SEVEN publicações acadêmicas

TEACHING AND LEARNING HISTORY THROUGH GAMES AND PLAYFULNESS IN BASIC EDUCATION FOR YOUNG PEOPLE, ADULTS, AND THE ELDERLY

O ENSINO E APRENDIZAGEM DE HISTÓRIA A PARTIR DE GAMES E LUDICIDADE NA EDUCAÇÃO BÁSICA PARA JOVENS, ADULTOS E IDOSOS

ENSEÑANZA Y APRENDIZAJE DE LA HISTORIA A TRAVÉS DEL JUEGO Y LA DIVERSIÓN EN LA EDUCACIÓN BÁSICA PARA JÓVENES, ADULTOS Y PERSONAS MAYORES

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ABSTRACT
This work discusses the use of digital games as pedagogical resources in the teaching of History in Basic Education, focusing on the Education of Young People, Adults, and the Elderly. It starts from the understanding that digital culture and technological artifacts reconfigure social and educational practices, demanding methodological approaches that integrate analog and digital mediations. Based on a literature review, the role of play in historical learning is analyzed, as well as the relationships between representation, narrative, and meaning-making in digital games considered history games. Grounded in authors such as Rüsen, White, Huizinga, Pereira, and Gee, the study identifies that digital games enhance the development of historical awareness, imagination, and historical reasoning by allowing immersion, simulation, and contextualized decision-making. The results indicate that, although originally conceived for entertainment, games can constitute learning devices when critically mediated by the teacher, articulated with the curriculum, and used for comparative analysis with historiographical sources. It is concluded that its use does not replace other methodologies, but expands formative repertoires and brings students closer to the production of meaningful historical narratives.

Keywords: History Teaching. Digital Games. Digital Culture. Historical Awareness. Playfulness. Youth. Adult and Elderly Education.

RESUMO
Este trabalho discute a utilização de jogos digitais como recursos pedagógicos no ensino de História na Educação Básica, com foco na Educação de Jovens, Adultos e Idosos. Parte-se da compreensão de que a cultura digital e os artefatos tecnológicos reconfiguram práticas sociais e educacionais, demandando abordagens metodológicas que integrem mediações analógicas e digitais. A partir de revisão de literatura, analisa-se o papel do lúdico na aprendizagem histórica, bem como as relações entre representação, narrativa e construção de sentido em jogos digitais considerados *history games*. Fundamentado em autores como Rüsen, White, Huizinga, Pereira e Gee, o estudo identifica que os jogos digitais

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potencializam o desenvolvimento da consciência histórica, da imaginação e do raciocínio histórico, ao permitir imersão, simulação e tomada de decisões contextualizadas. Os resultados indicam que, embora concebidos originalmente para o entretenimento, os jogos podem constituir dispositivos de aprendizagem quando mediados criticamente pelo professor, articulados ao currículo e utilizados para análise comparativa com fontes historiográficas. Conclui-se que seu uso não substitui outras metodologias, mas amplia repertórios formativos e aproxima os estudantes da produção de narrativas históricas significativas.

Palavras-chave: Ensino de História. Jogos Digitais. Cultura Digital. Consciência Histórica. Ludicidade. Educação de Jovens. Adultos e Idosos.

RESUMEN

Este trabajo analiza el uso de juegos digitales como recursos pedagógicos en la enseñanza de la Historia en Educación Básica, con especial atención a la Educación de Jóvenes, Adultos y Adultos Mayores. Se parte de la comprensión de que la cultura digital y los artefactos tecnológicos reconfiguran las prácticas sociales y educativas, lo que exige enfoques metodológicos que integren mediaciones analógicas y digitales. A partir de una revisión bibliográfica, se analiza el papel del juego en el aprendizaje histórico, así como las relaciones entre representación, narrativa y construcción de significado en juegos digitales considerados juegos históricos. Basándose en autores como Rüsen, White, Huizinga, Pereira y Gee, el estudio identifica que los juegos digitales potencian el desarrollo de la conciencia histórica, la imaginación y el razonamiento histórico al permitir la inmersión, la simulación y la toma de decisiones contextualizada. Los resultados indican que, aunque originalmente concebidos para el entretenimiento, los juegos pueden constituir dispositivos de aprendizaje cuando son mediados críticamente por el docente, se articulan con el currículo y se utilizan para el análisis comparativo con fuentes historiográficas. Se concluye que su uso no sustituye otras metodologías, sino que amplía los repertorios formativos y acerca a los estudiantes a la producción de narrativas históricas significativas.

Palabras clave: Enseñanza de la Historia. Juegos Digitales. Cultura Digital. Conciencia Histórica. Lúdica. Educación de Jóvenes. Adultos y Personas Mayores.

1 INTRODUCTION

Playfulness has been consolidated as a relevant pedagogical strategy in the teaching of History in Basic Education, especially through games, gamified activities and elements of digital culture inserted in educational mediations. By its nature, play does not distinguish age, social origin, formats or platforms, and can be mobilized in different formative contexts. We understand that thinking and learning can be processes articulated with playful practices, making them applicable to various fields of knowledge, including the construction of historical thinking. When intentionally associated with pedagogical practice, it can favor interest in the contents, stimulate attention, engagement and collaboration among students.

