

Reading games: possibilities for promoting engagement in reading

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Abstract:

Considering the dynamicity of the current contemporary and technological world and the responsibility of reading in human development, school, teacher and student took on a new configuration, requiring changes in the way of teaching and learning. In view of this reality, the present article originated from research carried out in the Professional Master's Program in Letters (PROFLETRAS), among 2018 and 2020, at the State University of Montes Claros (UNIMONTES), which intended to analyze the reading difficulties of students of the Elementary School II, from Basic Education, a public school in the municipality of Claro dos Poções, Minas Gerais. The research is anchored in the studies in Adler and Doren (1997), Zilberman (1988), Freire (1996), Leffa (1996), Solé (1998), Kleiman (2002), Koch (2003), Cosson (2010), among others. Using the action-research methodology, we propose an Educational Intervention Project that contemplated diversified strategies based on the elements of gamification with the aim of providing student engagement in the reading process. The research involved data collection, questionnaire, diagnostic activity and focus group; the elaboration and application of an educational intervention proposal contemplating gamified activities; final activity and the proposal of a pedagogical game based on the elements of gamification and the characteristics of RPG. The data evidenced positive results, proving that the use of differentiated strategies, using gamified activities as a methodology, can contribute to the development of reading proficiency.

Keywords:

Reading. Engagement. Game.

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INTRODUCTION

The advent of technology is one of the great factors responsible for the evolution of humanity, since it has dynamized society, the human being himself and their interpersonal relationships. Over time, several sectors have had to adapt to integrate into the new contemporary world. Education fits into this scenario, being noticeable its change in the profile of new students. More dynamic, accelerated, immediate and momentary, they enter the school differently from students of other times, taking with them new knowledge and experiences. Going further, this same young person enters universities and also leaves them for a different world from other times, more competitive, globalized and technological.

It is worth mentioning that this new reality, in addition to possibilities, also provided a world of risks and dangers that requires a new type of reading, and consequently, a new concept of teaching reading. Reading, in this scenario, has become even more necessary, which means that the school must be even more able to prepare the young person to practice reading and be able to face the personal, social and professional world.

Communication, for example, became more efficient, faster, new and diverse languages emerged and reading became much more present in people's lives, especially that of young people. However, what is perceived is that the volume of reading required by the technological society is not reflecting within the classrooms, in quantity and quality of learning. The task of teaching has become a challenge. This is because new times have also given rise to new students and these, therefore, require new pedagogical postures. In other words, new educational contexts require pedagogical approaches in which the teacher and student assume as protagonists strategies in the teaching and learning process, since today's school presents other characters, all active and inserted in diverse and technological contexts.

It is worth mentioning that corroborating with the National Curriculum Parameters - PCN (BRASIL, 1998) and with Applied Linguistics since the 1980s, reflecting on practice is to rethink didactics that enable students to carry out readings with autonomy and consciously so that it becomes a pleasant and present practice in classrooms and in their lives; it is to think of reading as a broad activity, which extends beyond decoding or teaching grammar; it is to recognize its formative and transforming character.

Given this reality, and the perception of the difficulty of 9th grade students in reading diverse texts with regard to an autonomous and critical understanding, the research started from the premise that gamified activities can contribute to alleviate the detected problems and bring students closer together of reading, since it proposes to bring to the school environment characteristics own of games.

Therefore, in this article, we have as main objective to present the research carried out in the Professional Master's Program in Letters (PROFLETRAS), among 2018 and 2020, at the Universidade Estadual de Montes Claros (UNIMONTES), which intended to analyze the reading difficulties of elementary school II students, from Basic Education. Using the action-research methodology, we propose an Educational Intervention Project that contemplated diversified strategies based on the elements of gamification with the aim of providing student engagement in the reading process. The study was carried out in a 9th grade class at a public school in the city of Claro dos Poções, Minas Gerais, and involved 32 participating subjects.

The research was developed through the need to identify new resources that could propose the development of reading, since this has always represented the biggest problem faced in classrooms; and because it is understood that it is the role of the school, as one of the training agencies, the responsibility to contribute to the formation of an individual active reader and trainer of his own history so that he is able to read the various texts, himself and the world, interacting with different languages and environments.

For that, the research is anchored in the studies in Zilberman (1988), Freire (1996), Leffa (1996), Thornburg (1996), Adler and Doren (1997), Solé (1998), Kleiman (2002), Koch (2003), Cosson (2010), among others, in a reflection on reading, its learning and interactive relationship; and in Vianna *et al.* (2013) and Tolomei (2017) in the analysis of gamification as an innovative and possible methodology in the development of positive strategies in the teaching and learning process.

Therefore, the present article proposes to present the research developed and the results achieved through a reflection on reading and the contributions of gamification to the development of reading skills.

READING IN A REFLECTIVE PERSPECTIVE

Throughout the history of Brazilian education, the teaching of reading has always been associated with the teaching of grammar. Reading was synonymous with decoding and this common and continuous practice ended up resulting in a mistaken conception of teaching reading and a distancing relationship between student/Portuguese class, and specially, student/reading. The anguished reports of teachers in the failed attempt to make the student read and with motivation, showing taste and involvement with reading, evidences, according to Kleiman (2002), a problem that begins with the understanding that the school has about reading and its teaching. First, the text is explored only as a resource for linguistic studies, by means of separating terms for the syntactic classification of the sentence. In another moment, the text is understood only as a means of extracting information and messages.

And, in this scenario, the conception of text is misrepresented, and the student is considered as a passive reader who receives everything ready, being led to targeted information, without the opportunity to formulate his own concepts and opinions and without making judgments. In other words, he is ignored or even excluded from the reading activity, which, ironically, aims to involve him in the process.

In this way, we perceive practices that are often discouraging, demotivating, which contribute to a negative image of the Portuguese language class. For Zilberman (1988, p. 10), “the school is the place where one learns to read and write, one knows literature and develops the taste for reading”. It is necessary that this space is better understood and that there is awareness that it is and has always been the function of the teacher to provide the appropriate and necessary means for the acquisition of knowledge to the student.

