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In interactions, it is possible to play... and in playing, the game is built: analyses of the document *Brinca Curitiba* on playing scenarios

Nas interações é possível brincar... e no brincar se constrói a brincadeira: análises do documento Brinca Curitiba sobre cenários do brincar

En las interacciones es posible jugar... y al jugar se construye el juego: análisis del documento Brinca Curitiba sobre los escenarios de juego

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Abstract

The present study analyzes scenarios of the act of playing in children's schools, published in the document BRINCA CURITIBA (Curitiba, 2016). This document is the report of a research project conducted by the Department of Early Childhood Education of the Municipal Department of Education of Curitiba, which was organized as a teacher training booklet to understand the right to play as a central axis of pedagogical practices. The scenarios analyzed, through documentary research, showed how child-child and child-adult interactions, as well as interactions with school spaces, constitute the act of playing and characterize the play through fantasy and challenges. Thus, with the understanding that playing is a form of interaction with the world and, together with toys, produces games, we conclude that the playing scenarios are places that promote interactions and interpretative reproduction of the context in which the child lives, through the production of scenes. And these scenes are characterized by games that can be understood as narratives of the child's body. Therefore, the playing scenarios can constitute the pedagogical foundation of Early Childhood Education.

Keywords: Interaction. Play. Game. Playing Scenarios.

Resumo

O presente estudo analisa cenários do brincar na escola da criança, publicados no documento BRINCA CURITIBA (Curitiba, 2016). Esse documento é o relatório de um projeto de pesquisa do Departamento de Educação Infantil da Secretaria Municipal de Educação de Curitiba, que se organizou como caderno formação de professores, para compreensão do direito ao brincar como eixo central das práticas pedagógicas. Os cenários do brincar analisados, numa pesquisa documental, mostraram como as interações criança-criança e criança-adulto, bem como as interações com os espaços escolares, constituem o brincar e caracterizam a brincadeira por meio da fantasia e dos desafios. Assim, com a compreensão de que o brincar é uma forma de interação com o mundo e, entrelaçada com o brinquedo, produz brincadeiras, concluímos: os cenários do brincar são lugares que promovem interações e a reprodução interpretativa do contexto em que a criança vive, por meio da produção de cenas. E estas cenas caracterizam-se em brincadeiras que poderão ser compreendidas como narrativas do corpo criança. Assim, cenários do brincar poderão se constituir fundamento pedagógico da Educação Infantil.

Palavras-chave: Interação. Brincar. Brincadeira. Cenário do brincar.

Resumen

El presente estudio analiza escenarios del jugar en la escuela infantil, publicados en el documento BRINCA CURITIBA (Curitiba, 2016). Este documento es el relato de un proyecto de investigación del Departamento de Educación Infantil de la Secretaría Municipal de Educación de Curitiba que se organizó como un cuaderno de formación docente para comprender el derecho al juego como eje central de las prácticas pedagógicas. Los escenarios del jugar analizados, en una investigación documental, mostraron cómo las interacciones niño-niño y niño-adulto, así como las interacciones con los espacios escolares, constituyen el jugar y caracterizan el juego a través de la fantasía y los desafíos. Así, entendiendo que el jugar es una forma de interacción con el mundo y, entrelazado con los juguetes, produce juegos, concluimos que los escenarios del jugar son lugares que promueven las interacciones y la reproducción interpretativa del contexto en el que vive el niño, a través de la producción de escenas. Y estas escenas se caracterizan por juegos que pueden entenderse como narraciones del cuerpo del niño. Así, los escenarios del jugar pueden constituir la base pedagógica de la Educación Infantil.

Palabras clave: Interacción. Jugar. Juego. Escenarios de juego.

Introductory concerns

Playing is a secret path, it never takes us to the same place, it is chasing a route with no intention of arriving. I'm talking about treading uncertainties! (Brandão, 2022).

What is interesting to say about playing and children's games? What still remains unknown about the topic and mobilizes us to produce research and reflections?

Starting a text with questions seems like child's play, because questions can move the game and, through them, build the game. Not exactly questions made of words based on grammar, which can be translated into dictionary entries, but of words that translate into action verbs.

Brandão (2022), who is presented in the epigraph as a poet and educator or educator and poet, plays with words and shows us clues on how to talk about the theme, and speaking, writing, discussing, reflecting on playing and games can take us to different places, for example: we can deal with policies for playing, the playing subjects, the ways of playing and the types of game, the intergenerational and intragenerational relationship in teaching practices, among other intersections. In short, a plurality of paths that scholars seek to unveil.

Given this context of concerns, we propose, in this study¹, an analysis of the scenarios of the action of playing in children's schools, as presented in the document BRINCA CURITIBA (Curitiba, 2016).

