

Intercomprehension and digital games: dynamizing the portuguese language classes in the 8th grade

ARTICLE

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Abstract

Considering the importance of working with written comprehension and students' demotivation during activities in Portuguese language classes, we developed an innovative proposal, integrated into the curriculum, combining digital games and romance languages. In this sense, our objective was to investigate the possible contributions of the intercomprehension approach, allied to the use of digital games, in Portuguese language classes with 8th grade students. The theoretical contribution was based on the concepts of intercomprehension, learning strategies and digital games. The qualitative approach to action research began with the application of a didactic sequence involving a digital multi-lingual game. For data collection, we used semi-structured interviews, observation of the teacher-researcher and recording the impressions of students. The results indicated that pedagogical practices that integrate intercomprehension and digital games stimulate the participation of students, in addition to contributing to the development of written comprehension.

Keywords: Intercomprehension. Digital Games. Didactic Sequence. Portuguese Language.

Intercompreensão e jogos digitais: dinamizando as aulas de língua portuguesa no 8º ano

Resumo

Considerando a importância do trabalho com a compreensão escrita e a desmotivação dos alunos durante as atividades nas aulas de língua portuguesa, elaboramos uma proposta inovadora, integrada ao currículo, unindo jogos digitais e línguas românicas. Nesse sentido, o nosso objetivo foi investigar sobre as possíveis contribuições da abordagem de intercompreensão, aliada ao uso de jogos digitais, nas aulas de língua portuguesa com alunos do 8º ano. O aporte teórico fundamentou-se nos conceitos de Intercompreensão, estratégias de aprendizagem e jogos digitais. A pesquisa-ação, de abordagem qualitativa, iniciou-se com a aplicação de uma sequência didática envolvendo um jogo plurilíngue digital. Para a coleta de dados, utilizamos entrevista semiestruturada, observação da professora-pesquisadora e registro das impressões dos alunos. Os resultados indicaram que práticas pedagógicas que integram a intercompreensão

e os jogos digitais estimulam a participação dos alunos, além de contribuir para o desenvolvimento da compreensão escrita.

Palavras-chave: Intercompreensão. Jogos Digitais. Sequência Didática. Língua Portuguesa.

1 Introduction

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In order to keep up with the demands of today's world, we felt the need to rethink the teaching and learning of the Portuguese language with teaching practices that favored student protagonism and, consequently, increased participation in classes. This study is therefore part of a larger research project that seeks to investigate the effects of intercomprehension on increasing participation and improving written comprehension in Portuguese language classes.

Given the difficulty students have in understanding texts from different genres, the idea arose to develop an innovative proposal integrated into the Portuguese language curriculum, bringing together digital games and Romance languages, with the aim of promoting the development of reading comprehension and student interest in classroom activities. In addition, this approach could awaken a sense of appreciation in the students, as they realize their ability to understand languages they had never studied or had little contact with.

With these challenges in mind and the need for 21st century teachers to be aware of the changes that teaching and learning are undergoing with the presence of technology, we set out to investigate the possible contributions of the Intercomprehension in Romance Languages approach, combined with the use of digital games, in the context of Portuguese language classes with 8th grade students.

Difficulty understanding the meaning of a text is a reality for our students. As the 2022 Program for International Student Assessment (PISA) pointed out, 55% of Brazilian students did not reach the basic level in reading comprehension, which can be an obstacle to learning, since text interpretation opens up space for the student's critical and reflective thinking. Many students reach the 8th grade without being able to understand the message

of a text. This situation can be triggered by a lack of reading comprehension strategies, a resource that could help students to more easily understand and assimilate the content of texts. These difficulties are exacerbated, above all, when traditional and decontextualized teaching practices are adopted, which are far removed from the reality of students, who are increasingly immersed in the daily use of technology. These factors can therefore contribute significantly to the poor development of students' reading comprehension skills, as well as to their lack of interest in Portuguese language classes.

