher's academic training to the use of this resource, the teacher's mastery in articulating the content and materials, to the conditions of the school's physical and material structure. It also involves the teacher's academic and professional performance background and conception of children and learning.

It is understood that excluding games from theoretical discussions of teacher education contributes to this resource being less explored by teachers in their daily practice. Furthermore, in the educational scenario, the idea that the game is not a serious activity persists. Therefore, it cannot be related to the teaching-learning work performed at school. They must understand the relevance of approaching the use of games in teaching training processes. The knowledge teachers should guide discussions about these materials, elucidating how games can be inserted in the learning process, their contributions, and how they can be adapted, among other issues that may arise.

The ludic approach in the formation of PNAIC

The PNAIC training brochure (Brasil, 2012c, 2012e, 2012f) refers to the ludic as a crucial contributory instrument, both in individual development, in its most diverse dimensions (cognitive, social, motor, affective), as well as a significant resource in the learning process, including the appropriation of reading and writing process. Based on the authors in this field (Piaget, Vygotsky and Kishimoto), the material highlights the relevance of playfulness. It emphasizes using games in the learning process, based on successful reports from literacy teachers who used them in their practices. The ludic at the materials has references and a role in the educational process, not only as a resource that can help the teacher to develop certain specific skills, such as attention, concentration, thought decentration, respect for others and rules, socialization, decision making, among others; but also as a possibility that favors the literacy process and contributes to the appropriation of the alphabetic writing system (SEA), which needs to be mastered by students to become competent users of the written language. It is essential to highlight that the PNAIC mentioned above notebooks approach games and play as ludic and emphasize games and their relationship with learning processes, especially the ten literacy games that constitute the material sent to the program participants' schools.

About research carried out with PNAIC materials, Monteiro (2015) and Menezes (2016) address the issue of playfulness and games in this continuing education program. Regarding the specific material of the PNAIC, Monteiro (2015) emphasizes that the program's defense of ludic is related to the anticipation of the entry of six-year-old children into Elementary School and the understanding of the importance of playing for this age group, as a guarantee of their learning rights, thus being a way to enable them to learn through games and play. According to the author, playfulness in the school context cannot be restricted to specific content learning but must be understood as an essential part of the child's development process.

Menezes (2016) addresses the use of games that compose the teaching material that was sent to schools. The research was carried out with literacy teachers participating in the PNAIC and the results show a mismatch between the teachers' expectations regarding the approach to games and what happened in training. Literacy teachers comment on the emphasis given, in training, to theory and the tiny space for discussing practices. In this light, Menezes (2016) criticizes the movement for not taking advantage of teachers' knowledge during discussions in continuing education, which could make the process more meaningful and exciting for the participants. The author also investigated the participant's use of the material and the adaptations to their reality, such as changes in the rules of the games. Some teachers also reported using the materials to provide moments of pastime and fun for students in specific routine periods to explore it without pedagogical intention. Thus, it is revealed that games are not always used for learning.

Although they address different issues, these studies help to understand the effectiveness of the proposals in the school context and how the participating teachers appropriated the pedagogical materials from the PNAIC and used it based on their knowledge and experiences in the classroom. As can be seen, the participants in the research by Menezes (2016) emphasize the importance of approaching the discussion about games in the context of training, especially in the PNAIC, where this was a subject to be debated. They reveal that the discussion, however, took place unassociated with teaching practice. It is relevant to understand that, even in training processes that could discuss the ludic, there may be failures, as they do not involve and use the teachers' knowledge about resources.

Next, a characterization of the games available from the PNAIC and their relationship with the literacy contents is presented to show which games were available through the program and which literacy contents were centered.

PNAIC games and literacy contents

The theme related to games was grouped in unit 4 of each year at the material of the PNAIC. In this way, these three notebooks discuss, theoretically and with practical examples, how play and games can be inserted in classrooms for learning. By reading the material, it is possible to perceive that it seeks to offer the teacher a reflection, among many perspectives, on the use of games in the classroom, without necessarily referring to the material provided by PNAIC, addressing several aspects such as the organization of the group; working with other curricular components; the consideration of the specificities of literacy, the appropriation of SEA and the game as a facilitating instrument for the student's diagnosis.

