Ilka Dias Bichara
Celina Maria Colino Magalhaes *Editors*

Children's Play and Learning in Brazil

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Foreword

> What is it that you want from me? Do try, now, and put yourself in my place, take the point of view of a country person. We in the country try to bring our hands into such a state as will be most convenient for working with. So we cut our nails; sometimes we turn up our sleeves. And here people purposely let their nails grow as long as they will, and link on small saucers by way of studs, so that they can do nothing with their hands.
>
> (Ana Karênina, Leon Tolstoi)

The sentence attributed to Leon Tolstoi that says "if you wish to be universal, sing to your yard," with some derivatives also known on the internet, may be understood under several different interpretations, some more pertinent than others. From my point of view, I have always seen in this sentence a great syntax of the resolution of the dilemma in the classic private-universal or nature-culture dichotomy. The sentence brings the almost paradox contradiction that the property of the universe is present in your private world. In theory a lot has already been written about it, also has several proposals for solving this dichotomy; however, we always go back to this typical dilemma for Manicheistic minds to whom the task of conciliating two congruent sides of the same version is impossible.

In a different sense, we can also notice in this sentence a reference to the need of a contextualist perspective, not a poor contextualism that conceives context as something greater, wider, and more exterior, that involves him. I refer to a systemic contextualism, an ecologic one, in which the part and the whole are only units that interrelate mutually. Thus, the backyard or the village somehow interacts with what is understood as universal.

In either case we can see most part of the cultural studies, especially the ones that refer to regional plays, chiefly in institutions or with very striking distinct characteristics. The play, as a typical universal biological neotenic characteristic of the human species, a behavioral standard that mediates interactions, bonds, affective and cognitive and learning aspects of the human species have distinct expressions depending on the context it arises. The context might be either a physical aspect or a typical relational characteristic, or even part of an institutional pattern loaded with routines, rituals, and typical norms. To distinguish the peculiar characteristic and relate it to a certain expression of play is not an easy task, and I see it as the main challenge of this book.

The book *Children's play and learning in Brazil* is a collection (which makes the abovementioned challenge even more radical) of research papers about the several play contexts developed in Brazil, and, specially, some chapters more than others emphasize the learning aspects involved in those plays and contexts. Undoubtedly, considering the diversity of contexts present in Brazil might seem a little pretentious, but it isn't, for it did not presume to exhaust the diversity of contexts present in the Brazilian soil. Conversely, by the assumed profile of collection, it dealt with the available raw material and is comprised of a compilation of the main current research done by these researchers. Thus, more than a didactic and exhaustive investigation on the subject in several contexts in Brazil, the material available here must be seen as a brilliant summary of the possibilities to understand the play-learning connection in the Brazilian context. Hence, there is no commitment here to any limited theoretical approach, a typical methodology, or an attempt to exhaust the matter; it solely aimed to, without systematization, demonstrate the differentiated aspects of the pretended relation. An interested reader may, by itself, uncover a possible systematization. Even though the absence of didactically addressing the reader might be seen as a negative aspect, I see it as positively providing the reader with more possibilities of understanding this wide theme that involves the matter of play.

In this sense, in the first chapter (Indigenous children's play in the Brazilian Amazon), we are confronted with the astonishing confirmation that regardless of the importance of investigating indigenous plays, the amount of research and descriptions found in the literature is still erratic. This scarcity might be due to how anthropology ignores the child as a legitimate producer of culture, and for psychology overvaluing the urban context. In this chapter the play aspects found in the game activities in a village at Parakanã are compared to other peer cultures reported in the literature in other groups of Amazon Indians. A special attention is given to the awareness of the environment and nature present in the plays which validates the presupposition of the functional value not only in its future life but also for the viability of its own childhood in that context.

In the second chapter, Bichara presents us with a very descriptive focus on the games and plays of Indians from the Northeast region in Brazil. The Indians from the Northeast are poor agriculturist who struggle for the possession of their lands and for the restoration of their culture. This chapter highlights the way of life of these Indians and children. In all three villages reported, it is noted that the freedom to play at any available spaces and with a large variety of objects from the nature and from their parents' work is a remarkable aspect of the play culture in these communities.

Priante, Lauer-Leite, and Lauer-Lellis show us in the third chapter the *riverside* children plays, mainly from the Amazon region. Using the data collection through focal group, the plays of 5- and 6-year-old children were described. In their analysis the authors emphasize the influence of nature on the children's daily living, the sea tides determinate the peers, types, shapes, time, and in general, design the limits and possibilities of play.

In a very distinct perspective from the other chapters in this book, Oliveira in the fourth chapter brings us a personal and anecdotic report, highlighting the diverse context of his experience and a temporal perspective.

Based on the premise that game is a universal phenomenon with specific characteristics that might be influenced by the context and culture in which the individual grows, the fifth chapter illustrates the occurrence of play in a shelter from the Amazon region, and the characteristics of gender and context are discussed; despite the intrinsic limits of institutionalization, there is a flexibility regarding the use of the available space.

Going, Kohatsu, and Miranda de Paulo bring a different perspective from the cultural contextual one regarding the challenges of full-time education in Brazil. In this sense, the sixth chapter is more about a report and reflection on an experience as to where the ludic stands in the full-time education. Even though this might be well stablished in other countries, the need to include other languages in the school context in Brazil is still seen as a dichotomy between studying and playing. The experience is discussed, having as a basis the need for the ludic in the incorporation of distinctive cultures and contexts.

