PHILOSOPHICAL GAMES WITH PUBLIC SCHOOL TEENAGERS

Vania Mendes dos Santos[1]

Abstract

This experience report describes the application of philosophical games workshops with students from the Integrated High School of IF Sertão Pernambucano, Rural Campus of Petrolina, carried out during the 22nd National Science and Technology Week of 2025. Under the guidance of Prof. Dr. Gabriel Kafure da Rocha, the initiative used dynamics such as "Philosophical True or

---

[1] Scholarship holder in Scientific Initiation (PIBIC-CNPQ). Graduating in Philosophy at PROF-FILO IFSertãoPE. E-mail: vaniamendes24871@gmail.com

False" and "Philosophical Dominoes" to transform the teaching of philosophy into a living, dialogical, and experimental practice, based on the perspectives of Walter Kohan. The methodology sought to break with traditional models of mere content transmission, promoting a horizontal environment of listening and problematization that stimulated the affective engagement, argumentative capacity, and intellectual autonomy of the adolescents. Although it faced challenges such as limited time and the initial difficulty of argumentation by some students, the experience showed that games function as powerful pedagogical devices for the collective construction of meaning and for a critical and democratic education in the context of public schools.

Keywords: Philosophical Games, Philosophy Teaching, Walter Kohan.

The present experience was developed on October 23 of 2025 at the Federal Institute of Sertão Pernambucano, Campus Zona Rural de Petrolina- PE, during the 22nd National Week of Science and Technology of 2025, with students of the Integrated High School course, with the guidance of Prof. Dr. Gabriel Kafure da Rocha, the presence of philosophy in various stages of education has historically been marked by challenges related to its legitimacy, methodology and pedagogical relevance. In educational contexts crossed by structural, social, and cultural crises, thinking about practices that favor

Re(senhas)

dialogue, reflection, and critical training become an urgent need. In this scenario, philosophical games were adopted as a pedagogical strategy with the objective of creating an environment of dialogue, listening and problematization, bringing philosophizing closer to the concrete experiences of adolescents. The proposal dialogues with contemporary perspectives of philosophical education, especially those inspired by philosophy for children and young people, who understand philosophy as a practice of thinking and democratic coexistence. The use of philosophical games is based on the conception that critical thinking is not developed only by the transmission of contents, but by the experience of questioning, argumentation and collective reflection. The work with philosophical games was integrated into the pedagogical routine of the class, articulated with transversal themes such as coexistence, rules, justice, friendship, identity and freedom. The environment was organized in order to favor dialogue, usually in a circle, reinforcing the idea of horizontality between educator and students. Philosophers such as Walter Kohan argue that "when teaching philosophy, it is a way of life" for the author teaching philosophy is not reduced to the dissemination of concepts, theories or the history of philosophy, but implies assuming an existential posture in the face of the educational act. In this sense, philosophy presents itself as a practice that is lived, experienced and built in the daily

life of the classroom. Kohan understands philosophical teaching as a way of inhabiting the world in a reflective, critical and sensitive way to the other. The educator, therefore, not only teaches philosophy, but lives philosophically, creating conditions for thought to happen in the relationship with students. From this perspective, the game is not understood as a simple playful activity, but as a philosophical device that provokes thought, destabilizes certainties and creates conditions for the exercise of intellectual autonomy. When playing, students are invited to justify opinions, listen to divergent arguments, and reformulate their own ideas.

> Experience and truth inhabit different spaces and have a complex relationship. An intense, important, desirable experience presupposes a commitment to a certain academic, historical truth that precedes it. (KOHAN, 2005, p.16)

Walter Kohan problematizes the traditional conception of truth as something fixed, universal and fully transmissible. For the philosopher, experience is not automatically subordinated to truth, nor can it be reduced to a criterion of objective validation of knowledge. On the contrary, it is an open field, marked by the singularity, unpredictability and intensity of what is experienced. In this perspective, an intense experience does not guarantee, by itself, access to the truth, just as the truth

does not necessarily impose itself as a result of experience. The relationship between the two is complex because experience transforms the subject, affects ways of feeling, thinking and existing, while truth, in the philosophical horizon, always remains provisional, situated and crossed by interpretations. Kohan, thus, moves away from a pedagogy that seeks measurable results and previously established truths, to defend an education that values the event of thought.