As Huizinga (2001) argues, the game goes beyond entertainment and constitutes a significant activity that transcends the immediate needs of life, giving meaning to human actions. The education and teaching of History, as well as in a game structured in phases, demand constant updating of knowledge and skills to advance in new stages. The relationships between student and teacher, student and student, and between these and the school change with each social and temporal reconfiguration. In this sense, Giacomoni and Pereira (2013) highlight that the History teacher cannot restrict himself to the past, but must maintain a permanent dialogue with the present time.

We recognize, therefore, that the teaching work requires multiple skills. Mediating the relationship between past and present, promoting critical thinking and guiding possible interpretations for the future is a complex task, which demands constant theoretical, methodological and technological updating. Being "tuned" and "connected" has become part of contemporary school dynamics, although it generates tensions and divergences regarding the use of Digital Information and Communication Technologies (DICT) in the classroom.

The expansion of cyberspace, digital resources and devices connected to the internet has transformed social and educational relations, introducing new languages and learning possibilities. Playfulness accompanies this process: digital games, simulations, interactive narratives, and gamified experiences have become complementary forms of knowledge construction and historical mediation.

Play and learning dialogue with human experiences, just as history is built over generations. Although it is not an unprecedented practice in teaching, the use of games represents a constant challenge for educators, especially with regard to the forms of pedagogical mediation and the critical position in the face of the historical representations present in these media.

The idea that the game represents only leisure and not learning has been contested, especially due to research that demonstrates its educational potential, whether in digital or analog environments. In this sense, relevant questions emerge for the field of History teaching:

- What historical elements can be learned through digital games?
- Do these games serve as a mechanism for the transmission or construction of historical knowledge?
- What are its limits and potentialities for understanding periods, characters and social relations?
- How do students interpret History from the interaction with such games?

These questions guide the present text, which is based on a systematic review of the literature, demonstrating how DICT and digital games have been incorporated into pedagogical practices and what impacts they generate in historical learning.

From the use of digital games in video games, computers, smartphones and other devices, the teaching of History gains an approach that articulates technology, playfulness and the construction of historical thinking, even allowing transdisciplinary appropriations that go beyond the limits of the discipline.

2 HISTORY IN EVERYDAY SCHOOL LIFE

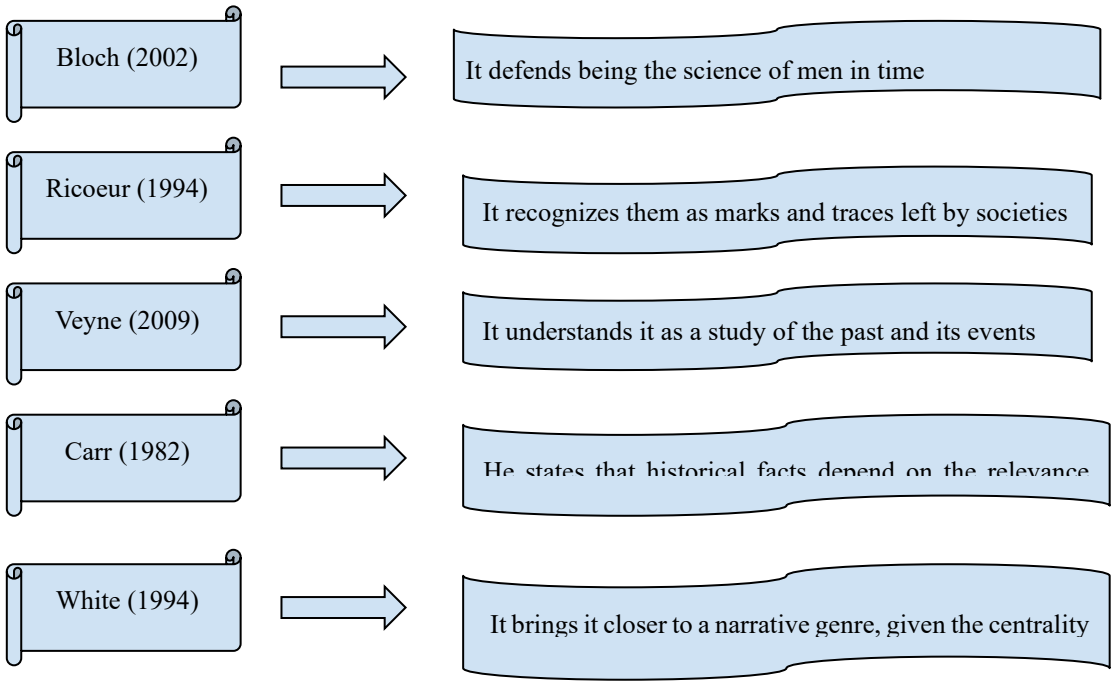
One of the main concerns of students in the early years of Elementary School concerns the triad: *what is History, what is its importance and why to study it*. Although there is no single answer – and this constitutes the richness of the discipline itself – the construction of these concepts is fundamental to attribute meaning to historical studies throughout schooling.