To justify the choices, for this analytical essay, we relied on some documents, such as the National Curriculum Guidelines for Early Childhood Education – DCNEI (Brasil, 2009a), which deal with playing and games in the interactions present in educational practices of Early Childhood Education. The DCNEI, by defining curriculum as "[...] a set of practices that seek to articulate children's experiences and knowledge with knowledge that is part of the cultural, artistic, scientific and technological heritage" (Brasil, 2009a, p. 6), reinforces the need for articulation between children's knowledge and the knowledge systematized in our culture. Thus, it highlights the need for the teacher to plan and develop an educational work that provides opportunities and expands the children's experiences, having interactions and games as guiding axes of pedagogical practices in Early Childhood Education. In this way, the DCNEI (Brasil, 2009a) consolidates what other documents defend for childhood: playing as a right of the child, according to the Statute of the Child and Adolescent (Brasil, 1990).

Interactions and games have a central role in the learning and development processes of young children, because "through their playful actions, their first interactions with and in the world playing with themselves and with their peers, they produce another cultural way of establishing social relationships" (Brasil, 2009b, p. 24). Therefore, interactions and games structure the ways children understand the world and communicate.

Based on the DCNEI (Brasil, 2009a), which is configured as a mandatory document in the scope of public policies for Early Childhood Education, we start from the premise that the Union, states, municipalities and educational institutions have the duty and obligation to mobilize public policies² and pedagogical actions that guarantee interactions and games as the axis of the Early Childhood Education school.

These considerations justify our choice to analyze the document BRINCA CURITIBA (Curitiba, 2016), because to guarantee the right to play in Early Childhood Education and mobilize the city to look at playing as an action of the child, the Municipal Department of Education of Curitiba, through the Department of Early Childhood Education, developed in 2015 and 2016 a research project that involved children, families and professionals from Early Childhood Education institutions, named **Brinca Curitiba**.

¹ Study carried out with the support of CAPES (PROEX/PPGE-UFPR).

² We understand public policies (PP) as "the definition, regulation, piloting, and execution of guidelines and actions that go towards solving needs and problems of daily life that arise for an entire community or specific segments of it. The definition and regulation of these policies are carried out at various levels, namely, in global or transnational, national, and local instances" (Amado; Almeida, 2017, n.p.).

We understand that this project constituted a public educational policy, since it established a set of actions that reverberated in mobilizing educational practices about playing, in the construction of the Early Childhood Education school in Curitiba and the research report was transformed into a training booklet distributed to all professionals of the Municipal Education Network of Curitiba, called BRINCA CURITIBA (Curitiba, 2016). From this document, we have chosen the playing scenarios for analysis.

Interactions and playing in Early Childhood Education: reflections on children's playing

Gianfranco Ravasi (2018, p. 36) tells us that: "One question always leads to another. A child's questions are relevant precisely because, like the poet, they can continually ask *why*." We agree with Ravasi (2018) and complement with the following reflection: in every researcher, as in children, there resides a question mark. Therefore, when the topic is playing and games in Early Childhood Education, many questions arise; however, in order to address part of our concerns about the theme, we have chosen to start by discussing the concepts of interactions and games, relating them to the concept of playing.

The word **interaction** has its origin in Latin, formed by the prefix *inter* + *action*. *Inter*, in its semantics sense, means **between**, so when we deal with interaction as a human relation, the prefix **inter** could be associated with: between two or more bodies, between bodies and objects, between bodies and space. As for action, according to Antony Giddens (2009), it is the capacity of the human being to intervene and transform the social world. When we translate this concept into the context in which children are, we understand interaction as their ability to act in the social world, in a relationship that is made **between** themselves and the space, **between** themselves and other child(ren) and/or adult(s), **between** themselves and objects, in a temporal dynamic marked by "normative elements and codes of signification" (Giddens, 2009, p. XXXV). In other words, interaction (*inter+action*) refers to setting oneself in motion **between** relations, because movement is constituted in action. This, in turn, is transformed into verbs of an agent who does, with the other, for the other, in the other.

This between-action (*inter + action*) of the agents leads us to another concept, that of **agency**. Agency is the human capacity to do things, "of which an individual is the perpetrator, in the sense that they could, at any point of a given sequence of conduct, have acted differently. Whatever happened would not have happened if this individual had not intervened" (Giddens, 2009, p. 11). However, human agency cannot be understood without structure, as it provides resources for people to act, but at the same time takes forms that are the result of our actions (Giddens, 2009). In this context, every action involves a certain type of power, which means the capacity to transform (Giddens, 2009).

Thus, an inter-action, as an **action between**, of an agent who holds a certain form of power to transform their social world, can be translated, when we approach children, into playing. But why playing?

Playing is a verb and, as a verb, we understand it as a mode of action of the children, or rather, inter-action, an exercise of agency by the child who acts in an orderly way, based on their own, non-literal logic, in which they exercise a certain type of power.

