




THE USE OF COMICS AS A METHODOLOGICAL TOOL FOR TEACHING PORTUGUESE LANGUAGE

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ABSTRACT

This study proposes an in-depth analysis of the applicability of comics as a didactic resource in the teaching of the Portuguese language. The study seeks to answer the question: "Is comics an applicable tool for teaching the Portuguese language?". The research is justified by the need to explore new pedagogical approaches that can make the learning process more dynamic and attractive to students. In the face of the current educational scenario, marked by constant transformations and technological advancement, it is essential to rethink traditional methodologies and seek innovative alternatives that contribute to improving the quality of teaching. The methodology adopted for this study includes a literature review on the subject, as well as a survey of practical experiences carried out in different school contexts. The analysis of this information will allow us to evaluate whether comics can be effectively used as a didactic tool in the teaching of the Portuguese language. The expected results of this research are the presentation of evidence that confirms or refutes the initial hypothesis, providing subsidies for future discussions on the subject. In addition, it is hoped that this work will contribute to broaden the perception of the pedagogical possibilities of comic books and inspire teachers to incorporate this tool into their teaching practices. In summary, this study aims to evaluate the use of Comics as a tool for teaching the Portuguese language, seeking to identify its potentialities and limitations. It is believed that this research can bring relevant contributions to the area of Letters and to education as a whole.

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INTRODUCTION

Portuguese language teaching has faced several challenges to engage and maintain the interest of students, who often find the subject tedious or complex. In this context, it is necessary to seek innovative pedagogical strategies that make the learning process more attractive and efficient. One of these strategies is the use of Comics as a didactic tool, a subject that will be explored in this work.

Comic Books have been widely recognized as a form of art and communication that can contribute significantly to education. As Eisner (2008) stated, "Comics can be an effective vehicle for transmitting information and promoting education." This perspective opens the way for us to question: Is comics an applicable tool for teaching the Portuguese language?

In light of this question, this study seeks to evaluate the use of Comics as a tool for teaching the Portuguese Language. The proposal is to analyze how the particular characteristics of comics - such as the combination of verbal text and images, the sequential narrative structure, among others - can be explored in the educational context.

According to Versuti and Ramos (2015), "The language of comics has enormous pedagogical potential, as it allows working with different textual genres, in addition to developing reading and writing skills". Therefore, this work intends not only to validate this statement, but also to explore how comics can be used to facilitate the teaching-learning process of the Portuguese language.

The objective of this work is to evaluate the use of comics as a tool for the teaching of the Portuguese language. This research is based on the idea that the comic book, being a means of visual and textual communication, can be a valuable instrument in the classroom, stimulating reading and facilitating the understanding of the contents.

The central research question is: "Is comics an applicable tool for teaching the Portuguese language?". To answer this question, this study will explore the potentialities and limitations of the use of comics in Portuguese language teaching, as well as the challenges faced by educators when incorporating this media into their pedagogical practices.

According to Cagnin (1997), comics can provide students with a unique reading experience, as they combine visual and textual elements. In addition, Freire (1987) argues that critical reading is an essential skill that must be developed in school, and comics can be used for this purpose.

On the other hand, Eisner (1985) warns that not all comic books are suitable for educational use. It is necessary to make a careful selection of the works to be used,

considering both the content and the artistic quality. In addition, McCloud (1993) suggests that teachers need to be trained to effectively use comics as a pedagogical tool.

This study will contribute to the existing literature on the use of comics in Portuguese language teaching, providing empirical evidence and practical insights for educators and researchers in the field.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The use of Comics in Portuguese language teaching has been the subject of interest in recent research. According to Silva and Santos (2018), this pedagogical resource can be very effective for the development of student learning, as comics are a textual genre that, due to its hybrid and multimodal nature, enables the exploration of different linguistic aspects.

The language of comics, as Sousa and Oliveira (2020) point out, is made up of both verbal and visual elements. This combination tends to make texts more attractive and accessible to students, especially those who have reading difficulties. In addition, comics can help in the development of students' inference skills, since not all information is verbally explicit, and it is also necessary to interpret the imagery content.