A large part of the concepts elaborated about History is based on the notion of *the past*, which leads to reflection on why certain past events arouse interest in the present. Such interest may arise from family experiences, news, cultural products, games, school content or everyday situations that raise questions and require historically grounded explanations.

For Rüsen (2010), interest is a central element of the human temporal experience, as it mobilizes the search for information from the past with a view to filling cognitive gaps and constructing meaningful explanations. Thus, defining History, in addition to epistemologically situating the student, helps in the structuring of thought and in the interpretation of experiential issues.

Several authors contribute to this definition:

Figure 1



Source: Prepared by the authors.

The constitutive complexity of History, far from being an obstacle, allows for multiple methodological and interpretative possibilities. Curriculum review and dialogue with new methodologies can bring students closer to historical thinking, making the discipline more dynamic and meaningful.

The use of DICT and, particularly, digital games, is one of these possibilities, by providing experiences of immersion, interaction and historical representation in virtual environments.

2.1 THE FIELD OF HISTORY AND THE "FRONTIER WORKS" IN CYBERCULTURE

The production and circulation of historical knowledge occur in multiple ways and manifest themselves in different cultural supports. Although academic historiography is constituted by its own methods, representations of the past also emerge in productions that articulate historical elements in non-academic formats, bringing history closer to the general public through accessible narratives.

In this context, Glezer and Albieri (2009) define the so-called *frontier works* as productions that, although not the result of direct historiographical research, dialogue with

facts, characters, times and historical spaces, functioning as a gateway to historical knowledge outside the school environment. Traditionally associated with historical novels, such works have expanded into genres such as drama, adventure, comics, cinema and, more recently, digital media.

The authors point out that, despite the growth of Digital Information and Communication Technologies (DICT), there has been no decline in interest in these works. On the contrary, there is an expansion of the publishing market, a greater diversity of formats and an increase in academic interest, indicating that such productions have consolidated themselves as relevant cultural objects for studies of memory, reading, culture and teaching.

Expanded accessibility — through digital books, streaming platforms, social networks, blogs, video channels, digital games, and apps — has contributed to greater circulation of these narratives, especially among young audiences and children. Such media operate as cultural interfaces that articulate leisure and learning, functioning as immersion experiences in historical contexts.

For Bezerra and Monteiro (2019), digital games that incorporate historical content constitute a new form of representation of the past, inserted in the contemporary Cultural Industry. The authors observe that many of these games adopt narratives of a monumental nature, centered on heroic figures, resuming the Nietzschean concept of *monumental history*. This approach, while arousing interest, can result in simplified and heroic views of the past, requiring a critical balance between fictional elements and historical accuracy.

The intersection between history, cinema and digital games reveals aesthetic and narrative continuities: the recreation of war scenarios, individual protagonism, the narrative of heroic deeds and hyper-realistic visuality articulate entertainment and collective memory. Examples such as *Saving Private Ryan* (1998) and *Medal of Honor* (1999) illustrate this movement, as both are set in World War II and were produced under the direction of Steven Spielberg, demonstrating how different media build convergent representations of the past.

Figure 2

Scene from the game Medal of Honor (1999) and movie Saving Private Ryan (1998)

Source: Internet.

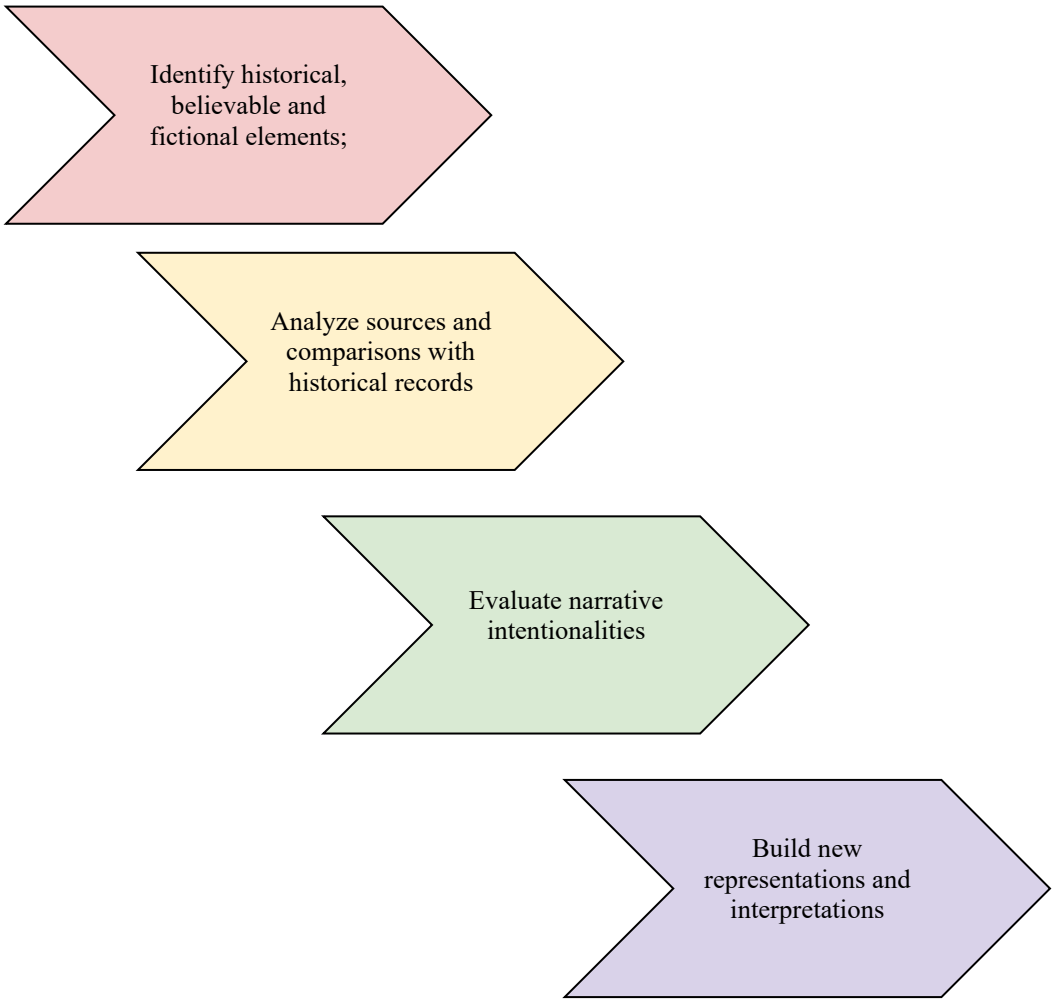
These productions are configured as historical representations, which implies recognizing that they not only disseminate memories, but also produce discourses about the past. Chartier (1988) understands representation as a form of construction of the real mediated by power relations, resulting in historically situated systems of social signification. Thus, representing historically implies selecting, classifying, and attributing meanings to human experiences, including those mediated by digital languages.

