INCLUSIVE PEDAGOGICAL PRACTICES: CONTRIBUTIONS OF A COOPERATIVE GAME INTERVENTION FOR THE SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

PRÁTICAS PEDAGÓGICAS INCLUSIVAS: CONTRIBUIÇÕES DE UMA INTERVENÇÃO COM JOGO COLABORATIVO PARA O DESENVOLVIMENTO SOCIAL DE EDUCANDOS COM DEFICIÊNCIA

PRÁCTICAS PEDAGÓGICAS INCLUSIVAS: CONTRIBUCIONES DE UNA INTERVENCIÓN CON JUEGO COLABORATIVO PARA EL DESARROLLO SOCIAL DE ESTUDIANTES CON DISCAPACIDAD

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ABSTRACT: The pedagogical intervention carried out during the Supervised Curricular Internship I of the Special Education teacher training program took place at APAE in Brusque (SC), involving students from the Work Experience Service (SEVIL). This applied, qualitative, and descriptive study, grounded in participatory research, aimed to foster social skills development through a collaborative matching game linking everyday situations with socially appropriate responses. The resource was co-created by the students and used in pairs, thereby encouraging interaction, communication, cooperation, autonomy, and decision-making. The intervention was based on the principles of inclusive education, the Natural Functional Curriculum, collaborative learning, and active methodologies. The results demonstrated increased participation and engagement, as well as strengthened social skills, showing that playful, collaborative strategies serve as valuable resources for inclusive pedagogical practices in specialized institutions.

KEYWORDS: Special Education. Social Skills. Interaction. Learning. Inclusion.

***RESUMO**: A intervenção pedagógica desenvolvida durante o Estágio Curricular Supervisionado I do curso de Licenciatura em Educação Especial foi realizada na APAE de Brusque (SC), com educandos do Serviço de Vivências Laborais (SEVIL). A pesquisa, de natureza aplicada, abordagem qualitativa, caráter descritivo e fundamentada na pesquisa participante, teve como objetivo promover o desenvolvimento de habilidades sociais por meio de um jogo colaborativo de pareamento entre situações do cotidiano e respostas socialmente adequadas. O recurso foi construído coletivamente pelos educandos e aplicado em duplas, favorecendo a interação, a comunicação, a cooperação, a autonomia e a tomada de decisões. A intervenção fundamentou-se nos pressupostos da Educação Inclusiva, do Currículo Funcional Natural, da aprendizagem colaborativa e das metodologias ativas. Os resultados evidenciaram maior participação, engajamento e fortalecimento das habilidades sociais, demonstrando que estratégias lúdicas e colaborativas constituem importantes recursos para práticas pedagógicas inclusivas em instituições especializadas.*

***PALAVRAS-CHAVE**: Educação Especial. Habilidades Sociais. Interação. Aprendizagem. Inclusão.*

***RESUMEN**: La intervención pedagógica desarrollada durante la Práctica Curricular Supervisada I del curso de Licenciatura en Educación Especial se llevó a cabo en la APAE de Brusque (SC), con estudiantes del Servicio de Vivencias Laborales (SEVIL). La investigación, de naturaleza aplicada, enfoque cualitativo y carácter descriptivo, fundamentada en la investigación participante, tuvo como objetivo promover el desarrollo de habilidades sociales mediante un juego colaborativo de asociación entre situaciones cotidianas y respuestas socialmente adecuadas. El recurso fue elaborado colectivamente por los estudiantes y aplicado en parejas, favoreciendo la interacción, la comunicación, la cooperación, la autonomía y la toma de decisiones. La intervención se fundamentó en los principios de la Educación Inclusiva, el Currículo Funcional Natural, el aprendizaje colaborativo y las metodologías activas. Los resultados evidenciaron mayor participación, compromiso y fortalecimiento de las habilidades sociales, demostrando que las estrategias lúdicas y colaborativas constituyen recursos relevantes para prácticas pedagógicas inclusivas en instituciones especializadas.*

***PALABRAS CLAVE**: Educación Especial. Habilidades Sociales. Interacción. Aprendizaje. Inclusión.*

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Introduction

Special Education, from the perspective of inclusive education, is committed to promoting pedagogical practices that value students' potential, ensuring opportunities for participation, autonomy, and development in different social and educational contexts. In this direction, learning must go beyond the transmission of content and favor experiences that enable students to assume an active role in the construction of knowledge (Marques, 2012). For Freire (1996), teaching means creating conditions for the learner to produce knowledge from dialogue, participation, and problematization of reality, recognizing them as subjects of the educational process.