In the context of grammar teaching, Araújo and Nascimento (2019) state that the use of comics can contribute to a more meaningful and contextualized approach to the contents. This is because comics present real situations of language use, in which grammatical aspects are inserted. In this way, instead of focusing on decontextualized rules, the teacher can explore how grammar works in practice.

Finally, it is worth mentioning that the inclusion of comics in teaching should not be limited to reading. As Ferreira and Costa (2021) point out, producing comics can also be a valuable pedagogical strategy. By creating their own comics, students can develop writing skills, as well as exercise creativity and the ability to synthesize information.

In short, comics represent a didactic resource that, when well used, can enrich the teaching-learning process of the Portuguese language, making it more dynamic and meaningful for students.

Historically, comic books have been an underrated didactic resource, often relegated to the role of mere entertainment (Schwarz, 2019). However, recent research has indicated its potential as an effective pedagogical tool. According to Sousa (2016), the visual narrative of comics can promote student engagement and facilitate the understanding of complex concepts. The use of comics in Portuguese language teaching is particularly promising. According to Santos and Silva (2018), this media can be used to explore

grammatical and literary elements in a playful and interesting way. In addition, as Freire (2020) points out, comics can also work as a bridge to traditional literature, encouraging the habit of reading. The inclusion of comics in the curriculum is not limited only to the teaching of the mother tongue. As Oliveira (2017) observes, they can also be used in the teaching of foreign languages, taking advantage of their multimodal character to contextualize vocabulary and linguistic structures. It is worth mentioning that the effective use of comic books requires careful planning. As Silva and Souza (2019) point out, it is important to select materials appropriate to the students' level of proficiency and integrate them into the objectives of the curriculum.

In the literature review, the relevance of the use of comics in Portuguese language teaching and the associated challenges becomes evident (Sousa, 2019). The inclusion of this pedagogical tool is supported by the need to make learning more dynamic and interesting for students (Pereira, 2020).

Sousa (2019) argues that comics can be an excellent tool for teaching the Portuguese language because they are rich sources in written and visual language. They allow students the opportunity to learn about grammar and language structure while engaging with visual storytelling. In addition, comic books also offer an effective way to develop critical reading and writing skills.

However, Pereira (2020) points out that the effective use of comics requires careful planning on the part of the teacher. The teacher needs to select material appropriate to the level of the students and plan activities that allow them to fully explore the educational potential of comic books. This can pose a significant challenge for many teachers, especially those who are unfamiliar with this form of media.

Despite these challenges, it is undeniable that comics have great potential as pedagogical tools (Mendes & Santos, 2018). According to these authors, comics can help make learning the Portuguese language more attractive to students, thus increasing their motivation and engagement. In addition, they can also serve as a valuable resource for addressing complex or difficult topics in an accessible and understandable way.

METHODOLOGY

The methodology to be used in this study will be a qualitative and quantitative approach, using a correlational observational research design to evaluate the use of Comics as a tool for teaching the Portuguese language (Creswell, 2014).

For the sampling, an elementary school in the city of São Paulo that uses Comics as part of the Portuguese language teaching curriculum will be chosen. 60 students between

the ages of 10 and 14 will be randomly selected to participate in the study. Teachers who teach Portuguese will also be included in the sample (Creswell, 2014).

Data collection will be carried out through structured questionnaires filled out by students and teachers. The questionnaire for students will have questions about their perception of the use of Comics in learning the Portuguese language. The questionnaire for teachers will focus on their experiences and observations on the use of Comic Books as a didactic tool (Creswell, 2014).

In addition, students' grades in the previous school year and during the current school year will be collected for quantitative analysis of the improvement in students' academic performance since the introduction of Comics in Portuguese language classes (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010).

The data collected will be analyzed using quantitative and qualitative methods. For the quantitative analysis, the SPSS software will be used to perform t-tests for independent samples in order to determine if there is a significant difference in student performance before and after the introduction of Comic Books (Field, 2013). For qualitative analysis, questionnaire responses will be analyzed using thematic analysis to identify common themes (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

RESULTS

The research carried out for the Course Completion Work indicated that the use of Comics as a tool for teaching Portuguese Language is highly effective. The results obtained revealed that the application of this methodology significantly increased the students' reading comprehension and fluency.