For Bezerra and Monteiro (2019), digital games should be analyzed as producers of images and discourses about the past, and not just as playful tools. Their popularity, audiovisual immersion, interactivity and technological convergence make them potential devices for historical learning, as long as they are critically mediated.

By bringing together fictional and historiographical narratives, White (1994) shows that history, as a text, articulates language and interpretation. Thus, fictional works can act as significant ways of teaching and learning in History, as long as they are articulated with analytical, comparative and interpretative processes, dialoguing with historiographical sources. Telles (2017) reinforces that such works make it possible to construct historical representations through imagination, as long as they are mediated by critical investigation.

In this sense, the teacher can explore digital games by asking students to:

Figure 3



Source: Prepared by the authors.

Thus, the ludic operates as a device for immersion, historical imagination and academic interpretation, bringing experiential knowledge closer to historiographical knowledge. As a pedagogical strategy, it does not act only as an illustration, but as an epistemological trigger for investigation and construction of historical meanings.

2.2 DOCUMENTS AND SOURCES IN MULTIMEDIA: LANGUAGES AND HISTORY TEACHING

Human production over time leaves material and symbolic traces capable of revealing practices, values, conflicts, systems of power and ways of life of different societies. These traces — converted into *historical sources* — constitute raw material for the historian's investigation, allowing interpretations of the past and its permanence in the present.

According to Bloch (2002), studying the past should not obscure our understanding of the present, since both are intertwined in a dynamic relationship.

Traditionally, written documents have been valued as the main historical sources. For Ginzburg (2002), the sources do not function as transparent windows or as insurmountable barriers, but as "deforming mirrors", requiring a critical posture in the face of their mediations and intentionalities. Duby (1993) reinforces that it is up to the historian to get closer to the possible truth, maintaining an investigative and suspicious posture in the face of the sources.

Thus, the historical truth is not found in an absolute way in the document, but in the interpretative process that articulates sources, narratives and intentionalities. Marrou (1978) observes that historical truth results from the relationship between the object analyzed (the past) and the subject who interprets it (the historian), overcoming the dichotomy between objectivism and radical subjectivism.

The very notion of historical document is historical and, therefore, variable. For Febvre (1989), a document is any trace produced by societies and that can be mobilized to understand their functioning — including everyday objects, material records, cultural productions and symbolic manifestations. History, according to Veyne (1989), is a form of knowledge constructed from documents, although not exclusively dependent on them, as it also involves narrative, interpretation and contextualization.

Le Goff (2003) expands this conception by stating that the document is the result of social choices, and can be constructed, silenced, destroyed or manipulated, and therefore expresses power relations. Thus, both the production and the circulation of sources constitute political acts.

In teaching, working with historical sources makes it possible to bring students closer to the investigative character of the discipline, fostering protagonism, critical analysis and a sense of historical belonging. Teacher mediation can start from everyday elements — such as photographs, personal accounts, letters, family objects, memes, digital games or cultural artifacts — to academically recognized sources, favoring interpretation and not mere observation.

Santos (2014) argues that the use of new cultural languages in the teaching of History should go beyond the exposure of images and audiovisual content, requiring contextualized analysis, problematization and construction of meanings. Films, games, music, series, digital documents, social networks and transmedia narratives can act as sources of historical knowledge *as long as they* are inserted in reflective, comparative and critical processes.