This perspective guided the pedagogical intervention developed during the Supervised Curricular Internship I of the Special Education degree program, carried out in the second semester of 2024, at the Association of Parents and Friends of the Exceptional (APAE) in the city of Brusque, Santa Catarina, with the Labor Experience Services (SEVIL) class, in the morning period. The service assists young people and adults with Intellectual Developmental Disorder and/or Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), aiming to foster the development of adaptive, social, and functional skills, stimulating the autonomy and participation of learners in different daily situations (Santa Catarina, 2026). During the internship observation period, demands related to social interaction, respect for speaking turns, active listening, initiative, autonomy, and participation in collective activities were identified.

These aspects highlighted the need to develop pedagogical strategies that would favor not only the learning of content but also the strengthening of social skills essential for coexistence and participation in society. From a historical-cultural perspective, Vygotsky (1991) highlights that development occurs through social interactions and mediation, demonstrating that shared experiences play a fundamental role in the construction of cognitive and social functions.

Based on these demands, an intervention proposal was developed, structured as a matching game between everyday situations and socially appropriate responses. The resource was collaboratively built by the learners themselves and, subsequently, used in an activity developed in pairs, fostering dialogue, cooperation, joint problem-solving, and decision-making. The proposal approaches active methodologies, which consider the student as the protagonist of the learning process and value their participation in the construction of knowledge (Bacich; Moran, 2018).

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Given the foregoing, this study is characterized as applied research, with a qualitative and descriptive approach, developed through participatory research. The choice of this methodological design is justified by the intern's direct involvement in the planning, execution, and mediation of activities, allowing for an understanding of the investigated phenomena from the interactions established within the intervention context. According to Minayo (2014), qualitative research makes it possible to interpret the meanings attributed by subjects to their experiences, while Gil (2008) highlights that descriptive research seeks to observe, record, and analyze phenomena without the intention of manipulating them. Participatory research, in turn, is characterized by the active participation of the researcher in the investigated context, favoring the collective construction of knowledge (Thiollent, 2011).

The relevance of this study lies in the appreciation of inclusive pedagogical practices that recognize the student as an active subject in the learning process, promoting contextualized, collaborative, and socially significant experiences. Moreira and Masini (2006) indicate that the theorist David Ausubel (an American physician, educational psychologist, and pedagogue, known for formulating the Theory of Meaningful Learning) understands that learning becomes more meaningful when new knowledge establishes relationships with students' prior experiences and knowledge, favoring the construction of knowledge that can be applied in their daily lives.

Special Education, legislation, and public policies

The history of Special Education in Brazil has been marked by different phases, which reflect how people with disabilities were understood and served by society: exclusion, segregation, integration, and inclusion. Initially, these people were deprived of access to education. Subsequently, specialized institutions emerged that offered care in a segregated manner, keeping them away from mainstream education. Next, with the integration paradigm, the presence of some students with disabilities in regular schools began to be admitted, as long as they were able to adapt to the demands of the educational system. Finally, the inclusion paradigm was consolidated, which proposes the elimination of barriers to learning and participation, guaranteeing access, permanence, and learning for all students in regular education, with respect for the needs and singularities of each individual (Santa Catarina, 2020).

Internationally, some guidelines and documents have guided discussions regarding access to education for all (Masera; Meneghel, 2023). According to UNESCO (1990), the Jomtien Declaration was adopted from the World Conference on Education for All, which

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establishes fundamental principles for promoting universal basic education. The document emphasizes that everyone, regardless of origin or social and economic status, must have access to quality education. In addition, it emphasizes the importance of inclusion and combating inequalities in access to education, promoting active community participation and links between different areas.

After this, in 1994, the Salamanca Statement was signed, with the objective of guaranteeing accessible and equitable education, providing learning opportunities that take into account particularities, for all learners. She also advocates for inclusive education as the best way to meet the needs of all children, regardless of their difficulties or disabilities, reinforcing that everyone has the right to a quality education, where the educational system must be adjusted to meet the particular needs of each student (Unesco, 1994).

In 2009, in Brazil, Decree No. 6,949 ratified the New York Convention and indicated that the government must develop and implement policies to ensure the inclusion and accessibility of PWD in all aspects of life (Brazil, 2009). Brazilian Inclusion Law (Brazil, 2015) ensures that persons with disabilities have access to education, work, health, and public services with adequate accessibility that promotes full participation in society, guaranteeing that they can enjoy opportunities and conditions similar to those of other people.

In Santa Catarina, public inclusion policies are guided by documents that seek to ensure the right to education for all students, in accordance with the Federal Constitution of 1988 (Brazil, 2026), the Law of Directives and Bases of National Education—Law no. 9.394 (Brazil, 1996), the National Policy of Special Education from the Perspective of Inclusive Education (Brazil, 2008), and the Brazilian Inclusion Law—Law no. 13.146 (Brazil, 2015). At the state level, the Special Education Policy of the State of Santa Catarina (2009) establishes principles and guidelines to ensure access, permanence, participation, and learning for students who are the target audience of Special Education in the regular school system, reaffirming the commitment to inclusive education.