In the seventh chapter, there is a look towards the public spaces and how it has the plays in the urban context have been taking place in a big city in Brazil. The author discusses the appropriation process of public spaces at different manners and with its own senses. The perceptions and suggestions about the spaces provided by the children may be an alternative for a better adaptation of the cities to the childhood demands and the understanding of children as citizens.

The eighth chapter brings back the discussion of the connection between the play and the child education, strengthening the hallmark of this book for the matter of development and learning. Here the main method used was interview and drawing. The authors discuss the data, raising the issue of the role the school has on the protection and promotion of infancy through plays, appropriation, and resignification of spaces, and bending rules are some of the themes discussed for the self-construction of childhood.

The last chapter discusses the polemic theme of digital technologies in plays. Two main assumptions guide the elaborated ideas: play as a cultural practice marked by the context and the active protagonism of children. The current urban context of the middle class in Brazil is noticeable to have wide access to the digital technologies in children's routine and hyper connections, and both phenomena are linked to the internalization of childhood. On the other hand, the children are making use of the rules from their social context, reinterpreting and renegotiating, and even creating new interaction rules. Becker, Souza, and Bichara in this last and remarkable chapter aim at analyzing this phenomenon of the contemporary play, discussing the appropriations of time and space dimensions used by the Brazilian children in stablishing and maintaining ludic episodes along with time and in different spaces.

It is possible that the reader will, upon finishing reading this book, ask himself about the mainstream of the theoretical experiences involved; in the same position, I don't feel frustrated in knowing there were none, and I also understand it as the

intention of the organizers. That this space was for the authors to have a freedom of speech about the play theme in several contexts in Brazil, this is where lay the most valuable richness of this book. As stated by the epigraph in this preface “yes, what is it that you want from me? Do try, now, and put yourself in my place, take the point of view of a country person.” The village here referred is the play for the children and in Brazil.

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Chapter 1
Indigenous Children's Play in the Brazilian Amazonia

Yumi Gosso, Briseida D. Resende, and Ana M. A. Carvalho

Amazonia, the region usually associated with the largest remaining tropical forest in the world, covers around five million square kilometers in Northwestern South America, 60% of which in the Brazilian territory and 40% extending across the frontiers of eight other countries. In Brazil, the territory named Legal Amazonia includes nine states in three of the five big geographical regions of the country: Acre, Amapá, Amazonas, Pará, Rondônia, Roraima, and Tocantins, in the North Region; Maranhão, in the Northeast Region; and Mato Grosso, in the Central-West Region. It accounts for around 50% of the country's territory. The region is extensively bathed by an intricate network of watercourses, most of them directly or indirectly pertaining to the Amazon River basin (Adas & Adas, 2011).

The most popularized depiction of the region is that of a huge plain area crossed by rivers, covered by a dense forest and scarcely populated – a portrait that is increasingly questioned by contemporary researchers. Gonçalves (2015, p. 9) argues that "far from being homogeneous, [Amazonia] is an extremely complex and diversified region" – not only as to biodiversity but also to geological, relief, and other geographical characteristics. A'b Saber (2002) asserts that, inside the highly biologically diversified forest, different local and subregional patterns can be identified: dry land (savannah) isles in the midst of the forest, white sand terraces, lowlands that are flooded in the rainy season, high rocky grooves, and sugar-loaf and flagged stone walls; the watercourses vary from huge rivers – the Amazon (the largest in the world, both in length and in water volume) and its tributaries – to small brooks (*Igarapés*) where only canoes can navigate. In the alluvial plains, the variety of ecosystems composes a "land-water mosaic" (p. 7).

Gonçalves (2015) lists several different points of view, based on which the Brazilian Amazonia has been (or still is) conceived: as nature (as opposed to culture), a peripheral and backward region, a national problem, a demographic hollow, a preserve of

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natural resources to be exploited, and the ecological preserve of the planet. These conceptions underlie the historical lack of policies focusing benefits for the region and its population and the various attempts of exploitation in the benefit of other national or foreign interests. The consequences of these various forms of exploitation are, among others, deforestation, pollution of the waters by mineral residues, soil degradation, and conflicts between exploiters (often migrated from other regions in search of work or profit opportunities) and local populations – mainly the so-called people of the forest (Gonçalves, 2015, p. 17). This denomination includes two different populations: *Ribeirinhos* (riparian dwellers) and indigenous groups. *Ribeirinhos* may have indigenous ancestry mixed with white or black blood, but their way of life is not indigenous: they are outcasts, marginalized by poverty from urban life, who only share a certain location by the river. Similarly to indigenous populations, they subsist on natural resources, small-scale agriculture, and animal farming and are, thus, equally dependent on the preservation of the natural environment (Portal Amazonia, n.d.).

Amazonian indigenous groups live in preserved areas that stand for 43% (2.1 million km^2) of the Brazilian-Amazonian territory and vary as to legal status: ratified and registered, identified, declared, and undergoing identification. The indigenous population in the region is estimated as something between 170.000 and 200.000 people, a small fraction of the 20 million people living in the Legal Amazonia, 62% of which in urban centers (Portal Amazonia, n.d.).