Different philosophical games were used, adapted to the age group and the reality of the school, including:
Game 1- True or False Philosophical. The students heard curious statements (e.g., questions are more important than answers.) and had to take a stand, justifying their choice.
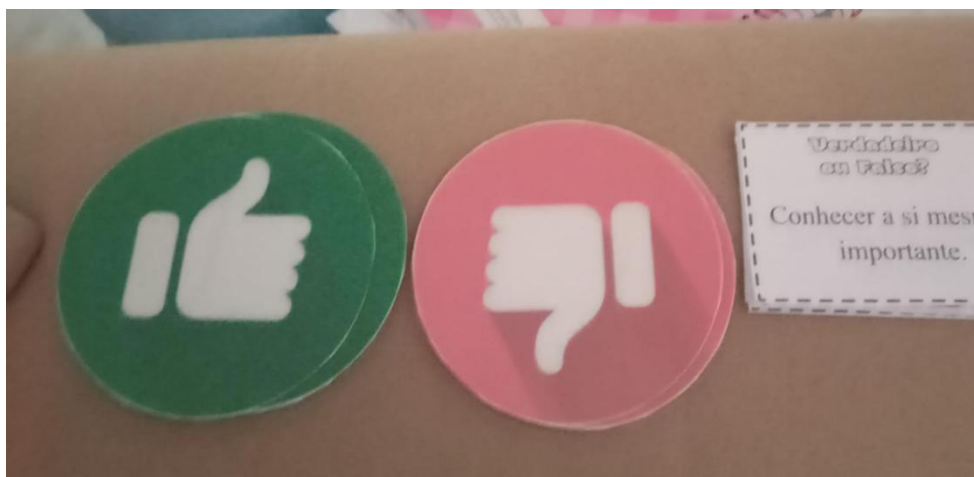
Figure 2 - True or False Philosophical Game. *(Source: authorship, 2025)*

Game 2- Philosophical Dominoes. The adolescents listened to the questions (e.g.: Thinking is important, why?) to place the letter she must answer by arguing the answer, if she does not answer, it is her turn. The winner is the one who finishes the cards first.

Figure 3 - Philosophical Domino Game. *(Source: authorship, 2025)*

The participation of adolescents manifested high cognitive and affective engagement. There was a willingness to intervene in dialogue, demonstrating genuine curiosity and respect for the speeches of colleagues. Such behavior corroborates the thesis that in this age group it is not only a recipient of knowledge, but an active producer of the senses. Observed results:

Re(senhas)

✔ Stimulation of curiosity and creativity.

✔ Development of argumentative capacity.

✔ Recognition of the student as a thinking subject.

The Philosophical Games Workshop was inspired by the proposal of the philosopher Walter Kohan: "We are interested in giving some attention to this tensioning condition of philosophy and its teaching, in order to strengthen the forces and powers that inhabit the thought of those who learn and teach (philosophy)." By stating that it is necessary to pay attention to this condition in order to strengthen the forces and powers of thought, the author argues that authentic philosophy is not an exercise in the repetition of ready-made truths, but a movement of questioning and openness. To philosophize is to put oneself in discomfort, to find strange what seems obvious, to doubt what is given. Therefore, any attempt to transform philosophy into a neutral, predictable and merely content-based discipline is a way of neutralizing its formative power. In this context, the teaching of philosophy cannot be reduced to the transfer of ideas, but must be experienced as a space for creation and movement. Kohan suggests that both those who teach and those who learn need to get in touch with the living and restless dimension of thought. It is precisely the tension that gives rise to natural philosophical thought. To educate philosophically is, then, to provoke thought, but not to offer ready-made answers. Thus, paying

Re(senhas)

attention to the tensioning condition of philosophy means recognizing its liberating force. By strengthening this greatness, not only is philosophy taught, but conditions are created for thought to become active, critical and creative. It is about forming subjects who think for themselves, capable of intervening in the world with awareness and autonomy. Therefore, the teaching of philosophy only fulfills its function when it preserves and enhances the tension that inhabits thought. Therefore, philosophical games cease to be mere entertainment and become a philosophical experience of reflection and collective construction of meaning.