We hypothesize that contact with the Romance languages (French, Spanish and Italian) combined with technology and active methodologies can foster the development of reading comprehension, since in order to understand languages they have not mastered and sometimes never had contact with, students are encouraged to mobilize strategies and knowledge during reading in a foreign language, which can be transferred even when reading in their mother tongue. Intercomprehension between Romance languages, adopted as a pedagogical practice in this study, is part of the plural approaches defined by Candelier (2003) as: "a pedagogical practice in which the student works simultaneously with several languages [...]" (Candelier, 2003, p. 19-20).¹

Intercomprehension seeks to promote the "development of the ability to co-construct meaning in the encounter between different languages and to make pragmatic use of this ability in a concrete communicative situation" (Capucho, 2004, p.86). It explores the ability to communicate between different languages, related or not, in which each speaker strives to understand the other's language, even if they don't know it. This approach adopted in Portuguese language classes can help learners understand their own language system and expand it through contact with other Romance languages, as shown by some studies, such as Lima (2015), Souza (2013) and Oliveira (2015), to name but a few.

¹ We'll leave the original quote so that the reader can practice intercomprehension: "...une démarche pédagogique dans laquelle l'apprenant travaille simultanément sur plusieurs langues. [...]"

In this scenario, interaction with multilingual games allows students to relate previous knowledge to new information, reassessing and applying acquired learning to solve problems in collaboration with their peers.

In our research, this methodology is aimed at understanding plurilingual games (French, Spanish and Italian), languages that are typologically similar to Portuguese. In order to understand languages, students must activate learning strategies, i.e. processes used by students to carry out tasks (O'Malley; Chamot, 1990), which can be presented as follows: *cognitive strategies*, which are those that involve the direct processing of information and the use of techniques to improve comprehension such as, inference, deduction, transfer; *metacognitive strategies*, which involve reflecting on the learning process itself, with the aim of monitoring and regulating performance, such as self-regulation, self-management; and *socio-affective strategies*, which refer to the use of social and emotional interactions as a means of facilitating learning, for example, cooperation and self-esteem.

Thus, the use of multilingual games can be an innovative approach to developing cognitive, metacognitive and socio-affective strategies for reading comprehension. As well as contributing to collaborative work, increasing motivation and the perception of oneself and others, thus promoting a sense of confidence and appreciation of the individual, as suggested by Martins (2011):

Intercomprehension makes it possible to mobilize knowledge, not only related to mental processes, orientations of individuals' cognitive activities, but also referring to the construction, renewal and valorization of all the individual's knowledge, with the intention of valuing the being in its fullness. (Martins, 2011, p. 62).

We tried to use active methodology to develop this practice, as we believe in a dynamic that values the student, promotes their protagonism, motivation and self-esteem. Moran (2018) points out that these methodologies emphasize the student's direct, participatory and reflective involvement in all stages of the educational process.

Game-based learning was the methodology we selected and is conceptualized as: "a pedagogical methodology that focuses on the design, development, use and application

of games in education and training" (Carvalho, 2015, p.176). In this approach, practices are implemented with analog games, board games, cards and/or digital games that use digital devices. Pimentel (2021) points out that digital games require students to learn about the game, the rules, understand the instructions, evaluate and choose the best strategy to overcome the challenges, stimulating skills and content that may be linked to them. In this way, multilingual games can playfully help students develop their reading comprehension skills through learning strategies. In addition, the game, organized in the form of a didactic sequence, can help increase motivation, engagement and promote collaborative work.

This research can therefore point to ways of bringing us closer to the universe of learners, contributing to the development of reading comprehension and increasing student participation in Portuguese language classes through digital multilingual games. Thus, integrating elements present in learners' daily lives and using Romance languages to support Portuguese language teaching can lead to more meaningful learning, placing the student at the center of the pedagogical process.

It is essential to stress that the didactic sequence described in the methodology was organized based on the integration of Portuguese language content, in particular textual genres, and the skills defined by the BNCC to be worked on with 8th grade students. In this sense, the plurilingual digital game in French, Spanish and Italian entitled *El juego - Crónica pluricultural* deals with the chronicle genre.

Let's move on to the methodological procedures, in order to give more details of how the research was carried out.