Indigenous villages are usually organized as a semicircle of family huts around a central common area where daily evening meetings and tribal ceremonies are held (Munduruku, 2003). Subsistence is based on hunting/fishing, gathering, small-scale agriculture, and animal farming. Social life is ruled by custom, lore, and traditions that singularize each ethnic group. Gonçalves (2015) stresses that "the characterization of these populations of original inhabitants of the region as 'indigenous' hides their enormous cultural diversity […]. Amazonia is not nature devoid of culture" (p. 70) and also leads to the neglect of their huge amount of knowledge about Amazonian ecosystems and preservation that should be recognized as their legacy to humankind.

Childhood and Play of Amazonian Indigenous Children

Brazilian Anthropology provides information on many groups, but studies focusing childhood, and particularly play activities, are still scarce. From 172 groups on which general information was found, less than 33% focused or presented cues about these topics. Some drawbacks of our survey of this literature – e.g., inaccurate or too inclusive concepts of play or methodological limitations – are pointed out by Gosso, Resende, and Carvalho (in press). The sample on which the present chapter is based includes 41 groups on which some information on play was available, even if only mentioning the occurrence of recognizable play activities and lacking detailed descriptions. These limitations led our decision to resort for a more comprehensive depiction of this topic, to the study of the first author on *Parakanã* children, where quantitative data are presented (Gosso, 2004) and complement it with the available information on other Amazonian indigenous groups.

At a Parakanã Village

Parakanã groups live in the *Parakanã* Preserve, in the Amazon Rainforest, Pará state. Observations of children's activities were carried out at *Paranowaona*, one of the five villages of the preserve at the time of data collection[1]. The number of inhabitants in *Paranowaona* village was 86, with some fluctuations due to the circulation of adults to other villages. They are a tribal society, and their culture is nearly intact, in the sense that it strongly resembles pre-Columbian-Brazilian indigenous inhabitants – for instance, most of them, excepting young men, can speak only their native language.

Subsistence is based on hunting wild animals like the deer and the more easily found land turtle and on gathering Brazilian fruits, nuts, and other seeds (*açaí*, *bacaba*). These activities are complemented by small-scale agriculture: rice, corn, and manioc tillage, the latter used to grind flour, the basic *Parakanã* feeding item. As in most indigenous groups, there is a clear-cut gender division of labor: men hunt fish, clear the soil for planting, and rule about marriages and the village's course; women look after the children and harvest, gather, and prepare flour and other food supplies.

Children who are still nursed are carried by their mothers in the *tapaxa* – a sling made of palm fibers – or looked after by their siblings. Younger children (up to 5 years old) remain in the village, while older children help their relatives harvesting the field or gathering fruits – a very common help modality, particularly for girls; 8- or 9-year-old boys start to follow their fathers in hunting expeditions and also to participate in *tekatawa*, the male evening meetings.

Childhood and Play in a Parakanã Village: Quantitative Data

Children in the *Paranowaona* village have very little contact with non-indigenous people. They only leave the village to visit relatives in other villages in the same preserve with their parents or other relatives. From the age of about 4, the children are already quite independent from the adults. They spend the day interacting among themselves in mixed-age groups, enjoying great freedom of movement, without adult supervision.

Twenty-nine *Parakanã* children, aged 4–12 (16 girls, 13 boys), were observed. For the purpose of analysis, the children were divided into two age groups: *konomia* (approximately 4–6 years old, six boys and eight girls) and *otyaro* (approximately 7–12 years old, seven boys and eight girls) – a classification made by the *Parakanã* themselves, who do not count the years and have no birthday celebrations – the two age classes are defined by the looks and maturity of the child. By the age of around 10, most girls are married or engaged. In our sample of *otyaro* girls, one was engaged (which means starting to help the future mother-in-law's domestic tasks instead of her own mother's), and four were married and lived with their husbands.

[1] Since then, ten other villages were settled.

In order to characterize the children's routines, an analysis of the general time budget (Szalai, 1966) was performed as a first step for a more detailed analysis of the time spent in various types of play. After an initial adaptation period, data collection using the focal subject method (Altmann, 1974) was started. Each session lasted 5 min, comprising ten 30-s periods. The activities of the children were registered on protocols on which behavior categories were noted down. Twenty-nine children were randomly assigned as focal subjects. Observation sessions were randomly distributed during the light hours of the day[2]. Although it was possible to hear the children's voices and laughter at night, it was not possible to make observations in the dark, due to the lack of visibility and also because the presence of foreigners was not expected in the village at night. The total number of observation sessions was 330. The number of sessions per child ranged from 7 to 18 (average: 11 sessions).

The observed behaviors were classified in the following categories: play, work, idleness, observation, eating and drinking, personal care and hygiene, talking, grooming, and aggression (Gosso, 2004). Since two or more categories could occur during the 5-min focal observations, each 30-s interval was registered only the category that lasted more than 1.5 s. The occurrence of work and play along the same 5-min intervals illustrates a point that is consistently stressed by child anthropologists: indigenous children do take active part in adult tasks but also use them as play opportunities, as pointed out by Gosso et al. (in press).