Thus, the use of different languages in teaching requires:

- adequacy to the school context and age group;
- articulation with curricular objectives;
- mediation oriented to analysis and not to passive consumption;
- reflection on authorship, context, intentionality and circulation of sources.

In this process, the use of documents and sources becomes a strategy to develop historical thinking, critical understanding and reading of the world, allowing subjects to recognize History as a situated, interpretative and plural human construction.

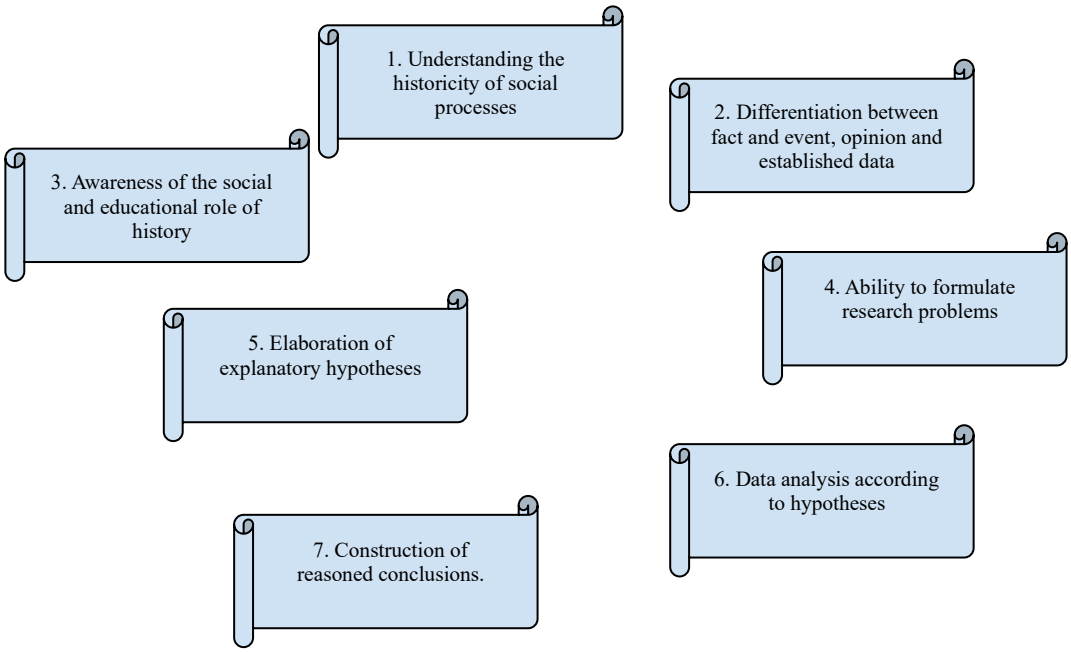
2.3 THE HISTORICAL WAY OF THINKING AND *THE HISTORY GAMES* TODAY

The incorporation of games in teaching practices not only expands the repertoire of pedagogical resources, but also enables new forms of mental organization, interpretation and knowledge construction by students. With the expansion of Digital Information and Communication Technologies (DICT), teachers began to mobilize digital games as instruments capable of stimulating historical reasoning, imagination and critical analysis — essential elements for the formation of historical thinking.

Telles and Alves (2015), based on McCall (2011), define *history games* as historical representations present in digital games that address aspects of the human experience in time. These games favor new perceptions about facts, characters, temporalities and social contexts, contributing to the development of historical skills and to the understanding of the multiple dimensions of historical narrative.

Martineau (1997) emphasizes that the teaching of historical reasoning must articulate interpretation of facts, problematization, contextualization and construction of meaning. In this sense, Mesquita (2018), analyzing role-playing games, identifies relevant pedagogical indicators to observe the development of this type of thinking by students, such as:

Figure 4



Source: Prepared by the authors.

Thus, digital games can constitute artificial environments in which students experience simulated historical situations, developing interpretations and constructing meanings about the past.

Maynard (2011) argues that historians should approach electronic sources and understand their potential as producers of memory. In the same way, teachers can appropriate the uses, resources and records present in digital games, contextualizing them and comparing them to academic sources, exploring tensions and contradictions between representation and historicity.

The structural malleability of games — whether through the creation of narratives, editing scenarios or simulating events — expands pedagogical possibilities. Uricchio (2005) highlights the value of historical simulation, as it offers the player an agency over the unfolding of events, creating situated interpretive experiences. However, such possibilities depend on the openness of the system and the editing ability of the game.

Even so, the playful aspect and creative freedom require judicious mediation. Bello (2017) points out that, when using digital games in the teaching of History, it is not enough to observe aesthetic and narrative characterization; It is necessary to analyze rules, gameplay, modes of interaction and decision structures, as these elements produce historical meanings and reinforce certain interpretations.

Kusiak (2002) points out a central dilemma: digital games are conceived primarily for entertainment; therefore, historical accuracy can be sacrificed in favor of fun. This requires pedagogical guidance that uses analogies, contextualizations and comparisons between game content and historiographical sources.

Therefore, games can serve different purposes in teaching:

Table 1

Learning objectives through games

Pedagogical purpose	Strategy	Expected result
Illustration and approximation	Use of the game's plot as context	Initial engagement
Critical interpretation	Comparison between game and historical sources	Analysis and reflection
Knowledge production	Creation of games and narratives by students	Authorship and historical synthesis

Source: Prepared by the authors.