Complementing this policy, the Guidelines for Special Education from an Inclusive Education Perspective (Santa Catarina, 2020) guide educational systems on the organization of support services, the elimination of architectural, communicational, pedagogical, and attitudinal barriers, the provision of Specialized Educational Services, and the collaborative work among education professionals. The document highlights that inclusion is not restricted to school access, but presupposes the guarantee of participation, learning, and development of all students in inclusive educational environments.

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According to the Guidelines of the Lifelong Specialized Care and Education Centers (Santa Catarina, 2026), institutions that collaborate with or receive support from the Santa Catarina Foundation for Special Education (FCEE) have an expanded social role, allowing them to carry out activities in the areas of health, social assistance, and education. As a result, the units dedicated to special education were renamed Centers for Lifelong Specialized Care and Education (CAESP).

In the municipality of Brusque, inclusion policies are strengthened by the joint action of the public education network and specialized institutions affiliated with the Santa Catarina Foundation for Special Education. In this context, APAE of Brusque stands out, as it is part of the state network of specialized care and develops complementary educational services aimed at promoting the autonomy, social participation, and quality of life of people with disabilities. According to the Guidelines of the Centers for Lifelong Specialized Care and Education (Santa Catarina, 2026), these institutions have begun to organize their services in an integrated manner across the areas of education, health, and social assistance, expanding the possibilities for lifelong care.

The APAE of Brusque was founded on September 14, 1955, and was the second institution to be created in Brazil. It was conceived by Dr. Carlos Moritz and his wife, Dona Ruth de Sá Moritz. The idea arose from the need to provide better care and development for the couple's second child, Pierre, according to records. Since then, APAE of Brusque has proposed to be a service institution focused on the development of PWD (Association of Parents and Friends of the Exceptional, n.d.). In this regard, in the updated guiding document for services in specialized institutions (Santa Catarina, 2026), the SEVIL targets individuals with intellectual disabilities, with or without other disabilities or Autism Spectrum Disorder, who are unlikely to enter the workforce or be included in the job market, but who possess the skills to perform unpaid work activities. The service aims to provide students with opportunities to access knowledge and develop their skills in their activities, as a right.

The APAE of Brusque offers this service of care for young people and adults from its institutions through workshops to carry out such work activities. The learners carry them out, for the most part, autonomously. These workshops are also in line with the general themes related to SEVIL's objectives and are linked to the principles of the Natural Functional Curriculum (CFN).

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Functional Natural Curriculum and collaborative learning

Suplino (2005) highlights the importance of adapting teaching to the practical and real needs of learners, especially those with disabilities. The special education teacher has a crucial role in adapting the curriculum to develop functional skills that students will use in their daily lives, such as communication and autonomy. According to the same author, these are fundamental premises for discussion about the CFN. Furthermore, the curriculum must be collaborative and involve the participation of families and the community, to ensure that learning is relevant and connected to the learners' context (Suplino, 2005). Therefore, pedagogical proposals must be based on the individual goals of each student, considering their unique characteristics, such as learning style, interests, abilities, and challenges.

Another principle highlighted by Suplino (2005) is that learning should be a pleasurable and motivating experience for the student. From this perspective, pedagogical proposals need to awaken students' interest and engagement, fostering their active participation in the learning process. When activities are meaningful and fun, motivation to learn increases, reducing behaviors of avoidance or disinterest and strengthening the bond between student, teacher, and knowledge. Similarly, the teacher's enthusiasm plays a fundamental role, as it contributes to the creation of a welcoming, stimulating, and conducive environment for development. Thus, the use of playful strategies, games, and pedagogical dynamics becomes an important resource for promoting functional, social, and academic learning, making the educational process more accessible, meaningful, and inclusive.

In dialogue with this conception, Mitchel Resnick (2020), in the work *Preschool for All: Creative, Hands-On, and Relevant Learning for Everyone*, argues that learning is enhanced through collaboration and peer interaction. The author argues that students construct knowledge more consistently when they have opportunities to share ideas, formulate hypotheses, solve problems together, and reflect on different points of view. In addition to favoring cognitive development, this process contributes to the improvement of socioemotional skills, such as communication, cooperation, active listening, negotiation, and respect for diversity. From this perspective, pedagogical practices based on collaborative learning promote greater student participation, strengthen student agency, and broaden the possibilities for inclusion by recognizing social interaction as a constitutive element of the educational process. These assumptions converge with Suplino's (2005) propositions, by emphasizing the construction of learning environments that value active participation, autonomy, and the integral development of learners. Furthermore, Resnick (2020) presents the Creative Learning Spiral, represented by

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the stages of imagine, create, play, share, reflect, and imagine again, highlighting that learning develops as a continuous and collective process. In this dynamic, the sharing of ideas occupies a central role, as it enables learners to learn from each other, build solutions in cooperation, improve their productions based on peer contributions, and broaden their ways of understanding the same problem. For the author, creativity is not the result of an individual and isolated process, but emerges from the interactions, dialogue, and collaboration among participants. Thus, cooperative learning constitutes a structuring element of the spiral, favoring the construction of knowledge, the development of skills in communication, listening, negotiation, co-responsibility, and teamwork, in addition to strengthening the active participation of learners in collective learning experiences.