Borba (2006, p. 39) corroborates by stating: "playing is one of the pillars of the constitution of childhood cultures, understood as specific meanings and forms of social action that structure children's relationships with each other, as well as the ways in which they interpret, represent and act upon the world".

Playing as a verb of action is embodied through verbal experiences that cross children's bodies, such as: running, jumping, hiding, throwing, climbing, cooking, turning off, cycling, catching, launching, among others. In short, the body semantics of an actor who interacts (*inter+acts*) with the other, with the space, with objects, with social rules, having the body in motion as a vector of action.

From this perspective, we understand that playing and interaction are concepts that blend, in which one mobilizes the other; that is, interaction mobilizes playing and playing mobilizes interaction. Mobilizing,

in this study, is understood based on Charlot (2000, p. 54), as follows: "to mobilize is to put into motion; to mobilize is to set oneself in motion." Therefore, in interaction, the child sets themselves in motion to play, and playing puts the child in an interaction.

Kishimoto (2017) states that playing is configured by some characteristics such as freedom of action, spontaneous character, free choice, and control of action. By translating these characteristics, we understand that freedom of action is a child's ability to act when playing. The spontaneous character means that the child engages in actions of playing voluntarily, exercising their will. Free choice refers to autonomous decision-making, with autonomy understood as power and participation (Sarmiento, 2015), therefore, agency. Thus, free choice refers to the child's power to deliberate while playing, such as choosing who will be the mother and the little daughter, or deciding if their body is capable of climbing and descending from a tree. These characteristics result in the control of the action, that is, in the mastery of oneself and the game.

Another property that constitutes play is the unproductive character of play, because "while the child plays, their attention is focused on the activity itself and not on its results or effects" (Kishimoto, 2017, p. 28).

Although we agree that playing is configured by these characteristics, we understand that by defining it in such a restricted way, we can imprison the possibilities of children's actions, since other aspects may be involved in what they recognize as playing, since the meaning attributed to playing is given by the playing actor. An example that we can refer to is the study by Barnett (2013), in which children mention the intensity of physical involvement to define if they are playing, or the study by Tamashiro, Garanhani, and Paula (2024), in which the children in the investigation attribute to playing the meaning of sports initiation and define it as a way to have fun.

In this sense, the concept of play can be polysemic, that is, it is an open concept in which it is characterized as a form of action through which the child creates and transforms meanings about the world, but it is also cultural heritage, the result of actions transmitted in an intragenerational (with children) and intergenerational (with adults) way.

It is through playing that the child can transform spaces, objects, and actions of everyday life into symbolic materialities. Playing is, therefore, an action that structures the child's relationship with themselves, with others, and with the world in which they are inserted. In this sense, playing is an experience of culture (Borba, 2006), as it allows the child to construct meanings about the world in which they are inserted, through acting, that is, interacting.

When playing, the child produces **play**. Thus, we can consider that play is a product of playing. Product here cannot be understood as a final result, because play, in general, does not have a rigid ending, but is always a process that is permanently modified during playing.

In general, we can attribute different meanings and, sometimes, ambiguities to the word play. Spréa and Garanhani (2014, p. 722) provide examples:

Florestan Fernandes (2004) refers to traditional games often using the expression *children's folkloric play*, while Kishimoto (1993) adopts the term *traditional children's game*. Educators, in general, use the term *play*, but, due to the recent access to numerous pedagogical materials and CDs that compile these games, they also use the term *toy*, referring not only to the physical object, but to the play itself, as is the case with *singing games*.

We understand play as a product of the children's culture³, which the child produces through play. "[...] play is a phenomenon of culture, since it is configured as a set of practices, knowledge, and artifacts built and accumulated by the subjects in the historical and social contexts in which they are inserted. It represents, in this way, a common heritage on which the subjects develop joint activities" (Borba, 2006, p.

³ Addressing a culture specific to children does not exclude that this culture is constituted by elements of adult culture and marked by social structure.

39). In other words, it is the materialization of the child's engaged action "according to personal motivations and the social situations that involve them" (Spréa; Garanhani, 2014, p. 725). Therefore, play is the child's **activity** and, "for the activity to exist, the child must mobilize, for them to mobilize, the situation must have a meaning for them" (Charlot, 2000, p. 54), that is, the child sets themselves in motion in an activity (here understood as play), that is, they mobilize when they invest in it (Charlot, 2000).

The investment that the child employs in play is constituted by different physical, human and social resources, which here can be understood by experiences, practices, knowledge, relationships, among others, which the child appropriates and mobilizes in play, an activity that can involve imagination, fantasy, challenges, uncertainties, improvisations, disputes, community, in short, a set of social practices.