> Philosophy at School" was also an experience in the sense that before starting the project we did not have an established and consolidated meta, not even precise objectives. (Kohan, 2005 , p.15).

Kohan demonstrates that the "Philosophy at School" project was an open and experimental experience, as "it did not start from a rigid meta or from totally defined objectives". This perspective is directly connected with the application of the Philosophical Games Workshop at School, as both share the same logic of discovery and construction of knowledge. When using philosophical games, teachers and students "do not only follow instructions or previously fixed contents: learning arises

from the interaction, questioning and reflection that arise during the activity. Games such as **Philosophical True or False** and **Philosophical Dominoes** allow students to explore ideas, test arguments, and experiment with different perspectives, similar to the pedagogical experience described by Kohan. In this way, philosophical games prove that philosophy in school gains strength when it is lived as an experience, where learning is not only alienation of knowledge, but a shared and experimental construction of thought.

Despite the positive results, the experience also presented challenges, such as the reduced time of classes, the need for constant adaptation of the games and the initial difficulties of some students in sustaining arguments. Such limits, however, are part of the training process itself and reinforce the continuity of the proposal. The report shows that philosophical games constitute a significant methodology for the teaching of philosophy in public schools, especially adolescents. By promoting dialogue, problematization and active participation, these practices contribute to a philosophical education committed to the critical and democratic formation of students.

References

AQUINO, Nelcino H.; ROCHA, Gabriel K. A FILOSOFIA CANTADA: Ensino de Filosofia a partir da musica popular nordestina. **dialektiké –** Revista de Filosofia, v. 5, n. 1, 2025, p. 56–67. Disponível em: https://doi.org/10.15628/dialektike.2025.19002

KOHAN, Walter O. **Infância, política e pensamento: ensaios sobre filosofia e educação.**Buenos Aires: Del Estante Editorial, 2016.

KOHAN, Walter Omar. **Filosofia:** o paradoxo de aprender e ensinar. Tradução de Ingrid Müller Xavier. Belo Horizonte: Autêntica, 2009. (Coleção Ensino de Filosofia).

KOHAN, Walter Omar. **Infância**. Entre educação e filosofia / Walter Omar Kohan. - 1 e d ., 1. reimp. - Belo Horizonte : Autêntica, 2005.

LEÃO, Adalgisa. Um Jogo Bastante Perigoso: Sobre Literatura e Filosofia. **Re(senhas)**, *[S. l.]*, v. 1, n. 1, p. e24002, 2024. DOI: 10.71263/3ne33h57. Disponível em: https://resenhas.ojsbr.com/resenhas/article/view/8. Acesso em: 27 jan. 2026.

ROCHA, G.K.. A RITMANÁLISE DA EDUCAÇÃO: A IMAGEM DA CRIANÇA EM BACHELARD. **IDEAÇÃO**

(UEFS), 2018. Disponível em:
https://doi.org/10.13102/ideac.v0i0.2995

Rocha, G. K. da ., Santos, D. M. dos ., & Pinho, R. O. A INFÂNCIA EM BACHELARD E STEINER: UM PONTO DE VISTA DA EDUCAÇÃO ANTROPOSÓFICA CONTRA A CRÍTICA DE ONFRAY. **Interação - Revista De Ensino, Pesquisa E Extensão**, *21*(1), 2019. p. 51–67. Disponível em:.
https://doi.org/10.33836/interacao.v21i1.284