From theory to practical application: reflections on pedagogical practice in specialized institutions

The intervention was carried out at APAE of Brusque, with students from the SEVIL. The activities took place in two meetings, held during the supervised curricular internship, each lasting approximately 50 minutes. The planning was structured in two complementary stages: the collaborative creation of a matching game and its subsequent application, aiming to foster the development of participants' social, communicative, cognitive, and adaptive skills.

The first stage consisted of the collective development of the pedagogical resource. For this, low-cost materials were used, such as blue and red cardstock, printed images and phrases, sheets of white paper, scissors, glue, colored pens, and a box for storing the game. The learners actively participated in all stages of the creation, carrying out the cutting of the cards, the gluing of the sentences and images, and the organization of the material. The game consisted of 30 pairs of cards. The blue cards presented everyday situations, while the red cards contained socially appropriate answers accompanied by illustrations, facilitating the understanding of the statements and increasing the activity's accessibility. The situations addressed skills related to communication, respect for speaking turns, social coexistence, conflict resolution, autonomy, routine organization, empathy, emotional self-regulation, and the performance of daily life activities.

The active participation of the learners in the development of the resource was based on Piaget's (1976) constructivist perspective, which understands learning as the result of the subject's action on the object of knowledge. From a historical-cultural perspective, Vygotsky

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(2007) highlights that development occurs through social interactions and mediation, reinforcing the importance of collaborative activities for the construction of new learning. Similarly, Freire (1996) argues that participatory educational practices foster students' autonomy, leadership, and involvement in knowledge production.

Besides favoring the active participation of learners, the use of games as a pedagogical resource sought to make the learning process more meaningful. Kishimoto (2017) highlights that educational games constitute important teaching strategies by integrating cognitive, social, and affective aspects, while Brougère (2010) understands playfulness as a cultural practice capable of promoting the construction of meanings through the relationships established between participants.

In the second stage, the learners participated in playing the game they collectively created. The pairs were intentionally organized by the teacher and the intern, prioritizing participants who had less closeness among themselves, with the objective of expanding opportunities for social interaction, cooperation, and coexistence. During the proposal, each pair should analyze the situations presented on the cards and establish the pairing between the situation and the most appropriate response. To do this, it was necessary to dialogue, justify the choices made, listen to colleagues, and build consensus before the final answer. Furthermore, all participants should respect the turns of participation and wait for their turn during the activity.

This organization is based on the principles of cooperative learning, which understand peer interaction as an essential element for cognitive and social development. Johnson and Johnson (2009) state that cooperative activities foster shared responsibility, joint problem-solving, communication, and the strengthening of interpersonal relationships. Complementarily, Del Prette and Del Prette (2017) highlight that social skills, such as empathy, assertiveness, self-control, and cooperation, can be developed through planned experiences in educational contexts.

As a strategy to increase participants' interest and retention in the activity, gamification elements were incorporated. For each correctly made pairing, the pairs received symbolic rewards, such as stars or buttons, representing the success achieved. According to Deterding *et al*. (2011), the use of game-like elements in educational contexts favors student engagement, motivation, and active participation. From the perspective of social learning, Bandura (2008) highlights that positive reinforcement contributes to strengthening the perception of self-efficacy and persistence in the face of new challenges.

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At the end of each intervention, a discussion circle was held, mediated by the intern, allowing the students to share their perceptions about the activity, reflect on the situations experienced, and identify the main learnings built during the process. This moment also made it possible to complement the information obtained during the observations made throughout the intervention. The data production occurred through direct and systematic observation of the activities developed, considering aspects related to participation, social interaction, communication, autonomy, cooperation, respect for rules, and behaviors presented by the learners during the meetings. The records were organized in a field diary and submitted to descriptive analysis, seeking to understand the observed behaviors and the meanings produced by the participants throughout the intervention, according to the assumptions of qualitative research (Minayo, 2014).

Considering the context of Special Education, the intervention was planned based on inclusive pedagogical practices, valuing the students' potential and promoting diversified strategies to favor their active participation. In this perspective, Mantoan (2015) emphasizes that inclusive education presupposes the construction of environments that respect students' singularities, promoting conditions for everyone to learn, interact, and develop their capacities in collaborative contexts.

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