2 Methodology

In order to answer the objective of this study, which is to investigate the possible contributions of the Intercomprehension in Romance Languages approach, combined with the use of digital games, in the context of Portuguese language classes with 8th grade students, we carried out qualitative research (Minayo, 2010), which seeks to analyze whether working with learning strategies combined with multilingual games can improve

8th grade students' written comprehension and participation in Portuguese language classes.

Thus, this study is characterized as an action research project which, according to Thiollent (2002), is a collaborative approach aimed at solving collective problems through planned practices. In this sense, the investigation addresses the difficulty that 8th-grade students from a public school face in understanding texts, as well as their lack of interest in Portuguese language classes. Based on this issue, we designed, implemented, and evaluated a digital plurilingual activity with the goal of developing learning strategies and increasing students' engagement in Portuguese language lessons.

Action research follows a cycle that moves through acting within the field of practice and reflecting on it: "a change is planned, implemented, described, and evaluated in order to improve one's practice, learning more throughout the process, both about the practice and the research itself" (Tripp, 2005, p. 446). These four stages form the foundation of our research.

During the planning phase, we organized a didactic sequence based on the digital plurilingual activity *El juego – Crónica pluricultural*. The initial goal of this phase was to test the hypothesis that using a digital plurilingual game could foster the development of learning strategies aimed at textual comprehension, as well as increase student participation. In the implementation phase, the didactic sequence featuring the digital plurilingual game was applied to an 8th-grade class. In the description phase, we presented the data collected through the following instruments: a semi-structured interview (audio recordings of participants), observations made by the teacher-researcher, and students' recorded impressions. This information was analyzed qualitatively and categorized according to O'Malley and Chamot's (1990) definitions of cognitive, metacognitive, and socio-affective strategies.

In the evaluation phase, we sought to verify the validity of our initial hypothesis—that is, we analyzed whether working with learning strategies, combined with the use of the digital plurilingual game, could effectively contribute to the development of reading comprehension and to increasing students' participation in Portuguese language classes.

To conduct the study and collect data, we designed a didactic sequence implemented with 14 students from the final years of elementary school (Ensino Fundamental Anos Finais, in Portuguese) in the subject of Portuguese language. The research took place in a classroom of 8th grade, class D, during the afternoon shift at Escola Municipal Professor Amadeu Araújo, located in Natal, Rio Grande do Norte (RN).

Zabala (1998) describes the didactic sequence as a methodological plan that organizes and connects various activities designed in pursuit of an educational objective, carried out with a defined beginning and end. From this perspective, we developed the didactic sequence *El juego – Crónica pluricultural*.

This didactic sequence was designed to make the study of the chronicle (*crônica*) genre more playful and engaging. Through a digital plurilingual game, students explored stories narrated in Romance languages—Spanish, French, and Italian—by characters from the chronicles, fostering intercomprehension and cultural enrichment. The proposal also aimed to encourage student participation in Portuguese language classes by transforming learning into a fun and meaningful experience.

The use of intercomprehension and technology as pedagogical tools was essential to spark learners' interest and curiosity, consolidating learning in an innovative and interactive way. Within this context, the organization of the digital plurilingual game aimed not only to address Portuguese language content but also to respond to the real needs of the school environment (Zabala; Arnau, 2010).

It is worth noting that the digital plurilingual game was developed as part of this research. For its creation, we wrote the stories narrated by the four characters in *El juego – Crónica pluricultural* in their respective languages: French, Spanish, Portuguese, and Italian. The necessary images and videos were produced with the help of artificial intelligence tools, such as Leonardo AI, which generated visual elements based on specific prompts. The final video was hosted on YouTube, generating a link that was later integrated into the Educaplay platform, a free software that enables the creation of multimedia educational activities.

Thus, the digital plurilingual activity was structured around multiple-choice questions related to the stories experienced by the characters. In this dynamic, students could listen to the narrative while also following along with the transcribed text shown in the video. It is important to highlight that this was not the students' first contact with French, Spanish, and Italian. Throughout the academic year, the teacher-researcher integrated these languages into Portuguese language classes, aiming to offer activities that would help students recognize the similarities among them. This approach was intended to foster the use of learning strategies and encourage metacognitive reflection on the Romance languages.