In addition to the teacher's training material, the schools received a collection with ten games that focus on the literacy process and the acquisition of writing properties and regularities. These game types are Hunting Rhymes; I am the one who writes; Change letter; Battle of words; Sound dice; Sound Bingo; Initial letter bingo; One more; Word within a word and Magic Trick. According to Brandão, Ferreira, Albuquerque, and Leal (2009), games can be classified into three groups according to their didactic purpose: 1) Those that include phonological analysis without corresponding with writing; 2) Those that lead to reflection on the principles of the Alphabetic Writing System, helping students to think about graphophonic correspondences; 3) Those that help to systematize the graphophonic correspondences (Brandão et al., 2009).

It is understood that different games can serve the same purposes, through various approaches, with other objectives. It was also possible to verify that, as Brandão et al. (2009) exposed, the games focus on working with phonological awareness and with graphophonic correspondence, and only one of the games works with the writing of words. This finding evidences the attention given to phonological awareness skills through the oral reflection of words and to the properties of the writing system, also in the context of orality and comparative analysis between words. Therefore, we understand a limitation in considering the relevance of writing by the child, including spontaneous writing, through games, for the advancement of writing and reading learning. Still, from the perspective of working with EBS, Brandão et al. (2009) emphasizes the importance of the teacher understanding the objectives of the games, as well as recognizing the class's needs, to the proposed activities because none of the games works simultaneously all aspects of EBS and, even more, all the literacy content. Thus, the teacher must organize several proposals for the assistance of the students, encompassing different knowledge.

An observation point on these games is related to the age group they can serve, or rather, to which year of the literacy cycle they are aimed. A significant portion of them is aimed at an initial work with the teaching of reading and writing, that is, for a work to be developed in the 1st year of the literacy cycle. Another point that deserves criticism is whether the games available also meet the needs and specificities of the other years from the literacy cycle if the training notebooks themselves indicate that students are expected to finish the 1st year dominating the properties of SEA. In addition, the material shows that in the 2nd year, "[...] the focus should be on mastering the system and the proper use of words in texts, through consideration on the linguistic resources necessary for the construction of meaning effects in oral and written texts" (Brazil, 2012d, p. 9). It also points out that work with spelling should also be developed, focusing on understanding the rules and not just memorization. Therefore, what is verified is that these games available by PNAIC do not work with these specificities of the 2nd and 3rd year of the literacy cycle.

Furthermore, we understand that literacy consists of a complex learning process with several dimensions, which are not restricted to understanding the functioning of the alphabetic writing system; however, it involves other skills, such as: textual, semantic, orthographic, morphological, and pragmatic, for example. Thus, the PNAIC games show and work with only one aspect of literacy (grapheme-phoneme relationships and phonological awareness in the context of orality). At the same time, other knowledge is not considered in this material.

Despite verifying that the knowledge covered by the games is restrictive to the initial work, it is also understood that teachers can organize different forms of adaptation to meet the student's specificities. As a result, it is relevant to know how the participating PNAIC teachers used and evaluated the games, which is presented below.

PNAIC games: what is their relevance for literacy teachers?

Ten literacy teachers who took the PNAIC course in 2013 participated in the research. These participants have extensive experience as primary education teachers (between six and thirty years) and literacy teachers (between five and twenty-four years). All of them have Higher Education, eight have a grad degree in *Latu Sense*, and two have masters in education. The interview consisted of eight open questions. Two of them mentioned the presentation and training for using PNAIC materials, such as the games and their use in the literacy contexts in which they worked. The interviews were audio-recorded, and the teachers were identified by the letter P followed by a number. It should be noted that the research was submitted to the Research Ethics Committee (CEP) from the university where the research was carried out, obtaining a clear statement, and registered under number: 1,867,285. The data collected at this stage were studied based on content analysis (Bardin, 1977) due to their relevance in research and defining indicators that allow the deduction of knowledge.