The resulting time budget was children were seen playing for 54.1% of the observation time and engaged in work for 10.3% of the time. The corresponding values for the categories, idleness, eating, talking, personal hygiene, grooming, and aggression were, respectively, 23.7%, 5.2%, 2.7%, 1.9%, 1.4%, 0.5%, and 1%. *Parakanã* boys spend more time playing (59.9% of observation time) than girls (48.3% of observation time). This picture is similar to that found in other societies with traditional subsistence patterns (Bock, 2005; Kramer, 2002).

As they grow up, indigenous children, particularly girls, spend more time in adult activities. Similar data are reported for other indigenous tribes (e.g., *A'uwê-Xavante*, Nunes, 1999, 2002; *Tenetehara*, Wagler & Galvão, 1961; *Xikrin*, Cohn, 2000). Adult activities performed by boys and girls tend to mirror the gender division of adult's labor, especially for older children. Since men's activities are less centralized in the village, they are less accessible to observation – except for fishing, a predominantly male activity, performed by the *otyaro*, by themselves on the riverbank or in groups of two or three boys in canoes. On the other side, caretaking is a very common activity for girls: even newborn babies are carried by 5-year-old sisters. Other common activities performed by girls are related to feeding: gathering fruits and nuts, breaking nuts using one stone as an anvil and another one as a hammer, processing (sieving and toasting) manioc for the production of flour, and collecting and cooking potatoes. Sugarcane harvesting is done by boys and girls: carrying machetes, the children cut the sugarcane, first in big pieces, then chop them

[2] The children used to attend school classes 1 h per day. These periods were not considered for the analysis of their time budget.

Table 1.1 Distribution (%) of play categories as a function of gender and age class

	Boys		Girls		
Play categories	*Konomia*	*Otyaro*	*Konomia*	*Otyaro*	Total
Physical contingency	48.5	38.6	43.1	47.9	44.7
Social contingency	9.4	4.1	13.8	16.8	11.4
Rough-and-tumble	7.6	6.2	3.8	9.8	6.9
Test of strength	1.0	1.1	1.8	1.0	1.2
Construction	8.4	14.2	22.2	0.6	11.5
Fantasy	19.1	9.2	14.9	3.4	11.2
Games with rules	7.4	26.6	0.0	20.5	13.6

into smaller pieces, and suck them. Younger children often follow the older ones and ask for toasted potatoes and sugarcane pieces.

The analysis of play activities used a combination of categories proposed by Morais and Otta (2003), Piaget (1951), Smilansky (1968), and Smith (1997): physical contingency (e.g., running, swimming), social contingency (e.g., imitating partner), rough-and-tumble, test of strength (e.g., jumping from a tree), construction (e.g., modeling clay), fantasy (involving symbolic transformation), and games with rules. The most frequent category was physical contingency (44.7%), followed by fantasy (11.5%), construction (11.3%), social contingency (11.0%), and games with rules (13.5%); rough-and-tumble play was observed during 7.0% of play time and test of strength during 1.3% of play time. Table 1.1 shows the distribution of play activities according to gender and age group.

Fantasy (i.e., make-believe play, a more consensual denomination in the literature) was more frequent among the younger children. The same was true for construction, while the opposite was observed for games with rules. The increase in the frequency of games with rules and the decrease in the frequency of make-believe along children's development are also observed among urban children from several countries (Papalia & Olds, 1990; Piaget, 1951; Sinker et al., 1993; Smith, 2005). Social contingency play was observed more frequently among girls than among boys, which is also in accordance with the literature on urban children: even newborn girls show more interest than boys in voices and human images (Connellan, Baron-Cohen, Wheelwright, Batki, & Ahluwalia, 2000); during the first years of life, girls are more sympathetic than boys to pain and sadness of other people (Strayer & Roberts, 1997).

In contrast, other play modalities seem to be more affected by the ecological and cultural environments. Physical contingency play – the most frequent modality in our data, regardless of age and gender – was significantly higher than among urban children, irrespective of socioeconomic level (Gosso, Morais & Otta, 2007; Pellegrini & Smith, 1998): the difference is plausible since, in contrast with urban children, indigenous children are free to explore their spacious surrounding environment and to face the challenges presented by the native forest and the rivers. Cultural differences in the amount of time allotted to

make-believe play are also pointed out in the literature: among the Mayas (Gaskins, 2000) and the Polynesians from the Marquesas Islands (Martini, 1994), make-believe is not frequent; in a study of children from the large industrial city of São Paulo, it was found that children from upper socioeconomic level, but not from lower ones, had a significantly higher frequency of make-believe than *Parakanã* children (Gosso et al., 2007). As for rough-and-tumble play, high rates were expected because the observations were made on a non-urban sample and outside the conventional school settings where most studies on this kind of play are usually done (Boulton, 1992; Humphreys & Smith, 1987; Pellegrini, 1989). Nonetheless**,** high R&T play rates were not found, although the children were on their own and there was no school policy discouraging it. We also did not find gender differences, an unexpected result since it is consistently reported in studies on industrial societies (DiPietro, 1981; Fry, 2005; Geary, 2002; Pellegrini, 1989; Pellegrini & Smith, 1998; Smith, 2005; Smith & Connolly, 1980). Bock (2005) found similar frequencies of rough-and-tumble play in boys and girls of Okawanga Delta, Botswana, where a mixed subsistence economy of foraging and small-scale agriculture is also practiced.