Below, we present a detailed account of the development of the didactic sequence *El juego – Crónica pluricultural*.

Box 1 – Didactic sequence - *El juego - Crónica pluricultural*

El juego - Crónica pluricultural

Grade level: 8th grade of Elementary School (Ensino Fundamental)

Duration: 6 lessons of 60 minutes each

Theme: Pluricultural Chronicles

Some learning strategies that may be activated by students

Cognitive strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Inference• Deduction• Transfer
Metacognitive strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Self-management• Self-monitoring• Self-assessment
Socio-affective strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Cooperation• Self-esteem• Empathy
Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Understand the <i>crônica</i> (chronicle) as a textual genre• Identify and analyze elements of chronicles in different languages

Didactic resources

- Develop comprehension skills and strategies for critical reflection
- Encourage empathy and the recognition of cultural diversity through the understanding of chronicles
- Collaboratively produce and perform a creative chronicle

Skills (BNCC – Base Nacional Comum Curricular)

- Digital game (El juego – Crónica pluricultural), featuring the chronicles of Marie, Saul, Pedro, and Gionni
- Digital whiteboard (computer lab), computers, tablets with internet access
- Paper and pens for note-taking.

(EF69LP12) Develop strategies for planning, composing, revising, editing, rewriting/redesigning (the latter three when not in live contexts), and evaluating oral, audio, and/or video texts, considering their appropriateness to the production contexts, the compositional form and style of the genres, clarity, thematic progression and linguistic variety, as well as elements related to speech, such as voice modulation, intonation, rhythm, pitch and intensity, breathing, etc., and kinetic elements, such as body posture, meaningful movements and gestures, facial expressions, eye contact with the audience, etc.

(EF69LP37) Produce scripts for the development of various types of videos (scientific vlogs, one-minute videos, radio shows, podcasts) to disseminate scientific knowledge and research results, taking into account the production context, structural elements, and compositional construction of the scripts.

(EF69LP44) Infer the presence of social, cultural, and human values, as well as different worldviews, in literary texts, recognizing in these texts the ways in which multiple perspectives on identities, societies, and cultures are established, while considering the authorship and the social and historical context of their production.

(EF69LP50) Create theatrical texts by adapting novels, short stories, myths, mystery and adventure narratives, novellas, fictionalized biographies, chronicles, among others, including stage directions that define the setting, space, and time.

(EF69LP51) Actively engage in the processes of planning, composing, revising/editing, and rewriting, taking into account the thematic, compositional, and stylistic constraints of the intended texts and the characteristics of the production situation – the intended audience, medium, circulation context, purposes, etc.

(EF89LP35) Create short stories or chronicles (especially lyrical ones), visual chronicles, flash fiction, adventure and science fiction narratives, among others, using knowledge about the structural elements and expressive resources typical of the intended narrative genres, and, in the case of group productions, collaborative writing tools.

Implementation pathway

1st Meeting (Two 60-minute classes)

Reading the chronicle “Emergência” by Luis Fernando Veríssimo

- Ask students what they think an emergency is.
- Write the students’ answers on the board.
- Ask if they have ever experienced an emergency.
- Explain that the text they are about to read silently deals with an “emergency”.

- After the first silent reading, the students read the text collectively.
- Discuss the plot of the chronicle with the class.
- Ask whether they consider the passenger's fear to be a real “emergency”.
- Then, students will complete the reading comprehension activity about the text “Emergência”
- Go over the answers with the class
- Ask whether they liked the story and if they know someone who has had a similar experience to the airplane passenger.

Note: The text and comprehension questions are in the students’ textbook — Teláris de Língua Portuguesa, provided by the school.

2nd Meeting (Two 60-minute classes)

1. Introduction (10 minutes)

- Briefly introduce the students to the Educaplay platform, which was used to design digital plurilingual game.
- Explain the context of the activity (game): students must understand the video story to choose the correct answers and advance in the game.