Next, the results obtained are presented. These data were organized into two categories: one regarding the presentation and study of games during the PNAIC course in 2013 and the other comprises the assessment that teachers made about this material, taking as support both the training process in the course and the knowledge about games from their use in the classroom, reporting whether they use them or not.

Game studies in the PNAIC course

The study participating teachers were asked about the dynamics of presentation and study of the PNAIC materials, especially concerning the ten literacy games. Eight out ten participants reported moments of presentation of these materials. Some teachers described only one occasion of getting to know the materials during the course; it was possible to know them better when they arrived at the schools where they worked, both in terms of games and other materials available through the PNAIC.

Other teachers commented that, during the course, there were some dynamics prepared for the knowledge of the resources, such as the organization of small groups to play and/or get to know them; specific meetings to handle them; other dynamics to get to know them followed by discussions; report from teachers who used the resources in the classroom, sharing with their peers the possibilities, adaptations, and possible interventions. There is also the report of the absence or low frequency of discussions about the PNAIC materials, which indicates the overlapping of the theoretical approach to the debates about the practices and didactic materials that can support it, which configures a training policy without considering the needs of the participating group. Some speeches of the participating literacy teachers elucidate the different forms of organization for the presentation and studies of these materials during the course:

P2: There were moments in the meetings to get to know and handle the literacy games box.

P3: Most of the time, no. The formative moments are spent reading and debating. Not much time is spent on material and practice.

P5: Knowing and even later when he came to school on HTPC¹ everything was always shown. Here, at least in our school, this material has always been publicized.

P6: They showed. We had the knowledge, we had access and we knew. Then, there were people who applied it in the classroom and made the circle and explored how they did it, they told us.

P9: Everything that was programmed to be passed in training was carefully followed, so reading, discussion, how to play, the games were played in groups, each group played a game, when it was time for the game, when it was time for to discuss the book, anything that was presented to us, we always discussed it in the group and then, then open it with everyone. There was a reflection on that game or that material, or that book.

The PNAIC training proposal foresaw that those responsible for training literacy teachers would be the study guides². Thus, in the network in which these teachers participated, there were eight classes of course-taking teachers. Therefore, there were eight study advisors, which may explain the different dynamics of the presentation and study of the PNAIC materials.

¹ HTPC: Collective Pedagogical Work Schedule, which takes place weekly for two hours of classes, in which teachers meet with the management team for discussions regarding the organization of school routine, as well as to participate in training processes

² Study advisors were the professionals responsible for training literacy teachers. The PNAIC had a training structure known as a cascade: professionals from the partner Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) were responsible for training the study advisors, who were professionals from their education networks participating in the PNAIC, who had experience in training teachers and were selected to perform this function. Therefore, the advisors were trained at the HEIs and were responsible for conducting the course with the literacy teachers.

There is also another strategy that teacher P10 reports, which was as a form of task, but without a moment for socialization and discussion of practices with the use of material, whether games or literary books. In this case, the task was a requirement for completing the course: "We had to present the work developed in the classroom to her. [...] The game, in the formation, only presented. [...] Half an hour, like that, nobody played, just presented" (Teacher P10).

The proposition of tasks to be carried out in the school is related to some of the strategies previously established in the orientation of continuing education proposed by the PNAIC, which had as objective the continuous process of formation; that is, the school was also a locus of formation; as well as intended to establish a relationship between theory and practice. This can be seen in the notebook named 'Teacher training in the national pact for literacy at the right age' (Brasil, 2012a), in which two strategies related to the facts reported by the participants are highlighted. The first concerns the tasks to be performed at home and at school, which, according to the material, consisted of several activities, such as reading and discussion of texts, development of classes based on plans made during the meetings and production of didactic resources.