As a product of culture, play is instituted through a set of norms and rules, which can be explicit, as is the case of the definition of roles in a game of tag, as well as in the game of mother and child, or implicit, as is the case of games of fight⁴ (a term used by children). In the latter, we realize that children do not always verbalize it that one of the rules is not to hurt the other; however, while playing, children know that to keep playing, they need to take care of the other who plays. Hurting the other concerns this other wanting to withdraw from the game, either because they got hurt or due to adult intervention in the game, who generally do not tolerate fighting games (Spréa, 2018).

The games are structured, in part, by the toy, which is configured as one of the motives that mobilizes the child's action (playing) and the entry into the activity (playing).

Spréa and Garanhani (2014, p. 722) state, quoting Brougère (2006), that the "toy is the support for play. This idea leads us to the importance of the materiality of the object, in which the child goes up or down; they catch, throw, or capture, with which they create scenarios and dramatizations, and play".

For Brougère (2021, p. 11-12) "it is marked, in fact, by the dominance of symbolic value over function or, to be more faithful to what it is, the symbolic dimension becomes, in it, the main function", since it is only in the interaction with this object that the child will give its meaning, that is, they will transform the functional function of the object into symbolic representation, often combined with other social terms of everyday life.

We agree that the toy can be the material object that has a predefined structure, as is the case of the doll and the car, but it can also be constituted by objects that do not have rigid structures, such as a box or a shadow, among others. Therefore, a toy gains meaning through the child's action of playing, which will give it different meanings.

Although the studies point to the physical dimension of the toy, we expanded this discussion here, because we recognize in the children's actions other resources that are activated in the game and that can also trigger it, as is the case of dance. The child plays dancing and, in this action, we could ask: what structures the game of dancing? In the internal logic that the child establishes with the game of dancing, their toy can be the dance itself, as a body narrative, which the child writes through their body in movement (Paula, 2023). In this situation, there is not necessarily the physical presence of an object.

Gestures, in the same way, can participate in the process of structuring a game, as is the case of the game Rock, paper, scissors⁵, in which the movements referred to each of these objects are what support the game to occur. In this case, if we removed the gestures, there would be no such game.

⁴ "These ways of playing allow us to improve motor skills and the ability to deal with fear and anxiety. These situations also contribute to the education of the body, such as fights with pillows, shots with pistols, swords, revealing the experience of risks that contribute to distinguishing fantasy from reality. Often, these experiences are inspired by superhero movements or environments of war and/or disputes, which lead children to represent imaginary universes through the body and movement, (re)constructed from multiple interactive influences. Many of these actions are characterized as games in themselves, and, however, in the adult's view, they can be understood as acts of violence or aggression. The games of fight and chase represent, throughout childhood, one of the most fascinating languages of the body from an evolutionary perspective; The behaviors of *play-fighting*, *play-chasing*, and *real-fighting* have been widely studied in animal and human behaviors" (Neto, 2020, pp. 88-89).

⁵ A game of luck in which the players, without the other knowing, make, at the same time, gestures with their hands that refer to the objects rock (closed hand), paper (open hand), scissors (gesture of the number two), and each gesture has a value of victory or defeat over the other. For example, scissors beat the paper, because they can cut it.

Thus, interactions and play are concepts intertwined by playing, because in the action of playing, relationships are built, through interactions, and materialize in forms of play, which constitute children's material culture (Corsaro, 2011).

Methodological map for the study

If in the past the poet Brandão (2022) defined play as chasing a route with no intention of arriving, in research, unlike poetry, it is necessary to trace routes to reach evidence and conclusive answers.

In this way, we propose to present a methodological map that guided this study, because:

[...] The data generated in an investigation work as points on a map that gradually connect and intertwine, and the lines of the paths formed give meaning to the research problem. It is up to the researcher, through the organization, analysis, and interpretation of these data, to connect these dots, to produce paths that will lead them to find new territories of knowledge (Paula, 2023, p. 121).

Thus, we resort to documentary research understood as "a procedure that uses methods and techniques for the apprehension, understanding and analysis of documents of the most varied types" (Sá-Silva; Almeida; Guindani, 2009, p. 5). The documentary material analyzed was BRINCA CURITIBA (Curitiba, 2016), which, although it is characterized as a teacher training booklet, is the research report of the Brinca Curitiba project, and, therefore, we justify that we carried out the analysis of a type of document that brings evidence and analysis.

The choice for the Brinca Curitiba project, by the Municipal Department of Education of Curitiba, is justified when we understand that actions and strategies for teacher training play a central role in the consolidation of a proposal that considers and values interactions and play as guiding axes of pedagogical practices in Early Childhood Education. In addition, it was a project that involved the participation of children, families, and professionals from Early Childhood Education institutions in Curitiba, and its research report was consolidated in a training booklet, distributed to the entire municipal school network (RME): BRINCA CURITIBA (Curitiba, 2016).