2. Game – Pluricultural Chronicle (20 minutes)

- Hand out tablets so students can access digital game.
- Ask students to play individually. Once everyone has finished, show the class ranking.

3. Discussion (40 minutes)

- Project the game video and ask four student volunteers to read the chronicle subtitles (in four languages) aloud to the class.
- Review the main event of each story: what the characters learned from their experiences.
- Ask students what the four stories have in common.
- Present the main features of a chronicle: short narrative based on everyday facts, often with reflection or critique.
- Remind them that the text “Emergência,” which they read in the previous lesson, was also a chronicle.
- Check if students can identify in the stories the typical characteristics of a chronicle.

4. Creative Activity: Writing Their Own Chronicle (30 minutes)

- Ask students to write a short chronicle about a meaningful personal experience, using the elements discussed in class.
- Instruct them to include a moment of reflection or learning.

5. Sharing and Feedback (20 minutes)

- Form small groups so students can share their chronicles with one another.
- Each group chooses one chronicle to perform and record for the class.

Note: Students must provide constructive feedback, highlighting strengths and suggesting improvements.

3rd Meeting (Two 60-minute classes)

6. Recording the Selected Chronicles (60 minutes)

- Use the tablets to allow students to record their videos in a designated school space.

7. Presentation (40 minutes)

- Present the recorded work to the entire class.

Final Self-Evaluation & Discussion (20 minutes)

- Gather the class for a discussion about their experience studying the textual genre using the digital plurilingual game and producing their own work.
- Ask students what they learned about themselves and others through this activity.

Source: Authors' elaboration (2024)

It is important to note that stages five (sharing and *feedback*), six (recording the chosen chronicles) and seven (presenting the sequence) were not carried out, as the students chose to write their chronicles individually, without the planned staging. This behavior is curious, considering that they are often reluctant to produce text, possibly due to embarrassment or fear of being evaluated. Although the focus of this research was not to delve deeper into written production, the students' commitment to the task was notable, even if their productions deviated from the standard norm of the Portuguese language, which demonstrates their interest and motivation for the activity, generating increased participation. These deviations, however, will not be analyzed at this point, since the main objective of the study focuses on written comprehension skills.

After the sequence was completed, 10 of the 14 students who took part in the digital multilingual game were interviewed, as not all of them were present on the day of the interview. To this end, we devised three questions, which served as the basis for the semi-structured interview aimed at identifying the cognitive, metacognitive and socio-affective strategies used by the students during the digital plurilingual game. Thus, the first question addresses the cognitive strategy, the second the metacognitive strategy and the third the socio-affective strategy. We present the answers collected during the interview in the results and discussion section. We have used the code letter and number (A1, A2...) to preserve the identity of the participants.

Below are the questions:

1. In the activity, did you come across any words or expressions you didn't know?

How did you understand the text?

2. What did you do when you realized you didn't understand a certain moment in the video?

3. How do you feel about having contact with languages you haven't had the opportunity to learn/study?

In addition to the data obtained through the interview, the teacher-researcher asked the students to record in a notebook what they thought of the activity with the digital plurilingual game. Below are some of the participants' impressions:

(A1): Boy, I really liked the digital game it was a different learning should have more often.

(A2): I found him quite dynamic and quite difficult, but also quite fun.

(A3): I thought it was great, the audio helped a lot. It was a great dynamic.

(A8): Ah...I really enjoyed it, it's good for us to learn more about languages. I really enjoyed the experience. I had a hard time at first, but when I played it again it seemed easier. I really loved it.

In addition to the above, we observed that the students were engaged during the didactic sequence, probably because they were the class chosen to play the game. The group in question was selected because of its configuration: a group made up of teenagers, aged between 14 and 17, who are outside the regular range of the education system, in other words, they are repeating learners, with a total of 66.67% repeating. There had been a previous conversation with them about the digital plurilingual game, which may have aroused their curiosity about how the game would work with Romance languages. This hypothesis corroborates the interest of the students, who, even before the game was played, asked about when they were going to play, thus showing a positive perception of the proposal, which they considered to be different from their usual routine.