Another strategy is the analysis of teaching resources, which are not restricted to those sent to schools through membership of the PNAIC, but also refer to other school materials, which, according to the training booklet (Brasil, 2012a), have a helpful potential in literacy, but are not always used. Thus, it is understood that the strategies used by the study advisors are in line with the actions planned by the program itself, although the dynamics of the meetings could have been different.

Teacher P3, however, clarifies that, in her training period, there was no space to get to know, handle and use the PNAIC materials. Still, it is possible to perceive dissatisfaction in her speech: "The training moments are spent with reading and debate. You don't spend a lot of time with material and practice" (Teacher P3). The research developed by Santos (2015), with teachers participating in the PNAIC training course, also shows that, for 16% of the participants, the training was inadequate concerning the methodological focus of the PNAIC training. Among the justifications for this evaluation, there is little time to talk about the participants' practices. Thus, it is observed that the teachers need to expose and discuss their practices and understand that the PNAIC could be a suitable space for this action, which did not occur according to their expectations.

The participant's dissatisfaction speech reveals that the training process could have also explored the knowledge of literacy teachers about these materials: ways of organizing them in the classroom, criteria for organizing student groups, possibilities of interventions with students, possible and necessary adaptations, the feasibility of use for which year of the literacy cycle, developments and activities based on these games, among other possibilities. These assertions are consistent with the data presented by Menezes (2016), which shows that teachers who participated in PNAIC had expectations about the training process which were not met. Furthermore, the articulation between theory and practice was little sought after, and the teaching experiences and practices of participants were not considered. Thus, these critical moments of formation, besides losing the possibility of covering the teachers' knowledge on the most diverse topics, also ignore teachers' difficulties and training needs, focusing the training process on the ready-made discourse of materials and guidelines.

Evaluations and uses of PNAIC games by literacy teachers

Considering these assertions about the dynamics of presentation and study of the PNAIC materials, specifically the literacy games, the evaluation that the participants carried out on these materials is also presented, as well as the feasibility and difficulty of using them in the context of their classrooms. Seven out of ten (7/10) participants gave a positive opinion about these games. Some even pointed out the contributions arising from their inclusion in planning and their use by students, noting advances in the learning process. Even in the context of the participants who evaluated the games from a contributory perspective, it should be noted that two of them did so with reservations. Also, three of the ten participants (3/10) criticized the material based on their professional knowledge and experiences. Some excerpts are presented that illustrate the assessments of literacy teachers, first in relation to those who pointed out only the contributory aspects:

P2: The literacy games box meets the literacy process, opening a range of possibilities and enriching reading and writing activities.

P4: [...] it brings games that serve as prerequisites for literacy, as well as learning to read and write.

P6: They contribute, but I'm going to tell you, it's that thing; I'm not going to tell you that I used it a lot, I could explore a lot more, but the little I used, I could see that the child was able to advance.

P7: [...] both to teach literacy and for those who have difficulties. [...] You see how that helps. It is he who is reflecting on his writing and what he is going to use there. I am delighted with it! [...] It's much more pleasant for them [...] they're not afraid of making mistakes, because the friend is there next to him and he corrects his.

These four participants presented positive opinions about the games, and it is possible to identify, in some statements, that these statements were made after experiences of use in the classroom, as is the case of teachers P6 and P7. Teacher P2 emphasizes that such games "[...] are in line with the literacy process". Thus, it can be observed that, for her, the games and their insertion in the learning process in the classroom contribute to her activities; it is a resource that complements and is in line with the work already developed because this idea of coming together leads to the understanding that the conceptions that underlie the game and its proposed work with language are in line with the teacher's perspectives. The participant also adds that games open "[...] a range of possibilities [...]", so she understands that there are several ways to use these resources. The speech of participant P2 is related to the study by Menezes (2016), conducted with 1st and 2nd-grade teachers about using PNAIC games. In her research, Menezes (2016, p. 105) notes that "We do not see these games as mere accessories, but as one more tool to enrich the teaching work." Likewise, it is understood that teacher P2 sees the game as a complement to her actions in the field of literacy, within her work perspective.