Who do *Parakanã* children play with? Harris (1995) states that the division of children in groups is universal, however, if the number of children in a given community is too small, mixed-age groups, one male and one female, will be formed and will be divided into age groups as the children grow up. The question is relevant here since Parakanã children's social environment is a multi-age and mixed-gender playgroup. Who do they choose for group play and for parallel play? In order to approach this question, play episodes were selected and classified in these two categories according to Parten (1932, *apud* Papalia & Olds, 1990) and Smith (1978). *Konomia* and younger *otyara* (7–9 years old) played more frequently (both in group and parallel play) with same-aged peers and, in each age group, favored same-gender partners. These results agree with those of studies on Western urban children (Fabes, 1994; Maccoby, 1988; Martin, 1994; Serbin, Moller, Gulko, Powlishta, & Colburne 1994).

Amazonian Indigenous Children's Play

Several similarities and differences in play behavior between indigenous and urban children were pointed out in the former item. Does the same occur between indigenous groups, and particularly between those who live in a similar ecosystem? Since quantitative data are absent in most available studies on indigenous children's play, this question is explored here with an ethnographic approach, starting with a general description of play activities, synthesized in Table 1.2 that makes references to the indigenous groups for which these sorts of activities are recognizably reported, even if with lack of details or in similar forms.

Table 1.2 Play activities categories and the groups in which they are mentioned

Play activities	Groups
Rules and roles	*Apinayé* (Nimuendajú,1983); *A'uwê-Xavante* (Grando, Xavante, & Campos, 2010; Instituto Socioambiental, 2015); *Bakairi* (Grando et al., 2010); *Baniwa* (Grando et al., 2010); *Bororo* (Grando et al., 2010; Lima, 2008; Moisés, 2003); *Camaiurá* (Lima, 2008; Meirelles, 2012); *Canela* (Gosso et al., 2005); *Ikpeng* (Grando et al., 2010); *Iranxe-Manoki* (PIB; Grando et al., 2010); *Kalapalo* (Herrero, 2010); *Karipuna* (Gosso, 2004); *Makuxi* (Pinto, 2010); *Manchineri* (Calderaro, 2006); M*ehinaku, Parakanã* (Gosso, 2004); *Panará* (Estelles, 2016); *Paresi* (Grando et al., 2010); *Taulipang* (Cooper, 1949); *Tikuna* (Abreu, n.d.; Grando et al., 2010); *Umutina* Grando et al., 2010); *Wapixana* (Costa, 2013); *A'uwê-Xavante* (Meirelles (2012); *Yawalapiti* (Lima, 2008; Herrero, 2010); *Yawanawá* (Grando, 2010); *Yudja* (Instituto Socioambiental, 2015)
Let's pretend that	*A'uwê-Xavante* (Carrara, 2002; Nunes (2002); *Caiapó, Canela, Tikuna, Yanomami* (Gosso 2004); *Karajá* (Campos, 2002; Gosso 2004); *Makuxi, Wapixana* (Costa, 2013); *Mehinaku* (Ferrari, 2013); *Munduruku* (Nascimento & Zoia, 2014); *Tapirapé* (Grando, 2014); *Xikrin* (Cohn, 2002b); *Yanomami* (Eibl-Eibesfeldt, 1989);. Y*awanawá* (Grando, 2010); *Yudja* (Grando et al., 2010)
Who is the strongest the fastest, the smartest	*Arapaso* (Pereira, 2013); *Camaiurá* (Gosso et al., 2005; Moisés, 2003); *Kalapalo* (Herrero, 2010); *Manchineri* (Calderaro, 2006), *Maraguá* (Yamã, 2013); *Mehinaku, Yawalapiti* (Lima, 2008); *Munduruku* (Nascimento & Zóia, 2014); *Paresi, Yudja* (Grando et al., 2010)
How well can we do it	*Apinayé* (Nimuendajú,1983); *A'uwê-Xavante* (Gosso, 2004); *Bakairi, Bororo, Paresi, Tapirapé, Umutina, Xavante* (Grando et al., 2010); *Camaiurá* (Moisés, 2003); *Deni* (Ribeiro, 1987); *Galibi Marworno* (Codonho, 2007); *Galibi do Oiapoque* (Meirelles, 2012); *Gavião P.* (Reis & Sousa, 2008); *Guajá* (IELA, n.d); *Kalapalo* (Herrero, 2010); *Karajá, Parakanã* (Gosso & Otta, 2003); *Manchineri* (Calderaro, 2006); *Makuxi, Wapixana* (Costa 2013); *Matsés* (Calderaro, 2006); *Mehinaku* (Ferrari, 2013); *Munduruku* (Nascimento & Zóia, 2014); *Sateré-Mawé, Urubu-Kaapor* (Gosso et al., 2005); *Taulipang* (CTA/ZM, 2009); *Waimiri-Atroari* (Silva, n.d); *Xikrin* (Cohn, 2002a); *Yanomami* (Gosso, 2004); *Yawalapiti* (Lima, 2008); *Yudja* (Instituto Socioambiental, 2015)
The body asks for movement	*Apinayé* (Silva, n.d.); *Arapaso* (Pereira, 2013); *A'uwê-Xavante* (Nunes, 1999, 2002); *Bakairi, Bororo, Tukano, Trumai, Yudja* (Grando et al., 2010); *Camaiurá, Mehinaku* (Gosso et al., 2005); *Gavião-Pykopjê* (Reis & Sousa, 2008), *Galibi Marworno* (Codonho, 2007); *Kalapalo* (Instituto Socioambiental, 2015); *Karipuna* (Brito, 2012), *Makuxi*, *Maraguá* (Yamã, 2013); *Matsés* (Calderaro, 2006); *Mehinaku* (Ferrari, 2013; Gosso et al., 2005); *Munduruku* (Nascimento & Zoia, 2014), *Parakanã* (Gosso & Otta, 2003), *Umutina* (Grando et al., 2010); *Wapixana* (Costa, 2013); Y*udja* (Grando et al., 2010)
Young artisans	*A'uwê-Xavante* (Nunes, 1999); *Makuxi* (Costa, 2013); *Manchineri* (Calderaro, 2006); Costa, 2013); *Mehinaku* (Gosso et al., 2005); *Parakanã* (Gosso & Otta, 2003); *Tikuna* (Grando et al., 2010); *A'uwê-Xavante* (Meirelles, 2012) *Xikrin* (Cohn, 2002b); *Yudja* (Instituto Socioambiental, 2015)