Another point to highlight during the post-game interview was the students' care in organizing their answers to the questions, showing a concern for expressing their ideas clearly. At the end of the interview, several students reported that they had enjoyed the experience, indicating that not only the activity with the digital plurilingual game, but the

whole process - from the introduction to participation in the interview - contributed to promoting engagement and an appreciation of their own experience as learners.

Below, we will present the analysis of the results and discussion in order to verify whether or not our research hypothesis has been validated.

3 Results and discussions

The results of the research, carried out with 8th grade students from the Professor Amadeu Araújo Municipal School, show the application of cognitive, metacognitive and socio-affective strategies when carrying out an activity with a multilingual digital game. Analysis of the answers provided by the participants revealed how these strategies, as described by O'Malley and Chamot (1990), were mobilized during the experience, demonstrating the positive impact of the intercomprehension approach and the digital game in the context investigated.

We found that the students predominantly used cognitive strategies to decipher unknown words and expressions in order to understand the subtitled video activity. The responses indicate that the participants resorted to transference, using similarities between the words in Portuguese and the Romance languages (French, Spanish and Italian) to infer meanings. This behavior, observed in participants such as A1, A5 and A9, reinforces the potential of intercomprehension as a pedagogical tool, as described by Capucho (2004). Expressions such as *"I tried to understand some, maybe that fit with Portuguese"* (A1), *"I tried to find Portuguese words that matched the one in the sentence"* (A5) and *"I took words that I thought were better, that sounded more like Portuguese and I put words together that I didn't understand very much and ended up transforming different meanings with these words that I didn't know"* (A9), illustrate the use of inferences based on the students' previous linguistic repertoire.

In addition, the use of auditory and visual resources, such as repeating the audio and observing "transparent" words, also stood out. Students like A3 and A7 pointed out that watching the videos and listening to them again helped them understand the narrative.

This data emphasizes the importance of pronunciation as a bridge to comprehension between related languages (Bonvino; Caddéo, 2008).

These data show that cognitive strategies were used more frequently, in contrast to Perassinoto, Boruchovitch and Bzuneck (2013), who found that cognitive strategies were used less frequently.

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When they noticed comprehension difficulties, some students applied metacognitive strategies to overcome the obstacles. For example, (A2) reported: *"I kept following the video and tried to see which words were familiar to me to try to connect them and continue with the text."* This response indicates the use of self-control, in which the student keeps an eye on the information they already understand, connecting it with the rest of the content. Participant A3 also followed the same strategy.

In addition, students like (A4), (A8) and (A9) mentioned that when they didn't fully understand a part of the video, they went back and listened to the audio again, which reflects self-management. In addition, participant (A10) highlighted the importance of the text and audio for understanding the story, thus emphasizing awareness, a relevant aspect in self-regulation. In addition, (A6) reported that she paused the video to think and look for words that made sense within the context, highlighting the importance of problem identification, a metacognitive characteristic, in adapting learning in the face of difficulties. These data show that the activity with the multilingual digital game may have contributed to the awakening of cognitive and metacognitive strategies. These practices reflect characteristics of self-regulation, such as self-management and problem identification, as described by Zimmerman (2002).

Although the activity was carried out individually, the students' responses showed a positive impact on their emotional and motivational perceptions. Participants such as (A4) mentioned feeling more confident as they progressed through the activity, while (A8) and (A9) expressed delight with foreign languages and interest in continuing to learn. This aspect confirms the observations of Martins (2011), who highlights the appreciation of the individual and increased self-esteem as potential results of intercomprehension.

The socio-affective dimension is also reflected in statements such as "*I found some very different languages, very beautiful to speak, I wanted to learn more*" (A8) and "*It was fun, because at first you think it's difficult, but then you realize it's not that complicated*" (A10). These statements suggest that the digital multilingual games not only stimulated learning, but also provided an environment of discovery and curiosity, which are fundamental for engagement in classes.