Brinca Curitiba Project was proposed by the team of the Department of Early Childhood Education, in 2015, with the desire and need to "[...] guarantee children's right to play; to value play as an essential practice in Early Childhood Education; to rescue the playful memory of Curitiba, to value its history and socialize it; to share meaningful actions that promote a greater repertoire for the children of Curitiba to play" (Curitiba, 2016, p. 7).

With the authorization of the subjects (professionals from the RME of Curitiba and families) involved, actions were developed to mobilize the reflection of professionals and family members about playing in the context of the city of Curitiba, through the construction of toys, survey⁶ of the favorite childhood games of professionals and families, collection of materials that portrayed play in past times, as well as analysis of the games present in Early Childhood Education institutions today. These actions were guided by the following themes: children and playing adults – toy construction; playing memories; playing treasures; playing scenarios; and the meanings of play.

The action **Children and Playing Adults - toy construction** was developed in March 2015, in celebration of the anniversary of the city of Curitiba, and consisted of a proposal to build toys based on the children's knowledge.

In order to put children and adults together to play, it was proposed to the professionals who worked with the preschoolers (children from 4 to 5 years old) of the RME institutions of Curitiba, to investigate the children's knowledge about the community and the city of Curitiba. To this end, the proposal was to

⁶ The training booklet does not present a detailed description of the survey of games and the collection of materials on play from the past. Emphasis is given to the characterization of the games and their analyses.

instigate the children about what they knew about the surroundings of their institution and invite them to look at places in Curitiba, so this knowledge would be transformed into moments of play (Curitiba, 2016, p. 11).

From this, through an action shared with children, families, and teachers, different toys were built, revealing elements of the city's culture, such as the superhero **Super Verdinho**, created to protect the city, and the *rolimã cart*⁷, a traditional toy in many neighborhoods of Curitiba.

Reflecting on the meanings that these and other toys carry allows us to understand toys not only as a support for playing, but also as a cultural product (Brougère, 2021), through which children create and recreate elements of their cultures.

The action **Playing Memories**, "[...] aimed to rescue the memory of Curitiba's play, in order to value its history and socialize it" (Curitiba, 2016, p. 23). Based on the understanding that playing memories are related to the meanings of play in different childhoods, a study was developed, through an online questionnaire, to learn about the playing memories of professionals from institutions and children's families. A total of 9,500 responses to this questionnaire were collected, 3,201 from professionals and 6,299 from family members (Curitiba, 2016).

The questions referred to the favorite childhood plays, toys and games (hopscotch, ball, *betes*, tag, among others), where they played (street, backyard, playground, square, at grandparents' house, inside the house/apartment, among other places), with whom (alone, siblings, parents, neighbors, friends, cousins or other people) and where they spent their childhood (Curitiba, 2016, p. 23).

In addition to these questions, there was also an open space for the participants' reports and/or comments. When filling out the questionnaire and writing down their memories, professionals and family members recalled experiences from their childhoods, and in the answers given, it was possible to identify elements that gave visibility to Curitiba's playing memory (Curitiba, 2016).

Regarding games and plays, *betes*, tag, and hopscotch marked the childhoods of the research participants, as they were present in all regions of the city of Curitiba. Regarding the spaces where the games took place, the street and the backyards of the houses were the most indicated places, and friends and siblings were pointed out by the participants as the main partners for playing in their childhoods.

The analysis of this action shows us that revisiting our memories and getting to know other memories related to play allows us to establish a relationship with playing today, as well as to reflect on the games that are part of different childhoods, in which spaces, who with and how children play today.

Recollections are constituted in memories and "these memories are sometimes materialized in objects, photos, filming, and other treasures that allow them to survive the present" (Curitiba, 2016, p. 29). With this understanding, the **Playing Treasures** action mobilized professionals and families to share their treasures, along with reports that contextualized them.

We observed that the richness of pretend play and traditional games, the charm of toys, the relationships established with friends, siblings, cousins, and neighbors through play, and the discoveries of play in nature marked the shared treasures. By knowing these treasures, it is possible to understand that play is constituted in the interaction of children with other subjects, with the objects and nature around them, and that the experience of playing permeates different spaces and times, being marked at the same time by continuity and change (Borba, 2006).

The following action, entitled **Playing Scenarios**, aimed to portray and reflect on the play spaces of the Early Childhood Education institutions of the RME of Curitiba, based on the understanding that:

⁷ "Roller cart or roller car is the name given to the cart usually built of wood and steel bearings, for racing downhill. It is usually used on asphalt and smooth descents". Available at: https://pt.wikipedia.org/wiki/Carrinho_de_rolim%C3%A3. Accessed on: 15 Mar. 2017.