As rightly says Freire (1996),

Knowing that teaching is not transferring knowledge, but creating the possibilities for your own production or construction. When I enter a classroom I must be a being open to questions, curiosity, students' questions, their inhibitions; a critical and inquiring being, restless in the face of the task I have - teaching and not transferring knowledge (p. 21).

In this sense, the teacher assumes a different posture, aimed at the student and his own practice, insofar as he perceives himself and the student as protagonists of a process where they play a joint role in the action of teaching and learning.

However, the reality of the classrooms reveals a different scenario, where the student is often not understood as an integral part of the process of building the senses and, as a result, is unable to develop the reading skills necessary to read with autonomy and criticality.

In this sense, it is important to understand the student as a reader who has a background of previous knowledge, is inserted in a specific context and has goals and preferences in the readings he performs. In other words, it is important to think about a different practice.

A good start, for example, would be to outline the objectives of reading, since, according to Adler and Doren (1997) and Solé (1998), it contributes to develop or expand reading competence. Once defined, it is possible to understand how students read and define the reading levels they present to reflect and plan interventional actions. According to Adler and Doren (1997), the levels are divided into elementary, rudimentary, basic reading and decoding synonymous; inspectional, a pre-reading and in general way about the main and structural information of the text; analytical, complete reading, where the reader seeks to analyze the information, he assimilates; and syntopic, deeper and comparative reading, where the reader extrapolates the lines of the text. The levels serve as a parameter for a specific view of how students assimilated and assimilated the reading they performed.

Another important question to think about is really understanding what text is, what reading is. Also, over time, according to Leffa (1996), its conception went through the privilege of the text, the reader and after the interaction between both, being later understood as a social practice.

Corroborating this theory, Cosson (2010) states that

The reader is as important as the text, the reading being the result of an interaction. It is a dialogue between author and reader mediated by the text, which is constructed by both in this process of interaction. The act of reading, even if done individually, becomes a social activity. Meaning ceases to be an issue that concerns only the reader and the text to be controlled by society (p. 39-40).

Reading then comes to be understood as the result of the interaction between author and reader through the text and in specific social contexts, where it establishes a dialogical relationship with itself, with the author and the world. Thus, author and reader add their personal perceptions and experiences acquired since birth, building meanings in the information assimilated and shared. And according to Koch (2003),

is, that is, a highly complex interactive activity for the production of meanings, which takes place, evidently, based on the linguistic elements present in the textual surface and in its form of organization, but which requires the mobilization of a vast set of knowledge (encyclopedia) and its reconstruction within the communicative event.

The meaning of a text is, therefore, built on the interaction between text subjects (or text-co-enunciators) and not something that preexists to this interaction (p. 17).

In this sense, we perceive the understanding of an active reader inserted in the process as a transformer of his own reality and the world around him, and the teacher as a mediator and facilitator of learning. The reader is understood as the protagonist of the process of construction of the senses through the interactive relationship that is established among author/text/reader, but also between student/teacher, because as stated by Kleiman (2002, p.10) “so that the child can learn, adults and children, together, must build a learning context through interaction, leaving the adult to define feasible, plausible, and significant tasks, according to pre-defined objectives in common agreement”. The teacher must, therefore, offer the student a learning space that values him in his experiences, knowledge of the world, values and customs, tracing the necessary strategies for the development of learning.

In this sense, the teacher is understood as a strategist who reflects and plans the skills necessary to achieve or effect learning, also taking into account the strategies employed by the student himself during the practice of reading. Well-defined strategies represent a stimulus for the student who will be able to read and understand autonomously and critically, and for the teacher who will see results in the dedicated effort.

GAMIFICATION

Vianna *et al.* (2013) affirm that gamification “corresponds to the use of game mechanisms oriented to the objective of solving practical problems or to arouse engagement among a specific audience” (p. 13). And according to the authors, the word gamification originated from the word game, being a translation of the English term gamification, being used for the first time by the British Nick Pelling,¹ in 2002. Basically, they recognize it as a methodology based on the mechanisms of games and explored in diverse contexts.

Also, according to the authors, the game/player interaction provides experiences and results that can be explored in other areas, as games combine challenges, feedbacks, rewards and pleasure in resolving conflicts and problems. Many supporters from different areas are already seeking to encourage their employees by adopting the principles of games, re-signifying activities that were previously not very productive.

According to the authors, the importance of games is also noticeable in human coexistence, as

the more complex individuals, societies and, consequently, life itself became, the more complicated also became the mechanisms required to experience in the daily life the essential feeling of satisfaction. [...] Therefore, it is understandable that we have created games, since they satisfy in a simpler, faster, clearer and more efficient way this constant search that plagues us for achieving or fulfilling goals (VIANNA *et al.* 2013, p. 16-17).

In addition to providing pleasure, the games stand out for the characteristics they present: the goal, the rules, the feedback and the voluntary participation that, associated with the narration, interactivity, competitiveness and reward, enable engagement to the players.

Motivation, an important element described by Vianna *et al.* (2013) as a “magic word”, it is a characteristic present in all moments of the game, being responsible for attracting players and keeping them engaged during its execution. Thus, games attract because they motivate through challenges and tasks that arouse satisfaction and pleasure.

In this sense, we recognize gamification as a stimulating element of learning and its use or its principles in education can contribute to the development of the teaching and learning process, mainly, reading, bringing student/teacher, student/reading closer and making the class more attractive, fun and pleasurable. Tolomei (2017) corroborates this theory when he describes that

the use of strategies such as the use of bonuses, medals, competition and goals are actions, which when worked in a contextualized way, instigate the student to participate in activities, which may not have produced the same effect before. This is because gamification returns the pleasure of the activity and the feeling of being in community, participating in something that provides an objective, with different paths, but that lead to the same point, a more dynamic and pleasurable way of learning (p. 154).