Teacher P4 addresses another dimension about the possibilities of using this resource by stating that the "[...] games that serve as prerequisites for literacy"; therefore, she perceived them as possibilities for working with the skills she considered missing for literacy, as they allowed the work with what she calls prerequisites. Teachers P6 and P7 reported the contributions of games based on their experiences of using them in the classroom. In relation to teacher P7, it is possible to observe that she points out three dimensions in which the games help in the learning process: first, she mentions that they enable a reflection of writing by the child itself: "It is he who is reflecting on his writing, what he will use there." With the use of this instrument, therefore, the child can reflect on the specificities of the alphabetic writing system and consolidate important learning for the acquisition of reading and writing.

Another aspect is the process of interaction and the construction of knowledge with the others, in this case, the classmates, through the games: "[...] they are not afraid of making mistakes, because their friends are there by their side and who corrects their mistakes" (Teacher P7). Finally, the issue of pleasure still stands out, representing one of the characteristics of the concept of play: "For them, it is much more enjoyable" (Teacher P7). In her speech, the participant uses the expression much more, which may indicate that she understands that, in games, students show more pleasure in performing the activities than in other proposals.

The speeches of teachers P2, P4, P6 and P7 confirm the understanding of how the evaluations of the games are diverse and how the experiences with their use are also different. In this sense, it is relevant to resume the discussion about the importance of teacher training in the context of games, in its theoretical and practical dimension, because the reports that teacher P7 offers in the interview provide evidence of knowledge about games derived from her practice, as well as her close observation of the students. These reports could contribute to the teacher training process, directing teachers' views to other issues beyond the rigorous learning of literacy content. It is understood that these training processes are favorable spaces for the knowledge exchange teachers develop during their professional experience.

Teacher P8's speech addresses, on the one hand, the recognition of the possibilities and contributions of games, but on the other hand, she reports her difficulties in inserting them in the classroom:

P8: I used it a lot! So yes, they help. The big problem that I see with the games, maybe it's even my fault, it's difficult for the teacher, alone, inside the classroom, to work with the games. [...] So, working with games is valid, yes! But I find it very difficult to do this alone in the classroom, so I always try to work with games when I have someone supporting me, an intern or a Pibid³ fellow. [...] when there is a pedagogical target, I find it a little more complicated.

The teacher considers that such difficulty may be personal. Her observation is interesting because a proposal to work with games foresees an organization of small groups due to the characteristics and rules of the materials themselves, as can be seen in the guidelines in the training notebooks:

One form of grouping can be, in some activities, to organize children who have similar knowledge to content, made possible as answers that are not provided by those who already mastered it; another form of grouping is through heterogeneity in ability already acquired knowledge. In this case, when one advances, it contributes to the development of others. Thus, like the teacher, the child will also mediate between the subject and the object of learning (Brasil, 2012c, p. 15).

³ Pibid: Institutional Scholarship Program for Teaching Initiation.

Thus, the material suggests that, at the time of the game, the children become mediators of knowledge in the activity when there is an exchange of ideas and discussions about the contents. However, considering that the teacher is also a mediator in the learning process, the difficulty exposed by the teacher portrays the complexity of serving all students with quality at this time. Among other issues, which do not concern only the literacy contents, the teacher also indicates the dynamics of the game and the classroom management itself as limiting factors for working with games in the classroom. It is also inferred that, at the time of training in 2013, the means of inserting games in the classroom were not discussed, proposed, or suggested effectively so that the proposed objectives were achieved.