Rules and Roles

Under this title are included play activities characterized by the presence of pre-established rules and/or characters, plots, sceneries (usually referred in the literature as games with rules). They may include make-believe and/or play fighting and play chasing, components as part of their plots, as exemplified in the games described below.

Kap (wasp) game: a pile of sand ("wasp net") where several children – "wasps"– are "humming" and are attacked by another group that tries to destroy the "nest"; the attackers are "stung" (pinched) and chased by the defenders.

Toloi Kunhügü (hawk in the native language): a tree is drawn in the soil by the leader of the game (the "hawk"); other children ("small birds") seek refuge in the tree branches ("nests"), then flee, stomping their feet and singing around the tree to challenge the approaching "hawk," who jumps to catch them, and "imprison" near the tree trunk those who are caught; the last child to be caught becomes the new "hawk."

Tucunaré (big Amazonian fish): two differently sized squares, drawn with rods thrust on the soil, stand for a river; in the smaller inner square (the "deep") live four *tucunarés* that will chase the "small fishes" (six to ten children) living in the "shallow" (the larger square, with six doors); some of the "fishes" are caught and led to the "deep," while the others escape through the "doors," which "are too narrow" to be crossed by the pursuers; the game is resumed until all the "small fishes" are captured.

"Angry Bull": the child chosen as the "bull" runs toward the "fence" (several children standing and holdings hands). If the "fence" is crossed, the other children pursue the "bull," and the child who catches it becomes the next "bull"; if not, the others make a circle around it; the "bull" asks a question that is not correctly answered; the "bull" gets angry and manages to escape; the others pursue him until he is caught by one of the pursuers, who becomes the next "bull."

"Pumpkin Thieves": children squatted on the ground are the "pumpkins" in a "field" guarded by another group of children ("the owners"); "potential costumers" ("elders") arrive to "buy" them but are refused by the "owners"; both groups leave; "elders" return, "steal," and hide the "pumpkins"; "owners" return and question the "elders"; one of the owners starts to fight with the "elders," while the others search and find the "pumpkins"; the game restarts with the "elders stealing the pumpkins" again.

"Wrestling Manioc" (from the Tupi *manyóc*): a group of children squat and embrace each other; the first child in the queue involves a tree with the arms; another child, placed at the end of the queue, pulls the last child, trying to separate him/her from the others.

"Where is the fire?": one child lies with the head face down in a hole dug in the soil and connected by a tunnel to another hole, so that he/she can breathe; the question "where is the fire?" is asked by a partner, and the child must reply correctly, guessing the direction of the sun.

Poï Aru Nhagü ("banana game"): two dyads try to stop each other from throwing down a pile of banana slices, while other participants of each team try to hit the opponents with cloth balls.

The structure of several other games is very similar to those played by children in other cultures around the world: hopscotch, played on a checker drawn on the sand; shuttlecock (an original indigenous creation); singing and dancing while wheeling hand in hand; marbles, played with small mud balls; and playing ball with wood sticks. These games are not described in detail in the literature, perhaps because observers recognize them as widely known play activities. An exception is *Adugo*, reported with strikingly similar structure and details for widely dispersed indigenous groups, and whose dynamics resembles checkers: the "board" is drawn in the sand; small pebbles are moved on the board representing a "pack of hounds" that tries to ambush the "jaguar" (a larger pebble moved by one child), which tries to escape and "eat" the "hounds." The "jaguar" wins if a certain number of "hounds" are "eaten"; if the "jaguar" is ambushed, the "hounds" win.

Another case in which detailed description is absent is that of imported games – football, volleyball, hockey – usually played by adults and then learnt and practiced by the children.

Let's Pretend That

Play activities included here – usually named make-believe, fantasy, or symbolic play – are characterized by the prevalence of imagination and symbolic transformation over rules (Vygotsky, 1978). Rules and roles may be present (Morais & Carvalho, 2004), but, unlike in games with rules, these are flexible and can vary from one episode to the next.