Thus, gamification, understood as a methodology, provides interaction, motivation, challenges, competition and engagement in game environments and can be understood as a learning strategy that provides more interactive classes and that promotes learning in the educational environment.

Today’s students are increasingly connected to the virtual environment and games are already part of their routine because they are attractive. The school also needs to be attractive, and for this, it needs to reflect on its practice, taking into account the student profile it receives, what type of education it intends to carry out and which student it intends to train.

¹ British computer programmer, game designer and investigative writer, best known for creating the game Frak! in 1984.

METHODOLOGICAL TRAJECTORY

Taking as a parameter the assumptions described, since it was carried out in a Professional Master's Program in Letters - PROFLETRAS, the methodology adopted was based on the assumptions of action-research, which it adopted as a technique to direct the paths the realization of a practice that sought to value the student and teacher as protagonists of the construction of knowledge and the elements of gamification as a plausible strategy in the process of teaching and learning of reading.

In this way, the studies started in November 2019 with the diagnosis of the class, divided into three moments and with the aim of clearly visualizing the relationship that students presented with reading, if it were a common and constant practice, if it were carried out with satisfaction and pleasure, in short, if there were reading habits and which they would be.

Therefore, in the first moment, a questionnaire was applied that sought to identify the students' relationship with reading, including the family. In the second moment, a diagnostic activity was applied through the organization of the room with tables, tops and colored towels, containing texts of varied textual genres, where students were invited to carry out spontaneous readings. The objective was to observe the students' posture towards the texts, identify their literary preferences and the reading levels they presented. The students circled the tables suspiciously, but little by little they started to feel comfortable and leafed through the texts, reading one or the other, commenting with colleagues and encouraging the reading of another text.

In the third moment, the focus group technique was used in order to identify the conception of students about reading and its importance for their personal and future lives. To this end, the class was divided into three groups, with each one being presented with the cut of the film "Mãos Talentosas" (2009) - a mother, in front of a huge bookstore of the boss, decides to force her children to read, which allows for a successful future to yours - for discussion through guiding questions.

The diagnosis revealed that the majority of the class recognizes the importance of reading for the personal and professional training of human beings but does not practice it with pleasure and spontaneity. Many do it out of obligation, do not usually visit the library spontaneously, some stop reading at the beginning of the text, others only read if the text has pictures and has few pages, some reported not being able to understand what they read and there were still those who did not they read no way. The class revealed a non-intimate relationship with reading and a distant and mistaken conception of their practice in the classroom. They expressed disinterest, as they associated her with a grammar class, despite recognizing the importance of their practice.

However, in the diagnostic activity, they performed readings, even though they were suspicious that they would be charged shortly thereafter, and of the genres presented, they expressed a preference for the chronicle and meme genres, as shown in Table 1.

After venturing through the room and the texts, the students answered the questions on the back. These were created in order to record the understanding of each one about the selected genre and to identify the reading levels they had. Therefore, according to Adler and Doren (1997), there are four levels of reading that must be recognized during the teaching and learning process. The elementary, a basic reading, synonymous with decoding; the inspectional, a pre-reading that examines the surface of the text; the analytical that demands more from the reader because it is completer and more complex; and the syntopic that is characterized by being a comparative reading that extends beyond the lines of the text.

Table 1 - Textual genres used in the diagnosis

STUDENT PREFERENCE RELATIONSHIP/TEXTUAL GENRES	
Textual Genres	Number of Students
Chronicles	9
Poems	3
Comic strips	3
Comics	–
Charges	3
Memes	9
Classified Ads	–
Advertisements	2
Medication leaflets	–
News	2

Source: Research data.

Thus, the questions were produced according to these levels and revealed the following result of the class:

Table 2 - Reading levels identified in the diagnosis

Classification of students according to Reading Levels (Adler e Doren, 1997)				
Textual Genres	Elementary	Inspectional	Analytical	Syntopic
Chronicles	–	A3, ² A8*, A14*, A16*, A19*, A22*, A26*, A27*, A30*	A8, A14, A16, A18, A19, A22, A26, A27, A30	A6
Comic strips	–			A31
Comics	–	A5		
Meme	–	A8, A9*, A10, A11*, A12*, A15*, A17*, A25*, A27*, A30*	A9, A11, A12, A15, A17, A25, A27, A30	
Poems	–		A4, A20, A28	
Charge	–	A23*, A24	A2, A23	
News	–	A1*, A29	A1	
Advertisements	–	A7, A21		

Source: Research data.

Thus, from the data obtained, it was possible to draw a real outlook of the students' relationship with reading and the level they presented in function of it and the most preferred texts of the majority of the class. In other words, the results evidenced many students presenting difficulties at the inspection level, but who, at times, managed to do an analytical reading, so they appeared on two levels. Most have yet to reach the

² The students were identified with the acronym A ('aluno', in Portuguese) and the number in alphabetical order, as they appear in the call list.

syntopic level. Thus, the educational intervention proposal was thought and planned, taking into account the reality evidenced by this reading public.

For this purpose, the two most preferred genres of the students were used, since we understand that an intervention focusing on the student should start from them, since it intended to bring them closer to the world of reading, and then expand their studies to the other genres.