Teacher P9 also has concerns, and her assessment was anchored in the training processes she had already experienced in her professional experience, with particular emphasis on continuing education in the context of the school where she works. Thus, despite having a positive view of games, in general, she does not evaluate the PNAIC materials as fundamental for her practice and the literacy process: "The games, the reflections, the activities, the books that they present [...] Excellent! But if you don't have any of that and you have other things to work on, you work the same way" (Teacher P9). In this sense, it is understood that the concept of literacy and a method to teach literacy is more relevant decisions in the learning process than the choice and use of material, decisions that will even influence the choice of teaching resources to be used in the learning process.

Furthermore, she understands that the PNAIC implements an effort to improve literacy rates in the country: "[...] the Pact, wow, did it come to save? No. It came to complement". The teacher demonstrates that other actions were already being carried out in her school, in which the relevance of the games was also highlighted, as the participant points out: "So much so that we have a room here full of educational games, I mean, we already had the material. What came, came to complete, not that we never had!". Thus, she indicates that, in the school where she works, games are already understood as essential resources for the learning process.

Three participants built a more critical opinion about the games and discussed more points to be considered about the insertion of the PNAIC games in the classroom than effectively contributing points. Teacher P5, for example, evaluated that the games did not present significant contributions to the literacy process: "The games are more for mathematics, but for written language are the types of projects that were suggested, such as texts." In addition, she highlighted the relevance of looking at the interaction processes among students, regardless of the materials used: "Everything has to be with interaction. Otherwise, it makes no sense to leave the game there in the child's hand, whether for language or mathematics" (P5).

Interaction processes are also highlighted in the PNAIC training notebooks on the play. According to the PNAIC, Brazil (2012c) notebook, in playful activities, children "[...] discover that they are not the only subjects of action, and that to achieve the goals they need to take into account the fact that others have their own goals they wish to satisfy" (Brasil, 2012c, p. 6). In this way, teacher P5 comments on the teacher's role when proposing activities of this type and her intention when planning them, as it involves the knowledge of the materials to be used (in this case, the games) and the diversified possibilities of their use (small groups, the whole group, different games for the groups, according to the student's needs, among others).

Teacher P10 says: "I think there is a question mark there. Does it really contribute? [...] If there is no contextualization, no". She believes that games can contribute to learning if the teacher is able to insert the materials in a contextualized way. She also reveals that the design of the games has some mistakes, such as the choice of words and illustrations. She evaluates that it is necessary to have other goals in addition to the learning of reading and writing because, in this sense, the resource is limited. She also believes that it is necessary to evaluate the material to be used to check if it corresponds to the established objectives and if adaptations are needed. However, it should also be noted that the PNAIC considers the limitations of the game resource. In the notebooks that discuss playfulness, it is understood that it is assumed that games, playfulness or any other teaching resource does not guarantee the child's learning:

On the contrary, they are objects that bring potential knowledge. This possible knowledge may or may not be activated by the student. They cannot be used as the only didactic strategy, nor do they guarantee the appropriation of the knowledge we seek. In this sense, the teacher plays a fundamental role, mediating game situations and creating others for the systematization of knowledge (Brasil, 2012c, p. 23).

The reports and experiences presented here are based on literacy, learning and playfulness concepts. The teachers' evaluations of the PNAIC games show how their experiences were different. Added to this are the various ways in which the process of continuing education of the PNAIC occurred, with possibilities or not, of reflecting on the materials allied to a discussion about the teaching practice in literacy. It is noted that

these resources from the program were not used only in the year of training as a requirement or task. Still, the teachers somehow incorporated them into their practice without failing to observe their imperfections and reflecting on the goals of their work and ways to use them.

The assertions of the participants presented are consistent with research by Pimentel (2005) and Simili (2009) that teachers understand the contributions of games in the educational context. However, they find difficulties or reasons not to use them, such as the difficulty in offering the material to the class, the incompatibility of the literacy concept underlying the resource, and the understanding and use of other proposals more fruitful for students, among other reasons.