Make-believe themes can be universal; however, as expected, they differ in particular aspect such as sceneries or artifacts, which are chosen from the available physical and cultural environment, e.g., indigenous boys were observed using a tree branch as a horse and a dead snake to playfully menace other children, impersonating a monkey climbing a tree and jumping on the branches, playing with a mango fruit that stands for an animal, and wood sticks being moved and "interacting" as "people chatting."

Indigenous girls play dolls with locally handcrafted similes or with industrialized dolls when available; they were also observed cradling in their arms different objects, such as a small pumpkin (Cohn, 2002b), a small armadillo involved in a piece of cloth (Jesus, 2010), and a banana blossom in a sling (Eibl-Eibesfeldt, 1989).[3]

Playing house was observed in a straw mat shaped like a tent or in a "village" with several houses and pathways – built by the children with clay and whose "architecture" mirrored their actual houses (Nunes, 2002). Activities performed during the game are also varied (e.g., interacting with members of the family, with neighbors or visitors, cooking, cleaning, etc). The core element in every case is the house as a shelter (Carvalho & Pedrosa, 2003; Nunes, 2002).

[3] Detailed descriptions of these play activities are not presented in the literature, which may mean that they are similar to those practiced by non-indigenous children.

The intimacy of indigenous children with the adult world is reflected in a modality of make-believe that could be labeled "playing grown-ups" – fishing in canoes (and sometimes eating the prey) and observing and capturing smalls animals (e.g., a lizard is the target of bow-and-arrow practice; a small armadillo or alligator is captured and played with) are reported for several groups. Bastos (2001) reports indigenous boys painting themselves to represent two different "clans" that engage in "war" (play fight), using roots as weapons. A peculiar form of make-believe is enacting rituals typical of the group's culture, as marriages, death rituals, and a sorcerer (*xamã)* attending a "sick" child (Ferrari, 2013).

Who Is the Strongest, Fastest, and Smartest?

Play fighting, play chasing, and hide-and-seek may involve make-believe components (e.g., the pursuer is a hawk or a jaguar that tries to catch or ambush the prey). In some cases, observers report the presence of agreed conventions (e.g., regarding the choice of the pursuer or seeker and of who replaces these roles or which places are allowed as hiding places); these could be understood as rules and roles but are less structured than in games with rules and can vary from one episode to the next.

Play chase and hide-and-seek can occur around the village's buildings and surrounding areas, with or without explicit conventions. *Bucheirinha* (played in the river, involving swimming, diving, and jumping) and *Pira* are play chase versions in which the pursuer carries an object (the *bucheirinha* or the *pira)* that is transferred to the child who is caught and becomes the next chaser. In *Ui'ui*, a variant of hide-and-seek, a straw is hidden in the sand, and the children must find it. Variants of play fight are also reported: the opponents' hands are tied to the legs, while they try to throw each other down; play fighting in the river, the opponents stand on a partner's shoulder and try to push each other down in the water; in *Suatiya shushuti* (sugar-cane), boys hold sugarcane stalks, previously collected and cut into pieces, and girls try to seize and keep them.

How Well Can We Do It?

Under this heading are referred less structured individual or group play activities that challenge the body and/or require particular skills. It includes the category *test of strength* and other modalities of challenges such as equilibrium, coordination, etc.

Many play activities – e.g., whirling, handstands, somersaults, human pyramids, and throwing an object as far as possible – involve practicing and displaying the mastery of bodily skills. In the "*Sucuri* snake track," a zigzag track is drawn on the sand, and the children must go through it jumping on one leg. *Heiné kuputisü* is a racing challenge where the racer must run a hundred meters jumping on one leg until the arrival line is crossed. Tug-of-war using a rope is reported to be seen in several groups.

Other play activities require mastery in the use of artifacts: kites and bow and arrow with diversified targets – from no target (throwing the arrow upward) to inanimate (e.g., pebble) or living (a small animal) targets; other weapons like spear, slingshot, and blow pipe; rope skipping; buzzers; cat's cradle; tops; navigating in canoes or flooding, sinking and upturning them; and walking on stilts, built by the children themselves with forked tree branches collected in the forest. In *Tipa*, two players take turns to throw up five little stones placed on a wood spoon so that they fall down inside a circle drawn on the sand; in the Wasp game, a spiral ("wasp nest") is drawn; younger children try to copy the drawing with the fingers; if he/she fails, the others shout and throw sand on him/her.

The Body Asks for Movement

Nunes (2002) attributes to the body's need for movement a variety of activities in which indigenous children use the body in playful manners, labeled as "playing with the body" in the author's qualitative analysis and also in Gosso et al. (in press). Quantitative approaches usually categorize these activities as physical exercise or physical contingency.

The body can be played with in several different ways in which the children explore both their own physical resources and those of the surrounding environment. They may just run from one place to the other, or on established trails, backwards, sideways or with curves; very fast or very slowly, with short or large steps; on only one leg; closing the eyes, empty handed or carrying/pushing objects; they jump to reach something and slide on sloped surfaces or on the mud. Trees can be used to be climbed, to jump from, to swing to and from, to seesaw, or to slide on the branches. In the river they swim, and they dive to collect seeds thrown in the water or swim after jumping from a tree trunk sprawled on the riverbank.