In addition, the response from (A9), who considered the usefulness of Italian in future contexts, reflects the appreciation of plurilingual experiences for personal and professional development: "*I found the language interesting, for example, Italian, because in the future, I might need it, like, if I'm going to join a company, I might need to use this language*" (A9), which demonstrates the students' connection with the relevance of foreign languages for their future.

At the end of the activity, the students' impressions of the digital multilingual game reflected both the impact of the cognitive and metacognitive strategies applied and the socio-affective dimension of learning. The responses indicated that the students enjoyed the experience, despite the initial difficulties. Most considered the game dynamic and challenging, but also fun, which corroborates the statements of (A2) and (A8), who highlighted the difficulty, but also the pleasure and fun of the activity. In addition, (A1) expressed enthusiasm, mentioning that the game was a "different learning experience" and suggesting that the activity be repeated more often.

Figure 1 - Summary of the experience with a digital multilingual game.



Source: Researcher's data (2025)

Thus, we found that the dynamic involving Romance languages and technology as a tool for teaching and learning in Portuguese language classes proved to be an effective proposal for engaging learners in the educational process. This work proved that the approach to intercomprehension and the use of digital games not only fostered the enthusiasm and participation of the students, but also opened them up to the French, Spanish and Italian languages, as one of the participants mentioned: "*I learned a lot about other languages that I didn't know.*"

From this perspective, we can see that the inclusion of Romance languages in the public school context has given the group taking part in the research an awakening to the world, broadening their knowledge of other cultures and contributing to reflection on the "I" as part of a whole. It is worth noting that, in the public schools of the municipal network of Natal/RN, students primarily study English as a foreign language, and this plurilingual experience offered a unique opportunity for linguistic and cultural expansion.

In this sense, we can say that intercomprehension combined with the use of digital games contributes to the teaching and learning of the Portuguese language. During the activity, the students immersed themselves in the playful universe of the game and used strategies to understand the Romance languages. By being challenged, the students

demonstrated a critical and reflective sense, skills that are essential in today's world. In addition to realizing how capable they are, this favors learning, since they are active in the process. The proposal has therefore proved to be a stimulating and fun tool to promote the all-round development of learners.

With the integral development of the individual in mind, we have listed some of the aspects observed from the digital multilingual game that contribute to the student's full development, such as expanding linguistic and world knowledge, stimulating curiosity and continuous learning, autonomy and resilience. We will discuss these aspects according to the data collected.

The expansion of linguistic knowledge and world awareness is evident in the statement of participant (A5), who reported: *"It's kind of weird, but I feel like I'm in the country."* This comment reveals a broadening of linguistic and cultural repertoire, as well as a growing sensitivity to diversity, indicating a newfound confidence when engaging with Romance languages the student had not previously studied. Moreover, it is clear that the learner feels comfortable interacting with these languages, reflecting a linguistic, cultural, and emotional connection.

Another example is participant (A7)'s comment: *"I never thought I would get to this point and get to know other languages, because I never thought I would study them."* By stating that they never imagined learning other languages, the student shows that the activity expanded their horizons, promoting the development of a more open and critical attitude toward learning and the world.

Similarly, learner (A2) stated: *"I found it impressive that there are so many other languages out there and I had never stopped to study them."* This sense of surprise at the existence of "so many other languages" signals an awakening to a pluricultural world.

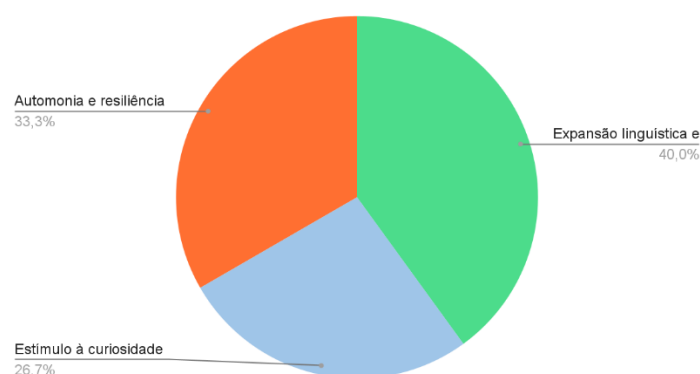
Regarding the stimulation of curiosity and lifelong learning, we observe that the activity sparked the students' curiosity and interest in learning more about languages, as reported by participant (A8): *"I found some languages very different, very beautiful to speak, I wanted to learn more."* In the remarks of participants (A2) and (A7), we notice their interest

in studying other languages and recognizing linguistic diversity, which broadens their perspective and encourages autonomy and the desire for continuous learning.