Each Early Childhood Education professional, when investigating, sharing, and reflecting on play, based on these initial considerations, has the intention of developing a sharp, attentive, and sensitive look at the movement of children and their playing experiences in the educational space (Curitiba, 2016, p. 37).

To this end, professionals socialized records of children's play, which revealed two arrangements in which the scenario of play is characterized in the context of educational institutions: interactions in the spaces of the institution and child/child - child/adult interactions (Curitiba, 2016).

This action led to the understanding that "when playing in the educational spaces of the institutions of Curitiba, the children show peculiar arrangements of their childhoods, which become scenarios built by them and/or experienced in the structured spaces" (Curitiba, 2016, p. 45). It reinforces, therefore, that children have their own ways of playing, which are revealed and structured in the different spaces of Early Childhood Education institutions.

The Brinca Curitiba Project brought together "[...] a set of actions that mobilized meanings about play in the education of children in Curitiba, which were revealed in interpretations of toys and/or games, scenarios and memories of playing experiences" (Curitiba, 2016, p. 47). In this way, the action **Meanings of Play** sought to reveal the senses and meanings present in the experiences of all those involved in the project.

Brinca Curitiba made it possible to undo the assumption that children in educational institutions in Curitiba nowadays do not play. Yes, they do play! And their ways and manners reveal the different ways of playing of the new generations... Adults, both the children's families and education professionals, recalled their childhood [...]. Such memories sensitized adults to look at play as it is presented today and to value it in children's education (Curitiba, 2016, p. 48).

The action Meanings of Play enabled reflection and studies on the Brinca Curitiba project and the construction of the document BRINCA CURITIBA, in 2016. In this document, the project's actions were structured in chapters, as follows: (1) Brinca Curitiba, remembering our history; (2) Children and playing adults – toy construction; (3) Playing memories; (4) Playing treasures; (5) Playing scenarios; (6) Meanings of play; (7) References.

In the exercise of analyzing the play scenarios published in the document, thematic analysis was used as a methodological procedure (Souza, 2019), and the document reveals play in the spaces of educational institutions in Curitiba in the form of two arrangements: 1) interactions in the spaces of the institution and 2) child/child – child/adult interactions. We analyze these arrangements based on the themes: the fantasy of the real and the challenge present in playfulness.

Playing scenarios in the BRINCA CURITIBA document

When playing, children appropriate spaces and establish relationships with people and objects in them. Thus, in the spaces structured by adults and/or by the children themselves, there are **scenarios** for playing that involve: the child body⁸ in movement, games with unstructured toys, inventions and constructions made from the contact with the elements of nature, and opportunities to get to know traditional games of the culture. Thus, we understand **the playing scenario** as a scenographic space⁹, where play is built.

In the context of theater, a space is scenographic when the actor attributes meanings to the elements that constitute it, therefore,

⁸We opted for the term child body and not child's body because "s" refers to an idea of what belongs. In other words, it indicates a body that belongs to a child. However, we understand that the child is their body, as a condition of their existence, and not belonging to a body, as if it were an accessory that they could remove whenever they wanted. To say that the child is their body means to recognize that each child is unique, singular and individual, that he or she is constituted in the collective, marked by social structures and culture" (Garanhani; Paula; Camargo, 2024, p. 6).

⁹ Scenographic space can be understood as a place set up to tell a story, through visual elements such as light, color, objects, furniture, among others.

[...] the value of the scenography is not in the amount of special effects or elements on stage. [...] The stage space can be scenography, the light can be scenography, a sound effect can be scenography, the movement of the actors on stage can be scenography. It is important for these forms to have content, meanings, that create dramatic space (Serroni, 2013, p. 28).

These spaces can become dramaturgical, scenic, playful-gestural, among others, according to Pavis (2005).

Based on these readings, we conclude that the playing scenario can mobilize the child's interaction with the elements and/or people that compose it, so that the game is built. But, for this, we must pay attention to some elements that are related to axes of Children's Culture, such as: the fantasy of the real and playfulness (Sarmiento, 2004), which mobilize the challenge.

The document BRINCA CURITIBA (Curitiba, 2016) presents eleven narratives (visual and written), from educational institutions, as playing scenarios, and we identified that they are characterized in scenarios by the way children interact with them, which are: among themselves and with the adult; with space and with structured and unstructured objects, with the knowledge of traditional games. In this sense, we understand that the premise that structures the configuration of the playing scenarios is the interactions.

With this as a premise, we selected two scenarios for playing, namely: the shadow and the cardboard box. And, in this study, we present only one figure of each scenario, in their analyses, due to the space we have for this publication.

The shadow

We present the scenario of playing with the shadow of your body, in Figure 1, built at the Madre Carmela de Jesus Early Childhood Education Center, at the Portão Regional Education Center, Curitiba, Paraná.