The proposal was divided into four moments and followed as a methodological basis the metaphor of Thornburg (1996), since it associates elements of nature with the human being learning phases. According to the author, the *bonfire* would represent the stage of knowing things, the *water well* would be the moment of reflection, dialogue and information sharing, the *cave* would be the moment of individual reflection and assimilation of the information received and *life* would be the moment of put the acquired knowledge into practice. Thus, associating with its metaphor, the proposal presented the following structure:

Table 3 - Educational intervention proposal

Moment I	Moment II	Moment III	Moment IV
Knowing the textual genre	Dialoguing on the textual genre	Reflecting on the textual genre	Practicing the acquired knowledge
<p>Activity I Chronicle: <i>Ousadia</i> – Fernando Sabino</p> <p>Activity II Picture: <i>Amor desarmado</i> – William Adolphe Bouguereau; Vídeo: <i>Quadro Morde a Língua</i> * Utilização de projetor multimídia</p>	<p>Activity I Chronicle: <i>Segurança</i> – Luís Fernando Veríssimo</p> <p>Activity II Memes * Utilização de projetor multimídia</p> <p>Complementary Activity Chronicle: <i>Caso de secretária</i> – Carlos Drummond de Andrade</p>	<p>Activity I Chronicle: <i>O lixo</i> - Luís Fernando Veríssimo * Utilização de rede social: WhatsApp</p> <p>Activity II Chronicle: <i>O lixo</i> – Luís Fernando Veríssimo</p>	<p>Activity I Chronicle: <i>A última crônica</i> – Fernando Sabino; <i>Cão, cão, cão</i> – Millôr Fernandes; <i>O padeiro</i> – Rubem Braga; <i>A linha e a agulha</i> – Machado de Assis; <i>Aprenda a chamar a polícia...</i> - Luís Fernando Veríssimo</p>
<p>Final Activity Jogo Pedagógico da Leitura</p>			

Source: Prepared by the authors.

Thus, for each learning moment, two activities and only one complementary activity were planned in order to provide more interaction between students. It is worth mentioning that the presentation and exploration of the reading of the genres took place in an interactive and shared way, taking into account the assumptions of *before*, *during* and *after* reading of Solé (1998). The moment I dedicated to the knowledge of the chronicle and meme genres featured the presentation, in activity I, of a video on the chronicle of the presentment *Morde a Língua* of the MultiRio digital platform³ and the application of the pause filed with the text “*Ousadia*” by Fernando Sabino (2009), using the Power point resource for this. In activity II, also using the same resource, the process of building a meme from the French academic professor and painter William Adolphe Bouguereau’ screen called “*Love Disarmed*”⁴ was presented, a work that gave rise to countless memes on the internet.

³ Municipal Company of Multimedia, linked to the Municipal Education Secretariat of the city of Rio de Janeiro City Hall, created on October 18, 1993, which proposes the use of means of communication and technological resources in the teaching and learning process.

⁴ The picture can be seen at: <https://bit.ly/3iT73KR>.

Moment II of the intervention was dedicated to the reflection and sharing of the knowledge acquired about the genders, promoting the construction of the senses in a dynamic and collective way. At this stage, the dialogue about the genres was guided by motivation, interaction, challenge, competition and fun based on the elements of gamification defended by Vianna *et al.* (2013). Activity I, “Puzzle”, carried out in a group, was created through the chronicle “Segurança” by Luís Fernando Veríssimo (2018) and counted with the text clipping, the organization of the room, decorated tables, colored envelopes to identify the teams containing the clippings and files with questions related to the text and a large and colorful dice to streamline and direct the discussions. From the exposure of the rules and the challenge proposal to build the meanings of the text first, the teams were moved by the competition and, in a shared way, mobilized themselves in reading and assembling the text without showing laziness or dissatisfaction, especially in the answers to the questions through of using of the giant dice.

Activity II relied on the organization of the room again and explored the meme genre through the challenge of sharing the readings and interpretations about the memes distributed to each team. Each group received memes to carry out the readings, discuss their characteristics and thematics interactively, recording their discussions. Later, images were presented for that each one to produce their memes according to their realities.

Soon afterwards, the discussions were shared with the other colleagues, together with the memes produced from the images. The socialization of their productions evidenced pleasure in their practice and revealed that students, even knowing and reading some memes on their social networks, demonstrated to be the first time that they associated them with their own realities, as can be seen in Figure 1, perceiving the meme as a textual genre that can and should be explored in the classroom, mainly for reflecting ironic and critical postures about social, cultural and political situations.



Source: Research data.

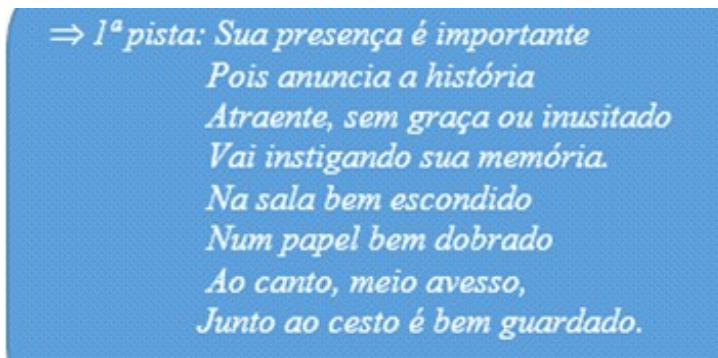
Figure 1 – Memes produced in Activity II

The second moment presented a third activity, the complementary activity, called “Hunting the text”, which was even more dialogued and interactive, since, according to Solé (1998, p. 120), “the activities of shared reading, [...], should allow the transfer of responsibility and the control of the reading task from the teacher’s hands [...] to the student’s hands”. In this sense, the activity was developed with the mediation of the teacher but built by the students through the interaction between them and with each proposed challenge. The chronicle explored was “Caso de secretária” by Carlos Drummond de Andrade (2018) and demanded the production of material - boxes and colorful envelopes and riddles - organization of the room and arrangement of envelopes in the spaces chosen to house the tracks, school shed, garden, pay phone close to the canteen, warehouse and library.

The activity proposed that, through the riddles, students unravel the clues that would lead to the parts that would compose the text, being instigated to make assumptions based on the questions they received from each part found. To this end, the goal and rules that would guide the students' activity and behavior during the activity were passed on, since, according to Vianna *et al.* (2013), are important elements in the concentration and stimulating of creativity and strategic thinking.