As for autonomy and resilience, we highlight how students overcame the initial expectation that they would not be able to participate in the activity. Participant (A3)'s statement suggests a strengthening of autonomy and resilience in the face of challenges: *"I thought I wouldn't be able to do the activity, but it worked out."* This is echoed in participant (A4)'s comment: *"I thought I wouldn't be able to do the activity, but it worked out. And I liked it."* Finally, participant (A10) remarked: *"We think it's a bit difficult, but then we see it's not that difficult."* These statements make learners' initial insecurities tangible, given that it was a new experience. However, the positive results expressed in their testimonials reinforce the increase in self-confidence and the ability to face new challenges—essential elements for emotional development.

To illustrate the data discussed regarding the aspects of the expansion of linguistic knowledge and world awareness, stimulation of curiosity and lifelong learning, and autonomy and resilience, we have organized the following chart:

Figure 2 – Aspects Related to Comprehensive Development



Source: Researcher's data (2025)

The results of this investigation demonstrate that the approach of intercomprehension, combined with the use of digital games, significantly contributes to the teaching and learning of the Portuguese language. In addition to promoting the

development of cognitive, critical, and reflective strategies, the proposal proved to be effective in expanding the linguistic and cultural repertoire of the students, as well as in valuing diversity. The playful experience allowed students to develop autonomy, resilience, and curiosity—essential characteristics for the comprehensive development of individuals in an increasingly interconnected and multicultural world. Therefore, the inclusion of Romance languages and technology in the school context emerges as an innovative and inclusive tool for knowledge construction and for strengthening the relationship of learners with learning.

4 Final Considerations

When revisiting the objective of our research, which was to investigate the potential contributions of the intercomprehension approach in Romance languages, combined with the use of digital games, in the context of Portuguese language classes with 8th-grade students in elementary school, we were able to verify, based on the results obtained, that pedagogical practices combining intercomprehension in Romance languages and digital games constitute a resource that stimulates participation, as well as contributes to overcoming linguistic and emotional barriers. The integration of the didactic sequence with the plurilingual digital activity proved to be a catalyst for the development of cognitive, metacognitive, and socio-affective strategies, in addition to fostering students' interest in foreign languages and engagement in Portuguese language classes.

Furthermore, the plurilingual digital game contributes to the development of skills inherent to the comprehensive development of the individual, thus emerging as a driving tool for the teaching and learning of the Portuguese language.

It is worth noting that the students' enthusiasm, demonstrated in the face of this innovative practice, reinforces the relevance of pedagogical practices that value the playful integrated into the Portuguese language curriculum. Thus, this study contributes to highlighting the need to implement active methodologies that consider students' particularities and interests, favoring meaningful and transformative learning.

We recognize that the situation involving the research was favorable, as we had a small number of participants and access to the school's computer lab. However, we faced the obstacle of the poor quality of the internet connection, which compromised the use of the tablets specifically acquired for the pedagogical practice in the classroom. This technical limitation has led to demotivation among teachers, as overcoming the issue requires scheduling the use of the computer lab, which has better connectivity, in advance. This demand results in greater competition for the space. We emphasize that, although our study took place under favorable conditions, this reality does not reflect the situation in many public schools, which are often marked by structural issues such as overcrowded classrooms, lack of equipment, and teacher shortages.

Finally, future investigations could further explore the contributions of the plurilingual digital game for teaching and learning in Portuguese language classes in other contexts, as well as the adaptation of the plurilingual digital game to an unplugged version.

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