Chapman (2012) argues that the historical interaction provided by games can be more significant than factual accuracy, as it promotes active participation and the construction of meaning. Fogu (2009) adds that games break with traditional temporal linearity, allowing multiple temporalities and versions of events.

Thus, we consider that *history games* do not replace other media, but expand repertoires of access to the past, as long as they are inserted in methodological processes that emphasize:

- critical analysis;
- validation with sources;
- awareness of technological mediation;
- understanding of narrative intentionalities.

2.4 THE DIMENSIONS OF HISTORICAL CONSCIOUSNESS AND HISTORICAL IMAGINATION IN TEACHING: TENSIONS AND POSSIBILITIES

The development of historical thinking can be compared to the progression of phases in digital games: it requires cumulative skills, decision-making, context reading, memory, combination of strategies and coordinated action. Just as certain games require *combos* — sequences articulated to achieve a certain effect — historical thinking demands complex cognitive articulations between temporality, interpretation, causality, and narrative.

Rüsen (2010) defines historical consciousness as the set of mental operations through which the subject interprets the temporal evolution of himself and his world, guiding his action in the present from the relationship between past and future. Such awareness is constitutive of the human experience, as Mesquita (2018) observes, and manifests itself not only in the understanding of the past, but in the way it acts as a reference to structure contemporary social practices.

In the work of Rüsen (2010), historical consciousness is classified into four forms:

Table 2

Historical consciousness according to Rüsen (2010)

Category	Central feature	Relationship with the past
Traditional	Permanence	The past remains unproblematized
Exemplary	Generalization	The past serves as an explanatory model for the present
Criticism	Rupture	The past is analyzed and relativized, recognizing changes
Genetics	Temporal transformation	Past and present are articulated in dynamic continuity

Source: Prepared by the authors.

This typology allows us to analyze how students construct historical meaning when interacting with games, narratives, and sources. In Mesquita's (2018) research, the use of RPG made it possible to observe how players elaborated historical interpretations, positioning themselves in relation to temporalities and social constructions based on the actions of their characters in fictional contexts.

The dimension of the historical imagination is articulated with this process. For White (1994), history is not separated from literature, since narratives are linguistically structured and carry interpretative subjectivity. When writing history, the historian selects, orders and interprets events through narrative resources; Therefore, imagination is not opposed to rigor, but a condition of historical representation.

Digital games, due to their narrative and interactive nature, can act as triggers of the historical imagination, because:

- **they build scenarios and temporalities**: by allowing visualization in differentiated spaces and media, with audiovisual, sensorial and movement stimuli in varied dimensions.

- **They recreate characters and events**: they allow historical figures to be remembered with greater visual, auditory and precision resources according to the quality of the graphics.
- **They enable different narrative paths:** it provides the opportunity to view and experience (limited or not) historical characters according to the narrative proposed in the games.
- **insert the player as an agent of the plot:** it inserts players with a first-person view and protagonism when working with immersion in the field of actions. Even though the game design allows for limited actions, something common in the configuration and proposals so that players do not get lost in the actions and plot, it brings new perspectives to the player in "experiencing" the story and making decisions.
- **They allow multiple interpretations and outcomes**: in games with more open narratives, they provide the opportunity for players to have varied decisions and have different answers according to their actions, causing more resources to be questioned and idealized according to the proposal of a class or interest.

Thus, by influencing the imagination, games can promote practices of historical interpretation that articulate past and present from experiences of immersion.

In this sense, Paixão and Borges (2018) state that imagination expands the human experience beyond immediate reality. Pereira (2020) expands this understanding by suggesting that the teaching of History should constitute a *hybrid territory*, in which school knowledge dialogues with cultural practices, digital media, youth, and community repertoires.

Instead of conceiving History as a single narrative about a distant past, Pereira proposes that teaching incorporates:

- **Multiple historical subjects**: understand that a narrative encompasses various subjects, in synchronous places and times, integrated or not, depending on the perspective of the narrator or what the intention is.
- **Extracurricular knowledge**: Knowledge and history are areas that cross various fields of research, situations, spaces and people. Therefore, it can be enriched by diversified knowledge such as popular culture, varied narratives, material and immaterial sources, among others.
- **Cultural and media experiences**: history conceives and can interact with various sources of research and events.

- **Divergent interpretations:** demonstrating points and counterpoints are necessary to foster debate and criticality about sources, allowing transversal dialogues in order to bring the meanings closer and capture subjectivities that a narrative alone may not be able to contemplate.
- **Possibilities for the future:** broadening debates, fostering research and questioning historical movements and their social relevance are legacies for future societies.

This movement is close to the proposal of White (2014), for whom imagination is also an ethical element of the relationship with the past, as it allows us to conceive futures not as a mere continuity of the present, but as a historical alternative. The historical imagination, in this context, is not restricted to fantasy, but acts as a force that produces social meanings.

Digital games, by allowing trials, experiments, errors, hypotheses and multiple narrative paths, become privileged spaces for this exercise. They allow us to feel the past without reproducing it literally, stimulating reflection on causality, perspective, and the consequence of social actions — fundamental elements for the development of historical thought.