In this way, the students were motivated by the challenge of unraveling the text and winning the other teams, but for that they needed to read, interpret, reflect collectively and strategically, formulating and reformulating their assumptions, in a situation of feedback so that they could build the meaning of the text according to their findings. With the text unveiled, the students had the opportunity to confront the constructed assumptions and reflect critically on their own mistakes. All of them succeeded to bring their knowledge of the world to the text, aggregating information and formulating opinions in a critical and conscious manner. The subject provided a healthy debate on interpersonal relationships and the stereotypes created by society. That is, the reading was expanded, extending to the profile and conduct of the human being in various personal and professional situations, to the concepts and images created from some postures, which provided a more profound and critical practice.

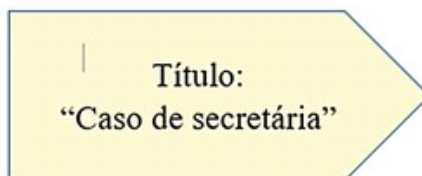
The efforts of each team resulted in everyone's success, since, even in a fierce competition, everyone felt motivated to complete the activity and even helped others when they realized they were encountering difficulties.



⇒ 1ª pista: Sua presença é importante
Pois anuncia a história
Atraente, sem graça ou inusitado
Vai instigando sua memória.
Na sala bem escondido
Num papel bem dobrado
Ao canto, meio avesso,
Junto ao cesto é bem guardado.

Source: Research material.

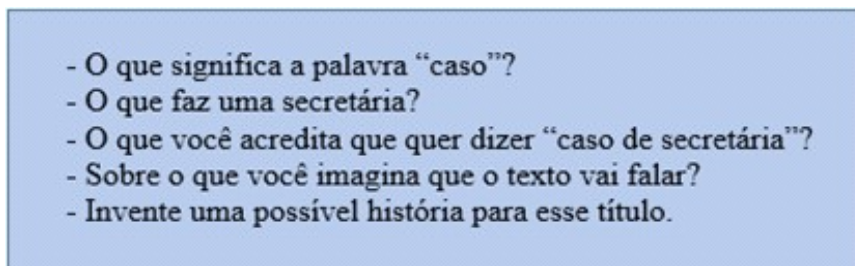
Figure 2 – Riddle 01 of the Moment II Intervention activity



Título:
"Caso de secretária"

Source: Research material.

Figure 3 – Response from riddle 01 of the Moment II Intervention activity



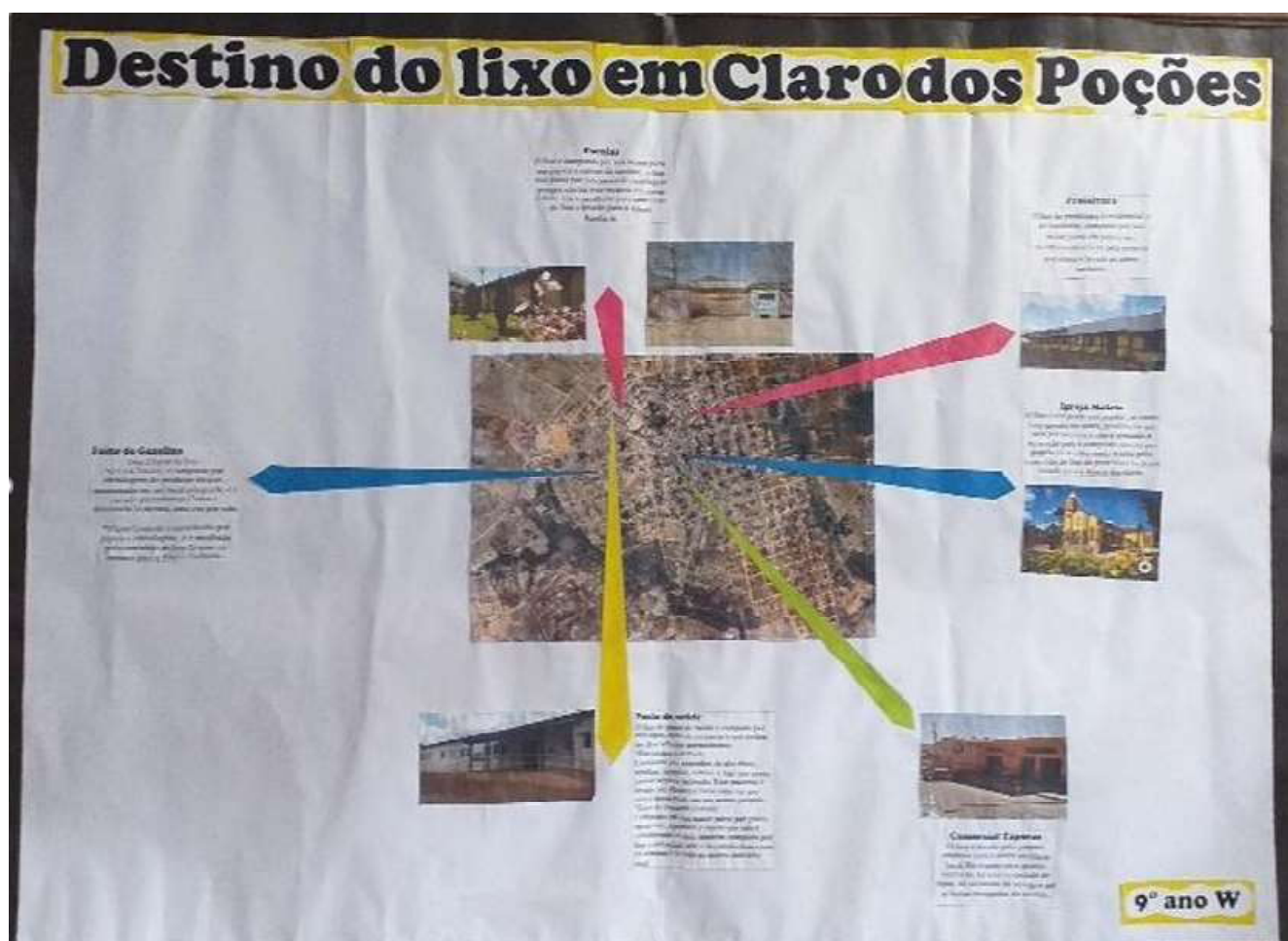
- O que significa a palavra "caso"?
- O que faz uma secretária?
- O que você acredita que quer dizer "caso de secretária"?
- Sobre o que você imagina que o texto vai falar?
- Invente uma possível história para esse título.