In relation to the PNAIC games, despite the positive considerations of the teachers mentioned here, some participants also expressed negative opinions. Thus, we understand that the discussion about the games held by the program presents a conception of the use of these resources strongly associated with learning. Therefore, it assumes that these materials are playful, fun, and interesting for students in the literacy cycle. So, this is an adult understanding of what is pleasurable for the child. It is also understood that the child's time at school must be filled with proposals that involve literacy, even in moments of play. Furthermore, the ten games from the program also approach literacy in only a few aspects of its dimension, emphasizing grapheme-phoneme relationships and phonological awareness. Therefore, they have a reductionist perspective when dealing only with content related to the word reflection, to the detriment of other equally relevant skills in the context of literacy.

The teachers balanced the contributions of these specific materials to their work because, as it was possible to verify in their speeches, there are indications of the resource's positive points. They also recognize that other materials make significant contributions to literacy. In addition, they highlight the importance of the teacher's perspective, indicating the need for clarity in relation to the goals and possibilities of using the games. It is understood that the teachers reflected on their needs and the options of inserting games into planning. With this, it is inferred that they have a favorable view of the program and its contributions to their work in literacy. Nevertheless, the report of these contributions stems from a reflective process about the program and its possibilities of collaboration for teaching.

Conclusion

This article analyzed how some literacy teachers who participated in the PNAIC in 2013 understand the contribution of the program's games to literacy, discussing the relationship between the insertion of resources in the classroom and teacher training directed to this theme. The bibliographic research showed teacher training processes' relevance to discussing games and ways to insert them into the classroom, highlighting the literacy process. This research revealed that teachers understand games as contributing resources to their practices. Such investigations, however, highlight the teachers' discourses about the difficulties in using them, which may be associated with practical issues (students' indiscipline, for example) and even with conceptual problems, such as the understanding that games are opposed to the serious work involved in the learning process.

Specifically, about the games, the documentary analysis showed how the materials provided by the PNAIC (box composed of ten literacy games) focus on some aspects and contents of literacy, while other dimensions are not addressed, such as, the irregular correspondences between letters and sounds, (which consist of cases where there is more than one letter, which in the same position, represents the same sound. Regular cases are those that have direct correspondence, that is, a single letter for a single sound. Also, there are frequent cases that depend on the context; that is, even with more than one sound associated with a letter, or more than one letter for the same sound, they can be predicted through the position of the letter in the word), which also make up the literacy contents, especially in the final years of the cycle (3rd grade, within the PNAIC proposal). Furthermore, they focus only on aspects of the grapheme-phoneme relationship, despite other literacy components. Thus, it is understood that games contribute to the literacy process. However, the literacy teacher must be clear about the contents and skills addressed by them so that they can plan their classes, as well as interventions and possible adaptations, depending on their student's needs.

Moreover, the voices of literacy teachers, both in relation to the training process aimed at discussing the playful and concerning their evaluation of the games, corroborate the results of the indicated research, which confirm the relevance of the teacher training processes addressing the games and their ways of using them, to offer practical and theoretical subsidies to the teacher. As observed, the participants reported that there

was not always an in-depth discussion about the games, their possibilities, how to insert them in the classroom, what contents they cover, and how to make interventions and possible adaptations. There are teachers reports that there was only one presentation of the resources to the participants, without a significant discussion of their use in the literacy process.

Thus, far from having a dualistic discussion about games (contributory or not), the use of the resource is understood within a complex context, in which there are, on the one hand, the processes of teacher training, which may or may not contribute for a better knowledge of the materials and the ways of using them, linking them to the school contents. On the other hand, there is the exercise of teaching, permeated by the concepts of learning, child, and literacy, which influence the decision to choose the games, as well as the knowledge and reasons for using them. Given the above, it is not about having simplistic explanations for using games but considering them in the complex network of variables about their insertion in the classroom.

In this context, teacher training directed to this theme has notoriety, fostering discussions and rich exchanges of ideas and knowledge about resources. Finally, it is vital, in teacher training, it is imperative to have well-founded discussions about the possibilities, contributions, limitations, and difficulties of inserting these resources in the classroom context, considering the vast teacher's knowledge on the subject.

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