2.5 PLAYFULNESS IN YOUTH AND ADULT EDUCATION

Youth and Adult Education (EJA) is an educational modality marked by the heterogeneity of trajectories, life experiences, interrupted temporalities and differentiated relationships with schooling. In this context, playfulness emerges as a pedagogical possibility that respects the subjects' previous knowledge, promotes engagement and favors meaningful learning through practical, dialogical and culturally referenced experiences.

Historically, playful practices have been associated with the children's universe, and are rarely recognized as formative strategies for adolescents, adults and the elderly. However, authors such as Brougère (2008) and Kishimoto (2011) demonstrate that playfulness is a cultural, social and symbolic phenomenon, not restricted to childhood. Thus, it can be understood as a practice that articulates pleasure, creativity, imagination and learning, assuming educational functions when intentionally structured.

In EJA, playfulness does not act only as a teaching method, but as a mediation that values subjectivities, promotes autonomy and strengthens identity bonds. Freire (1996) highlights that adult education should start from the concrete experience of the subjects, allowing learning to be the result of the problematization of their realities. The playful

approach, when integrated with social and historical themes, can articulate memory, popular culture, community narratives, and social criticism.

Rocha (2015) reinforces that playful practices in EJA increase the intellectual self-esteem of the student, often marked by a history of dropout, school failure and educational exclusion. Activities such as cooperative games, narrative dynamics, *role-playing games (RPG) and simulations can promote active participation and resignification of the relationship with knowledge.*

In addition, the dialogue between playfulness and digital technologies is highlighted in the face of the growing insertion of adults and the elderly in the universe of connected media. Kenski (2012) argues that digital culture requires new forms of pedagogical mediation, based on interactivity, authorship and multiplicity of languages. From this perspective, digital games, gamified environments and storytelling resources can contribute to more democratic educational practices in EJA, bringing curricular content closer to the sociocultural experiences of students.

Considering the ludic as an emancipatory strategy implies recognizing the EJA student as a historical subject. Thus, playfulness should not be treated as an isolated motivational technique, but as a pedagogical dimension that integrates criticality, aesthetic pleasure, social reflection and the construction of identities.

3 DIGITAL TECHNOLOGIES AND EVERYDAY SCHOOL LIFE

The insertion of Digital Information and Communication Technologies (DICT) in school environments still represents a significant challenge. Issues such as inequality of access, teacher resistance, inadequate use of resources, insufficient training, as well as reductionist perceptions about the role of technology in the educational process, constitute "phases" that need to be overcome so that such tools are effectively incorporated in a critical and pedagogical way.

It is wrong to assume that the simple use of technologies — including digital games — guarantees learning. The school does not operate under strict prescriptions or standardized responses. As Costa (2019, p. 91) states, in education "there are no manuals, there are no formulas, there are no certainties, but there are possibilities", which are built and guided by the teacher based on his theoretical and methodological choices.

Thus, it is not only a matter of inserting resources, but of consciously appropriating their theoretical conceptions, pedagogical purposes and epistemological limits, articulating

them with clear objectives of historical learning. Given these scenarios, it is important to think about some aspects:

- **Study of the theoretical foundation that guides the use of technology**: As important as the use of digital technologies in learning environments, thinking about their applicability and relevance in pedagogical mediations sustain successful works. Constantly reviewing the literature and experiences of other professionals makes the theoretical and practical framework have greater chances of success. According to Soares (2022), the use of technologies cannot be mere allegories, they need to have a meaning for their incorporation and understanding by all learning participants.
- **Understanding the interfaces between historical content and game**: Playing for the sake of playing does not make sense and is not capable of providing effective learning. The use of methodologies and artifacts is premised on offering differentiated experiences and working on meanings that the teacher understands as effective in the acquisition of historical knowledge. The conjectures and construction of the activities must dialogue with possible objectives and goals that are intelligible to the students during the experience. Otherwise, it will lose meaning. Exemplifying and briefly explaining the contexts of the game, positioning on the objectives to be achieved and working on historical facts during immersion favors learning. Fiction and reality need to be worked on in order to generate formal learning.
- **Definition of coherent evaluation strategies:** explaining the purposes of the activity, as well as the points to be analyzed and shared, whether in a written or oral evaluation, needs to be delimited before the activities are started so that the participants understand the purposes and have an idea of what to observe. Otherwise, there may be a loss of meaning or activity emptied of purpose. Fostering collective learning strategies, systematization of knowledge and exchanges based on conversation circles or focus groups are examples of approaches to classroom work.

Valente (2005) argues that digital games constitute multimodal texts, as they articulate several areas of knowledge — Arts, Mathematics, Language, Computing, Science and History — enabling integrated learning. From the perspective of History teaching, this multimodal character allows working from narrative interpretation to the creation of historically based scenarios and plots.