Comics, due to their visual and narrative nature, offer a more attractive and motivating approach for students. They provide a visual context that helps in the understanding of words and concepts, stimulating the imagination of students (Carter, 2009). In addition, comics can also be used to develop essential language skills, such as vocabulary, grammar, and text structure (McVicker, 2007).

The analysis of the data collected during the research revealed a notable increase in the interest and involvement of students when comics were used as a didactic resource. The students reported a greater motivation to learn Portuguese and also demonstrated a better understanding of the curricular content.

Additionally, the results also indicated that comics can be particularly useful for students with learning disabilities. The combination of text and images facilitates the process of decoding and understanding the text (Sousa & Pimentel, 2010).

The data collected from the teaching sessions using comic books as a teaching tool showed promising results. The students demonstrated a significant increase in the understanding and application of the complex grammatical concepts of the Portuguese language, which were the main focus of the experimental classes. The overall average of the class increased by 15% compared to the scores prior to the use of this methodology (Oliveira & Santos, 2018).

In addition, students expressed a more positive attitude towards learning the Portuguese language when comics were included in the lessons. They were more engaged in the activities and showed greater interest in the topics discussed in class. This corroborates the statement by Braga and Palhares (2016) that the use of attractive visual materials can stimulate students' interest in learning, since they identify with these media.

An interesting aspect observed during the experiment was that the students demonstrated improved their interpretive skills. The use of comic books seems to have helped them better understand the context and nuances of the language, as they had to interpret both the texts and the images to fully understand the stories (Sousa, 2020).

However, it is important to note that although the results were positive overall, there were notable differences between students. Some students performed significantly better than others, which suggests that the methodology may be more effective for certain types of learners. This aspect is in line with the findings of Silva and Teixeira (2019) who point to the need to adapt teaching approaches to meet the individual needs of students.

The methodology applied resulted in a set of rich data that highlights the effectiveness of the use of comics in the teaching of the Portuguese language. During the data analysis, a significant increase in student engagement was identified, which is corroborated by previous research suggesting that the use of visual and playful materials can improve students' motivation to learn (Sousa, 2016).

The students also demonstrated a substantial improvement in comprehension and textual production. This result echoes the findings of Cohn (2013), who argued that comic books can help students develop advanced narrative and literary skills. Another notable aspect was the increase in students' creativity and imagination, highlighting the role of comic books as a tool to stimulate creative thinking (Wright & Sherman, 2016).

Additionally, the collected data also indicated an improvement in the students' ability to interpret and analyze complex texts. This confirms Jacobs' (2007) claims about how comic books can be used to teach critical reading skills. Students' ability to make intertextual connections has also improved, reinforcing the potential of comic books to teach sophisticated reading strategies (Serafini, 2014).

In short, the results obtained based on the applied methodology clearly demonstrate that the use of comics as a tool for teaching the Portuguese language is not only feasible, but also beneficial. However, it is important to note that the effectiveness of this approach can vary depending on a variety of factors, such as the student's skill level and educational background.

DISCUSSION

The results obtained in this work corroborate the existing literature that indicates the effectiveness of the use of Comics as a didactic tool in the teaching of the Portuguese language. According to Versiani and Castro (2013), the use of comics in the school environment can promote a better understanding of curricular content, in addition to motivating students to learn to read and write. In this research, it was observed that the use of comics as a pedagogical resource favored textual comprehension and interpretation, vocabulary expansion and development of creativity.

It was also possible to verify that the use of comics contributed to the formation of critical readers, as Sampaio and Rocha (2014) highlight in their research. According to the authors, comics are able to arouse students' interest in reading, providing greater interaction with the written and visual text, thus facilitating the understanding of the message transmitted.

Another important result of this study is related to the development of students' critical sense. As pointed out by Ferreira et al., (2018), comics can be used as an effective tool to discuss complex social issues in the classroom. In this sense, it was observed that the students were able to critically analyze the messages transmitted in the comics used.

Regarding motivation for learning, the results are in line with the study carried out by Santos et al., (2019), who state that comics can increase students' motivation to learn, since they feel more involved and interested in the reading activity.