Figure 1 - Playing scenario: CEI Madre Carmela de Jesus - NRE PR



Source: Curitiba (2016, p. 39).

The narrative of this scenario, published in the document BRINCA CURITIBA (2006), is as follows:

Elements of the space that mobilize play can also be observed in the courtyard of CEI Madre Carmela de Jesus – NRE PR. On the cement floor of the patio, a beam of light coming from the sun and rich ideas of the children were an invitation to play with shadows. The sunlight awoke the desire of one of the children

to project from the shadow the invention of imaginative beings. The child who started this game invited, from his discovery, other children who felt very comfortable to reinvent other figures through their bodies. And so, the game emerged, and the children, together, created playful characters with their shadows, such as superheroes. Animals also appeared in this play with the body, and reptiles and birds appeared. And, in a scenario of imagination, the body choreographs other authorial forms, such as airplanes, rockets, and submarines.

The game of projecting shadows happened because the scenario presented by the educational space of the institution allowed it, and the time allocated to this moment, which was one of freedom, constituted a fundamental element for the construction of the playing experience. A time when the unpredictable can happen. Not everything needs to be demarcated with rigid schedules, because the time for play is a time that cannot be measured with clocks. Thus, the moment after the end of lunch is an opportunity for the children of CEI Madre Carmela de Jesus – NRE PR to create a playing scenario.

Garanhani (2015) states that places with different elements of nature can promote challenges and arouse children's curiosity and investigation, as they involve the child body in movement and mobilize different perceptions of the body. Thus, outdoor environments, which integrate different natural elements, constitute playing scenarios that provide interactions with nature. But not only do they promote interactions with nature, but also stimulate the imagination.

Sarmento (2004) states that the imaginary transposition of people, situations, objects, or events underlies the constitution of the specificity of the child's worlds, as well as being a capacity for resistance in the face of painful situations of existence. Thus, the imbrication between the real and the imaginary (fantasy of the real) is one of the resources that the child uses to understand, express, and attribute meaning to what they experience. And it constitutes one of the axes of Children's Culture.

By visualizing the playing scenarios in the document BRINCA CURITIBA (Curitiba, 2016), we identified that the spaces organized for playing mobilized fantasy. They were propositions that instigated children to a symbolic transformation of spaces, equipment, and/or materials, that is, they gave other meanings to these elements, based on the freedom to configure the layout, without pre-established scripts, favoring creativity and child protagonism. In this sense, we understand that the scenario is a place of action for children and can be understood as a resource for pedagogical practice. However, in Early Childhood Education, playing scenarios may constitute a pedagogical foundation, in addition to being a resource for teachers' practice.

In the playing scenario, which we are now analyzing, it is possible to visualize the child-space and child-child interaction that is architected by the imagination that the shadow of their body mobilizes. It is possible to imagine that the game involved the improvisation of both the verb and the gestures that made up the scene, in the interaction with the imaginary characters that structured a plot. This allows us to consider that playing scenarios are spaces that mobilize imagination, improvisation, role playing, character creation, and also bodily challenges.

Challenge is defined by Solly (2015) as a subjective and individual action that involves exceeding limits, in which the child moves from the comfort zone (of the domain) to the expansion zone (of the not yet mastered), and what may be a challenge for one person may not be for the other.

Considering these statements, we can see that playing with the shadow involved the transgression in experiencing the limits of body movement, as the children tested gestures and postures, putting their bodies at risk. And this hypothesis led us to consider that in playing scenarios they can mobilize an aesthetic experience with the body, in which the playful is the challenge, that is, by mobilizing different emotions, conflicts and contradictions, whether of pleasure or fear, they can lead the child to an internal state of full engagement in the activity of playing, that is, to a playful state. From these considerations, we consider that a game, to lead a child to playfulness, must provoke challenges, and playing scenarios can be great mobilizers of challenges.

The cardboard box

The second playing scenario that we selected for the analysis was built at the Laura Santos Municipal Center for Early Childhood Education, in the Matriz Regional Center for Education, Curitiba, Paraná. We present an excerpt from the document *BRINCA CURITIBA* (2016) that addresses this scenario:

At CMEI Laura Santos – NRE MZ, these considerations were shown in the partnership between the teacher and the child, through a complicity that only the experience of play can provide.

But what experience are we talking about?

For Bondía (2002, p. 20), "experience is what we have, what happens to us, what touches us." And when we remember our childhood, sometimes we remember looks, smells, goosebumps. Memories accessed by the senses that these experiences provided us with when playing (Curitiba, 2016, p. 43).

In Figure 2, which illustrates the document, it is possible to identify the traces of the description presented.

Figure 2 - CMEI Laura Santos – NRE MZ



Source: Curitiba (2016, p. 43).