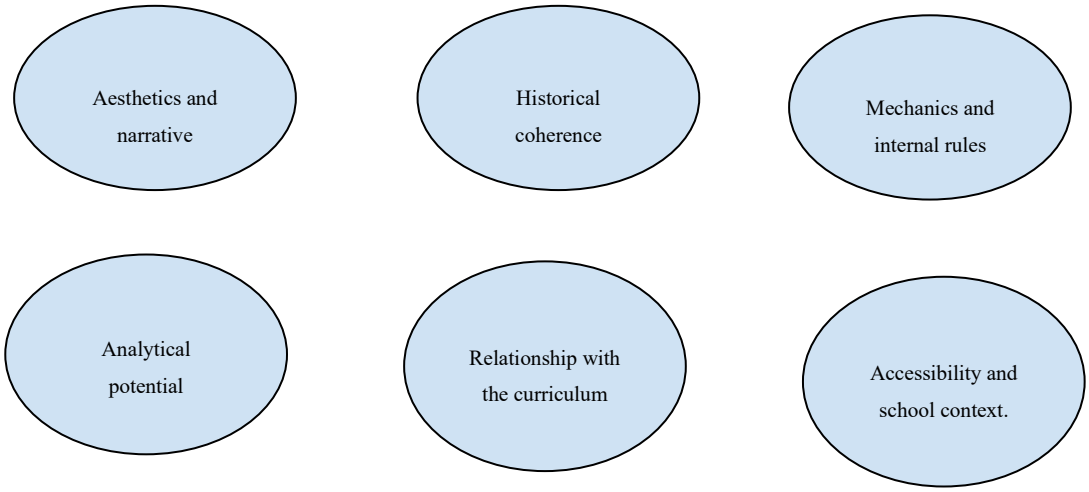
When students participate in the process of producing, customizing, or modifying games, the pedagogical component can become even more meaningful. Creating plots, building characters, and simulating historical processes allows you not only to learn about the past, but to reflect on how it is narrated, interpreted, and represented.

Such experiences generate continuous cognitive and affective feedback, observed during the interaction with the game and also after the decision-making process. This relates to the concept of *flow state* (CSIKSZENTMIHALYI, 2014), characterized by full immersion in activities that challenge pre-existing skills and promote high engagement. In these states, players demonstrate creativity, focus, perseverance, and strategic decision-making—skills relevant to historical thinking.

Gee (2009) observes that well-structured games offer progressive challenges: they start with simple problems and gradually complexify the situations. This mechanism is close to pedagogical practices that organize learning in a spiral, activating previous knowledge and expanding it in a guided way. Thus, digital games can help both in the development of conceptual mastery and in the mobilization of skills that already exist, but not yet explained.

The selection of games, however, cannot be impulsive. It is necessary to consider:

Figure 5



Source: Prepared by the authors.

Arruda (2009) reinforces that the focus of interactions should be on the development of historical reasoning, and not only on enchantment or sensory immersion. Entering simulated environments can provoke a feeling of participation in the past, but it is critical mediation that transforms experience into historical knowledge.

We agree, therefore, with Gee (2009) that pleasure, challenge and learning are constitutive elements of digital games — and, when critically mediated, can contribute significantly to pedagogical practice. The goal is not to choose between "playing" or "studying", but to understand how play can become a means to operate historical thought, and not an end in itself.

4 FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

The teaching of History in contemporary times demands pedagogical practices that dialogue with multiple languages, temporalities and forms of knowledge production. The expansion of access to Digital Information and Communication Technologies (DICT), as well as their presence in the cultural experiences of young people, adults and the elderly, requires from the school not only the incorporation of new resources, but the resignification of training methods and purposes.

Digital games, as cultural artifacts inserted in the universe of the Cultural Industry and marked by fictional narratives and historical representations, are configured as one of these possible resources. Its use should not be reduced to mere entertainment, but understood as a device capable of mobilizing historical thinking, imagination, critical analysis, construction of meaning and production of narratives about the past.

The literature analyzed demonstrates that such media enable experiences of immersion and historical simulation that can contribute to the development of interpretative skills, critical reading of sources, formulation of hypotheses, understanding of temporality and the relationship between past, present and future. Such dimensions dialogue with concepts such as historical consciousness (Rüsen, 2010) and historical imagination (White, 1994; Pereira, 2020), allowing situated and socially referenced learning.

However, the pedagogical use of digital games requires competent mediation. It is necessary to understand narrative intentionality, limits of representation, absence of historical neutrality and predominance of entertainment as an original function of the cultural product. Without this care, there is a risk of reinforcing reductionist, heroic, Eurocentric or anachronistic perspectives of the past.

The role of the teacher, therefore, is central, because in approaches that use games, whether digital or not, it is important to consider the selection of games that are coherent with curricular content, to articulate historical sources and comparative analysis, to problematize

narratives and represented discourses, to evaluate learning beyond the performance in the game and to promote dialogues about identity, memory, power and culture.

It is concluded that digital games do not replace traditional teaching methods nor do they constitute an automatic didactic solution. However, when used critically, they can expand training repertoires, bring students closer to investigative practices and contribute to the construction of significant historical knowledge, especially in contexts of Youth, Adult and Elderly Education.

Thus, one of the contemporary challenges will be to understand how games and playfulness can become part of an intentional, dialogical, critical pedagogical project committed to the formation of historically conscious subjects capable of transforming reality.

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