Source: Research material.

Figure 4 – Questions about the title of the Moment II Intervention activity

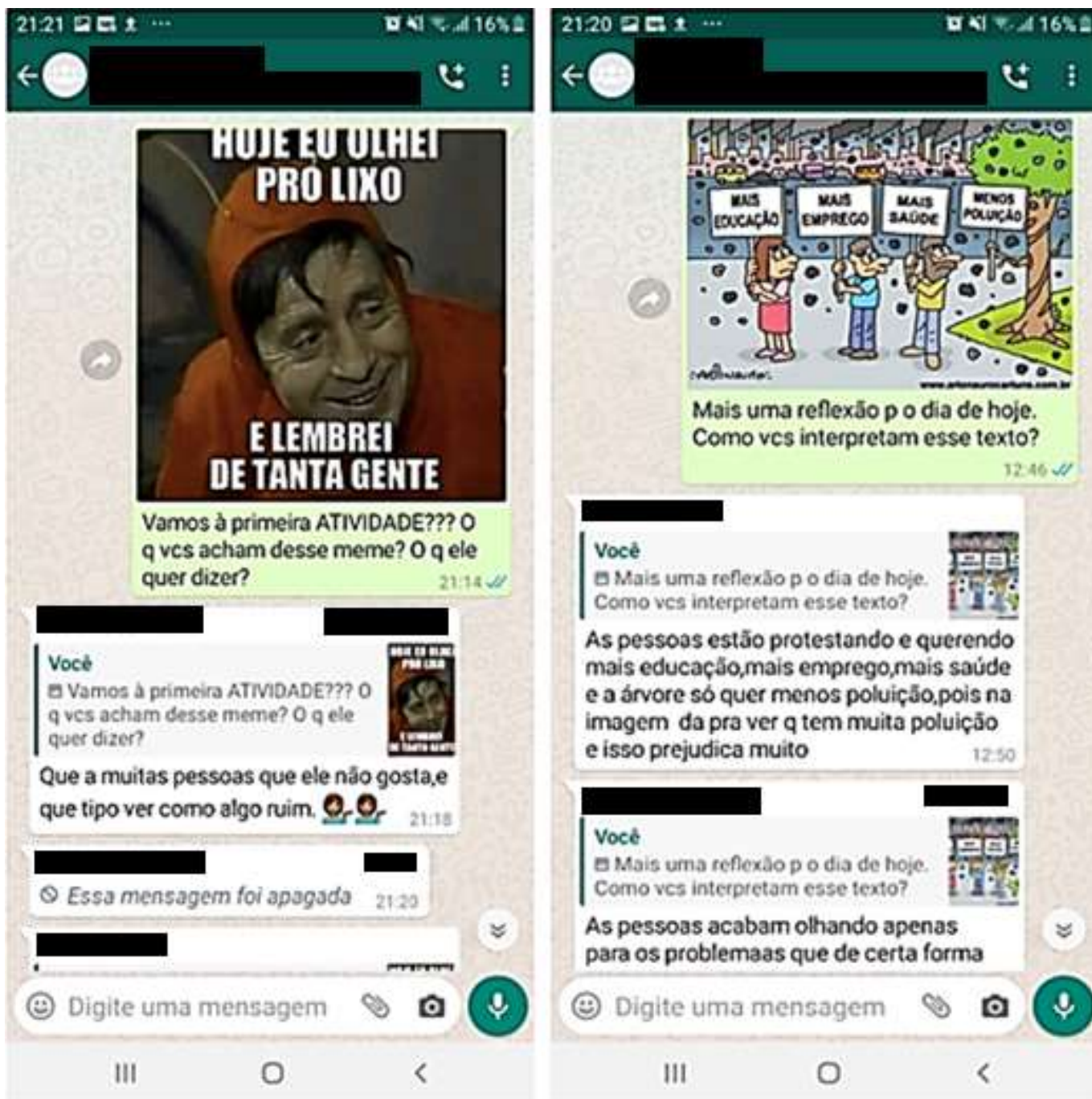
The third moment of the intervention sought to lead the student to an individual reflection so that he would be able to read, think critically and formulate his opinion based on the genres under study and, for that, involved fieldwork and the use of social networks. In activity I, the text selected for study, “O lixo” by Luís Fernando Veríssimo (2009), was explored, starting with the analysis of the title, with the formulation of hypotheses, assumptions, since, according to Solé (1998, p. 117) “the students themselves must select brands and indicators, formulate hypotheses, verify them, build interpretations and know that this is necessary to achieve certain objectives”. In this sense, the whole sense of the text was built from the assumptions built collectively through shared reading that sought to explore the before, during and after reading of Solé and contributed to the realization of an individual reflective activity, a since reading and dialogued discussions recognized the student as the protagonist of the reading practice.

Activity II involved fieldwork, as the discussions extended to environmental issues involving the municipality’s garbage, since the students associated the subject with the reality they lived and knew or did not know. This way, together, a route was drawn from the main points of the city and the division of the groups (same groups of the previous activities, since the competitive spirit of the group did not allow them to separate) for the visit to each one of them. The information was shared in a moment of socialization of the research results and organized in an infographic produced in the room by the students, as shown in Figure 5. At the same time, the students created a group in the WhatsApp application, through which they held individual discussions and reflections on related posts to the theme worked and where they had the opportunity to exercise the reading of memes and other textual genres with the same theme, as shown in Figure 6.