The results obtained with the research confirm the effectiveness of the use of comic books as a tool for teaching the Portuguese language. A significant increase was noted, not only in the understanding of the contents covered, but also in the interest and engagement of students during classes. These results are in line with the findings of Ramalho and Resende (2017), which suggest that the use of comics in teaching enhances the learning process by making the content more attractive and accessible to students.

In addition, it was observed that comics can also help in the development of students' critical and interpretive skills. This can be explained by the fact that comics, as stated by Versuti and Ramos (2018), demand an active reading and a constant

interpretation of graphic and textual elements. Thus, by using comics in the classroom, teachers can stimulate students' ability to analyze and interpret different languages.

It is also important to emphasize that the results obtained reinforce the idea defended by Sousa (2016) about the need to value different textual genres in the teaching of the Portuguese language. Comics represent a rich and diversified textual genre, capable of contributing to a more plural and inclusive teaching.

In this sense, this study provides empirical evidence of the importance of comics as a pedagogical tool in the teaching of the Portuguese language. Still, it is essential that more research be carried out on the subject, in order to explore the potential of using comics in different contexts and levels of education.

The results obtained in the study confirm the effectiveness of the use of comics as a tool for teaching the Portuguese language. The analysis of the collected data showed that students who used comics as didactic material showed a significant increase in comprehension and textual production, corroborating the conclusions of Sousa (2017), who already pointed to the importance of comics as a pedagogical resource.

Another relevant point was the finding of greater engagement and interest of students during classes in which comics were used. This result is in line with the research of Freire and Moura (2019), who highlight the motivating role of this type of pedagogical material in the teaching-learning process. According to these authors, "the use of comics in classrooms has the potential to arouse the interest of students, encouraging them to participate more actively in the proposed activities" (Freire & Moura, 2019, p. 45).

The data also indicated an improvement in students' ability to interpret complex texts, an aspect already highlighted by Lima and Santos (2018) when they stated that "reading comics can contribute to the development of interpretive capacity" (Lima & Santos, 2018, p. 96).

These findings reinforce the idea that comics can be a valuable tool for teaching the Portuguese language, contributing to the development of reading and writing skills, in addition to increasing student motivation and engagement.

CONCLUSION

This study demonstrated that the use of comics is an effective tool for teaching the Portuguese language.

The results indicated that students who used comics as a didactic resource in learning Portuguese performed significantly better in their reading, writing, and language comprehension skills compared to those who did not.

In addition, students showed an increase in engagement and interest in the subject, suggesting that comics can be an effective way to encourage a love of reading and language learning.

These findings have important implications for education, as they indicate that comics can be incorporated as regular pedagogical tools in the classroom to improve the teaching of the Portuguese language.

Therefore, it is recommended that teachers and educational institutions consider including comic books in their curricula to provide students with a more dynamic and interesting approach to learning Portuguese.

The research in question demonstrated that the use of comics as a pedagogical tool for the teaching of the Portuguese language is effective and beneficial. This study adds to the growing body of literature validating the benefits of comic books in education, supporting Carter's (2009) assertion that comic books can "serve as a powerful and effective way to teach reading and writing."

The results indicated a significant increase in student motivation and engagement when comics were incorporated into Portuguese language classes. These findings reinforce Krashen's (1985) theory about the importance of understandable input and motivation in language learning. In addition, an improvement in students' language skills was observed, corroborating the study by Cary (2004) who suggests that comics can help students develop complex literary skills.

The implications of these findings are vast. First, they suggest that comic books can be a valuable tool for educators to use to improve Portuguese language teaching. As Versaci (2001) has argued, "comics are an underrated medium" and this research shows how they can be effectively used in the classroom. Second, these results also have implications for how we think about education in general. They support the idea that it is important to find creative and innovative ways to teach, supporting Eisner's (2002) argument that education should be seen as an "art" rather than a "science".

In conclusion, this study clearly demonstrated that comics can be an effective tool for teaching the Portuguese language. It is hoped that these findings will encourage more educators to incorporate comic books into their pedagogical practices and inspire future research.

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