It is possible to visualize, in Figure 2, the child-adult and child-material interaction, which, although we call the box material, does not cease to have a spatiality, and the meaning given to this material by the child-adult interaction transmuted the original meanings of its spatiality and characterized the box as a toy.

About spatiality, according to Lopes (2014), the child, in their games, may not obey the logic of the instructional manuals, when imagining and/or trying other possibilities of interaction, challenging themselves when elaborating their own instructions for spaces and materials. These instructions are not fixed, but mobile, and are reconfigured at each interaction.

Thus, challenge and imagination emerge from the physical and symbolic transformation of the scenario, because challenge is always an act of imagining. A body capable of challenging itself, as is the case of the child in interaction with an adult, in the analyzed playing scenario, who first imagines, then abstracts and formulates hypotheses of how their body can act in the scene. So, they try, that is, make tests, recursively experiment with different forms of interpretation, and, therefore, create possibilities of movement, extracting new knowledge from their actions.

These analyses allow us to think that playing scenarios are **flexible, versatile, and complex**¹⁰ spaces. Flexible because they allow a variety of configurations which (re)feed different body narratives, that is, narratives that the child can, through recursion and reconfiguration, (re)create different games. Versatile because they provide a diversity of aesthetic experiences with play that sensitize meanings of spatiality. And, complex, as they provoke different challenges that involve playful traits and imagination, mobilized by a set of **"actions, woven by the body in movement** together with the other, through relationships" (Paula, 2023, p. 192).

Based on these considerations, we observe, in Figure 2, the teacher's facial expression that shows a spontaneous smile, and leads us to conclude that: the scenario of playing can also constitute an **affective space** when considering that affective is what affects us. Thus, in the scenarios of play, affective bonds are established mobilized by interaction.

The use that was made of the box in the construction of play mobilized us to reflect on another aspect: what are the circumscribed spaces of play?

Carvalho and Meneghini (2011), when addressing the organization of space by the educator, propose two forms of spatial organization: open and semi-open. The latter is called the circumscribed zone, that is, "areas delimited on three or four sides" (Carvalho; Meneghini, 2011, p. 153). Although the authors situate spatial delimitation from the perspective of educators, we understand, based on Polonio (2005), that children create circumscribed spaces. For the author, the construction of a space by a group of children and the social relations are indissoluble (Polonio, 2005); therefore, the space mobilizes different relationships. A closed space, such as a circle, sensitizes ways of inhabiting as intimate experiences and forms of belonging.

These considerations enabled us to understand that in construction games, such as the hut, it is common for the children themselves, during play, to circumscribe the playing space. A delimitation that is not always drawn by a visible line, dividing the inside and the outside, mine and your space. Often, this line is only imaginary. Such delimitation, in certain circumstances, is accompanied by power relations that involve who can enter and who cannot enter my house, my cabin, or my space.

We believe that this delimitation, in addition to the power relationship, demarcates an intimacy; after all, no one enters the other's house without being invited. Thus, in the playing scenario presented, playing inside the box, within the limits established by the line that divides who is inside and who is outside, refers to intimacy and coziness, through the proxemics that we see between the teacher and the child.

This leads us to understand that the playing scenarios are territories of intimacy, which are translated both by bodily proximity and by the affective bonds established, as well as by the gestures that are expressed by fantasy.

Finally... Conclusive analysis

Based on the understanding that playing is a form of interaction between the child and the world and, intertwined with the toy, produces games, we conclude that the scenarios of play are places that promote interactions and the interpretative reproduction of the child (Corsaro, 2011) about the context in which they live, through the production of scenes. These scenes are characterized by games that can be understood as narratives of the child body, which we call body narratives¹¹ (Paula, 2023). Therefore, playing scenarios can be understood as extensions of play, that is, not as separate spaces or mere accessories, but as places for the production of **scenes that stage the context in which the child lives**.

¹⁰ For this understanding, we were inspired by the studies of risky play (Kleppe, 2018).

¹¹ The concept of body narrative is understood, in this study, as the writing of oneself, through which the child expresses their experiences and ways of inhabiting the world through the body in movement (Paula, 2023). These narratives are not necessarily written with words, but inscribed in the gestures, displacements, interactions, and transformations that the body performs in space (Paula, 2023). Thus, the body narrative composes a language typical of childhood, which is drawn in everyday life and takes place in the intertwining between body, time, space, culture, and social relations (Paula, 2023).

Finally, the scenarios of play, in the child's school, can be open and naked spaces for the constitution of interactions, places of encounters translated into communicative acts, in which the children, during the action of playing, interact with the other and with the space, affecting each other and, in a body semantics composed of gestures, postures, displacements, and facial expressions, formulate narratives.

Thus, in addition to these conclusive essays, we dare to say that playing scenarios may constitute the pedagogical foundations of Early Childhood Education.

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