Source: Research material.

Figure 5 – Infographic produced about municipal waste collection



Source: Research material.

Figure 6 – Group created on WhatsApp

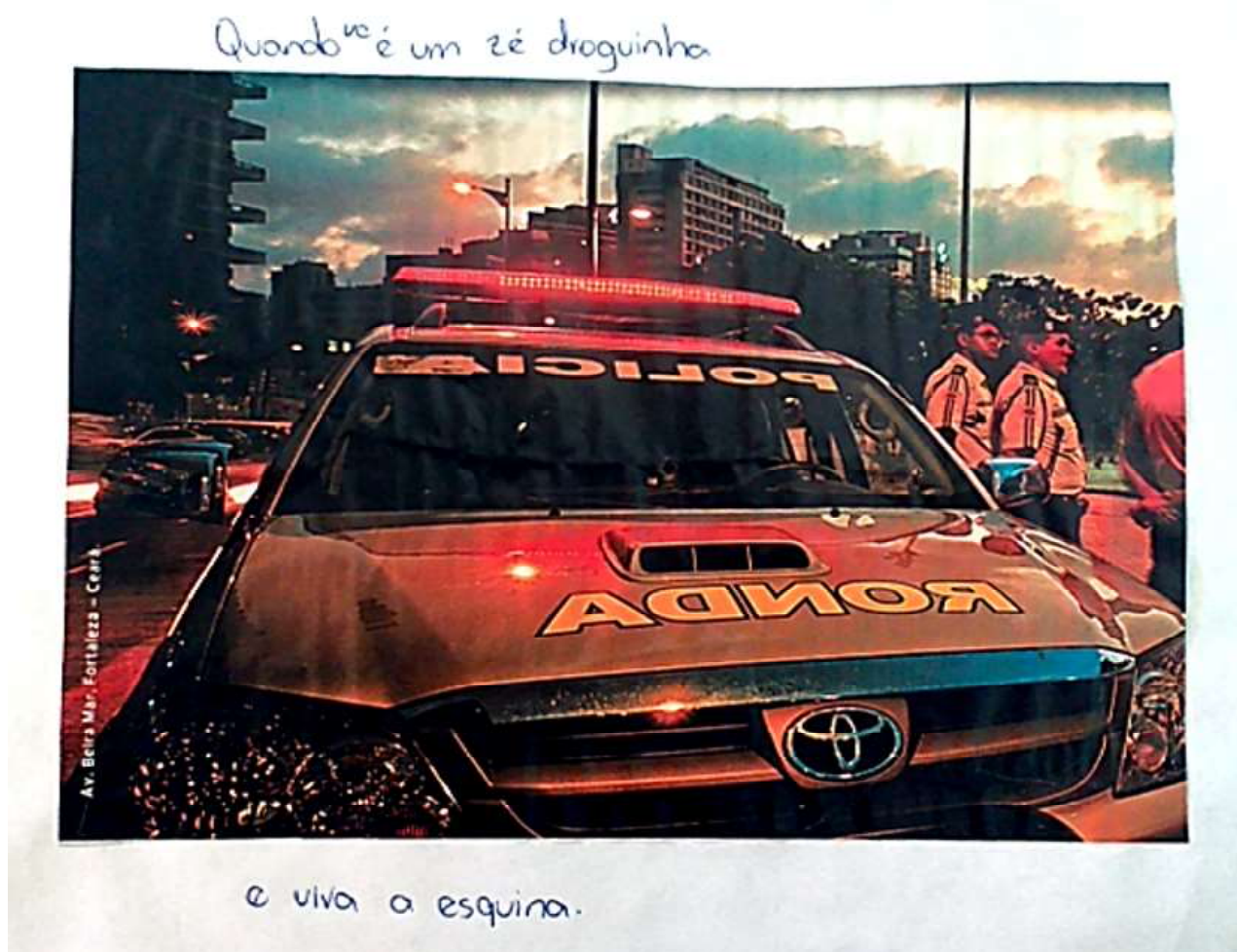
The environment created by them allowed them to express themselves spontaneously, as stated by Kleiman (2002, p. 24), “it is *during* the interaction that the most inexperienced reader understands the text: it is not during silent reading, nor during reading aloud, *but during the conversation* about relevant aspects of the text”. And this new environment is a space that they dominate, that they are familiar with and where they share their opinions and judgments. It is a space for intimate and reflective conversation, quite different from a classroom, but it also offers reading and learning. In this sense, it was explored in order to bring teaching closer to the students’ environment, where they felt that learning can happen in a pleasant way and through situations that they already dominate.

The fourth moment contemplated the practice of the knowledge acquired about the explored genres, exercising reading in a pleasant and stimulating activity, since it was based on the constituent elements of

gamification. In this sense, in order to carry out the activity, there was a need to acquire and prepare material and adapt the classroom, since students would have to put into practice cognitive and metacognitive skills to perform it.

Thus, the room was organized with six tables with colored towels, being five of them marked as stations that presented signs with instructions and tips, and envelopes with challenges to be fulfilled in order to reach the hidden treasure, in this case, the text. The first table had welcome signs and guidance on the adventure they would have to travel. All teams were instructed on the rules of the activity, identified with a specific color and named after the authors of the texts they would unveil - but did not know - and would have to choose a writer to register the ideas formulated, in addition to receiving a travel itinerary. In the first season, the signs provided guidance on deciphering a coded text that led to the application of the knowledge acquired about the chronic genre and contributed to the formation of assumptions about the text that they would have to meet, the goal of each team.

In the second season, the envelopes presented images and interpretive questions that further encouraged discussions and assumptions about the texts. In the third season, the sign guided to a moment of individual reflection, which also followed questions contained in other envelopes. In the fourth season, the sign guided the production of memes based on the assumptions built and for that, on the table there were magazines, papers, brushes, scissors and glue. Figure 7 shows the meme produced from the assumptions related to the text “Aprenda a chamar a polícia” (VERÍSSIMO, 2019) of one of the teams.



Source: Research material.

Figure 7 – Meme produced in the intervention activity

The 5th and final season contained a congratulatory plaque and a treasure chest, containing all the texts and the proposal for the production of a retelling, through a mini-story through the VivaVÍdeo and FlipaClip⁵ applications. Faced with the revelation of the treasures, the groups were surprised to discover that the name of each one was, in reality, the names of the authors of the texts they sought to unveil. Subsequently, they performed comparative readings with the notes they had taken, analyzing and evaluating what they recorded. Soon after, everyone shared their assumptions in a dynamic and fun way with the other teams, detailing the elements that led them to make one or the other assumption.

The feeling of victory was felt in all the teams, since everyone got involved and engaged in the proposed challenge. One of the teams, composed of students with greater difficulties, remained united, trying to complete all stages, without discouragement or lack of motivation. It was the team that stood out the most for the sense of pride acquired with the completion of all activities.

The intervention was concluded with the application of a final individual and reflective activity that included texts from both explored genres, chronicle and meme, and sought to evidence the evolution of students in the reading levels in which they found themselves and assess whether the use of gamified activities really contributed to student engagement in reading.

The activity was applied in two classes and, differently other activities that involved reading and interpreting text, it received no complaints or questions about grades. All of them endeavored to do it motivated by the sequence of diversified activities that they had previously carried out. The activity also provided space for students to evaluate the actions developed, in order to verify the positive and negative points for later review and/or adequacy of the proposal.

Thus, after carrying out the educational intervention proposal, we identified the following result:

Table 4 - Result of the final activity (AF)

Result of the Final Activity				
Textual Genres Selected (PEI)	Reading Levels (Adler and Doren, 1997)			
	Elementary	Inspectional	Analytics	Syntopic
Chronicle/Meme	—	A11*, A20*, A21*	A3, A4, A5, A7, A8, A9, A10, A11, A12, A17, A19, A20*, A21*, A23, A25, A26, A27, A28,	A1, A2, A6, A14, A15, A16, A29, A22, A30, A31

Source: Prepared by the authors.

The result evidenced advances in all students - even in those who were unable to deepen a lot in their readings. The number of students at the most advanced level, syntopic reading, increased in relation to the diagnosis result and more students were able to carry out a deeper reading, rising to the analytical level, that is, they expanded their readings from the construction of meanings which was carried out through strategies that favored interaction, the definition of reading objectives, the creation of motivated hypotheses since the reading of titles, characters, images related to the thematic, reflections and association with previous knowledge they had.

⁵ VivaVÍdeo: application considered one of the most complete for editing videos. Available at: <https://bit.ly/3vLrqMN>.

FlipaClip: application that creates cartoons with pictures made and edited by the user. Available at: <https://bit.ly/3vHSX1C>.

Finally, students deepened their readings through a fun and enjoyable practice, where they felt valued and recognized as part of the teaching and learning process. Those who did not go further, still presented evolution in contact with the text, in interaction with colleagues, in an attempt to overcome the challenges proposed by the activities and their own. The discouragement was overcome by the challenges proposed and reading exercised as a different practice from the teaching of grammar. It was noticeable the commitment of everyone in all activities, even in the posture in the face of the interpretative evaluative activity previously accompanied by many complaints and questions. The students' commitment resulted in the proposal of a game that explores reading through the elements of gamification and based on the RPG game (Role Playing Game).

The results also evidenced that the choice of textual genres, taking students' preference as a parameter, was an important element in the development of the research and the success of the proposal. The other genres, in turn, we believe that they will have a better acceptance in the measure that the students have already been motivated by the gamified activities developed.

The intervention was ended with praise from both sides, since students and teacher strengthened their ties, interacting in a pleasant way during the process of teaching and learning of reading through gamified activities.

FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

The art of teaching has always accompanied the human being, contributing to their development and training as a citizen. This task, however, does not proceed in a simple way, since the teacher, student and context must interact so that the learning takes place effectively. Both student and teacher live in society and in specific contexts, carry with them a bag of knowledge acquired throughout their lives and are influenced by the world. One cannot ignore all these elements when it comes to teaching and learning. The school itself is a contextual environment, where different beings converge experiences, relate and share feelings and opinions.

Given the above, we cannot ignore the influence that the current technological world has been bringing to society in general, and, especially, to education. The learning context in this century is technological and this means young people who are more attuned, connected, dynamic and immediate. This also means that pedagogical practices from other times will not have the same success as in other times.

It is necessary to adapt, teacher, school, teaching must take positions consistent with the current context, but above all seek strategies that contribute effectively to learning, making reading a pleasurable and fun practice, and teaching less exhausting and uninteresting.

It was in this sense that the present article presented the results of a diversified teaching and learning proposal based on the gamification carried out with the objective of promoting the engagement of students from a 9th grade class in a public school in the city of Claro dos Poções, MG, in the reading process.

Thus, understanding that the school must (re)think teaching, especially the teaching of reading, recognizing the importance and need to adapt to the contemporary context and the new student profile, who often does not like to read, but is inserted in the world of reading through digital technologies, we found, in the class analyzed by the research, that the use of diversified strategies, in particular, the use of gamified activities could contribute to dynamize the art of teaching, enhancing the learning of reading through of an intimate and pleasurable relationship.

We also evidenced that the hypothesis was confirmed in the student/teacher, student/text, student/student interaction and in the realization of a practice that valued the learning context, understanding the subjects as protagonists of this process.

The research evidenced that students assumed a different conduct in reading activities because they were motivated to build the meanings of texts as active subjects who participate together in the construction of meanings.

It is worth mentioning that the pedagogical reflection must recognize the importance of the performance of the teacher and the student as partners in the teaching and learning process, contributing to the aggrandizement of the art of teaching.

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