Young Artisans

Indigenous children may have some access to industrialized toys (balls, puppets) brought by visitors or bought in neighboring non-indigenous villages; more frequently, toys are manufactured by their parents and other adults (Silva, n.d). However, producing play artifacts can be a play activity in itself (e.g., modeling clay) or part of it (e.g., constructing a stilt with tree branches or collecting and processing *urucum*, the fruit whose juice is used for body painting). Frequent examples are molding with clay/mud animals, utensils, or other objects to play with them, building a canoe, and producing a car from an empty can or a truck from boxes tied with cords to transport objects or small children.

Some typically female activities are making necklaces, bracelets, and other body ornaments with seeds, grains, and other suitable materials; painting the body like adult women do, but with different and less culturally ritualized motives; and weaving natural straw to produce animals, geometric figures, and utensils (baskets, fans, etc.) to play with.

Concluding Remarks

Besides the scarcity of scholarly literature on indigenous children's play, its qualitative limitations are also relevant to delimit the scope of this chapter. Methodological options – such as interviews (often retrospective) versus direct observation (often a-systematic), inclusion of adult games and children's play in the same category, lack of sufficient familiarity with the native language (e.g., to allow the recognition of make-believe games), play artifacts mentioned without descriptions of their use in play activities, etc. – are constraints for a more comprehensive depiction of these children's play cultures and habits.

Gosso et al. (in press) emphasize the pervasive presence of nature in indigenous children's play, a point that was already suggested in this chapter with respect to the frequency of physical exercise play. Based on the recognition of this fact, Profice, Santos, and Anjos (2016) argue that this close contact with nature is a major difference between indigenous groups living in non-urban areas and urban children that can be deemed responsible for these indigenous children's precocious environmental awareness: the authors suggest that continuous interaction with all kinds of natural elements throughout development would lead to a respectful and careful relationship with other beings.

Besides other developmental implications of play behavior for future life that are usually pointed out in the literature, such as practice of skills required in adult life, indigenous children's play richly exemplifies the functional value of play during childhood – a notion which would enlarge Bjorklund and Green's (1992) concept of ontogenetic adaptation (meaning characteristics that are functional in the first stages of life and cease to be so in adulthood).

Facing on their own, and without adult supervision, the challenges of their physical environment in their free play activities, indigenous children are acquiring knowledge and practicing skills that are not only required for their future life but are also essential for their survival as children.

This perspective contributes to clarify the striking contrast between the conceptions on childhood that prevail in indigenous societies despite their cultural singularity and variety and those of non-indigenous societies – particularly the absence of physical punishment and of concern about adult-guided education, the tolerance of children's deficient performance when helping adult tasks, and the freedom allowed for the choice and timing of children's activities (Carvalho, Moreira & Gosso, 2015; Gosso et al., in press; Nunes, 1999).

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Chapter 2
On the River, into the Woods, in the Fields: The Playing of the Northeastern Brazilian Indians

Ilka Dias Bichara

Currently in the national territory there are eight thousand nine hundred and sixty nine people self-entitled Indian (IBGE, 2010) in very diverse economic and social condition, as a result of the historical process of colonization and the many ways of residence adopted along five centuries. Brazil is a country with continental dimensions, since its occupation by the Portuguese people in 1500 until today there has been distinct regional development as a result of different interventions associated to climate factors that favor or difficult those interventions.

Among this group of Indians in the country, 57.7% live in the Indian lands (reservations and delimited areas), 42.3% live out of those areas mainly in urban areas. It is very diverse the way they depend on the environment they are settled in; some, mainly the ones that live in the suburbs of large cities, are in severe social vulnerability. The struggle to own their land and to have the land delimited is a reality throughout Brazil.

The image the world has about the Brazilian Indians reflects the reality of the Indian people that live in the Amazonia who, some of them, still live as if it was the period where the Portuguese settlers invaded America (some are still hunters and collectors and keep the original language and culture); however, the reality of all the Indians in the country is very diverse. In other regions, even the ones that have already conquered their land limitation live in poverty and maintain few traces of its own culture. This is the case of the "northeastern Indian."

It was in the northeast region that the Portuguese people docked in Brazil in 1500, more precisely in Porto Seguro city, in the State of Bahia, and it was also in this region where they raised the first city and the basis for the government in Brazil, Salvador, also in the state of Bahia. The effective occupation process of the Portuguese people in the Brazilian territory in the northeast region took place by the introduction at the beginning of the sixteenth century with the single culture of sugarcane at the seashore, and right after they implemented the cattle raising in the

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countryside. In order to guarantee this occupation, aligned to the process of donation of large portions of land to Portuguese people, it was carried out a long and intense war against the Indians in the region, mainly in the seventeenth century.

In order to survive, according to Almeida (2011:2009), the northeastern Indians… "Established different forms of military, political, economic, religious, and social interactions, with different social and ethnic agents to face situations of extreme violence. Wars, peace agreement, religious conversions, alliances, thefts, armed conflicts, judicial resources**,** negotiations, dislocation, escapes, appropriation of new cultural and political codes, cultural, social, and identitary rearticulations, were some of the several strategies adopted by them. They blend in and change considerably, however, they don't stop being Indians."

A very important factor in this process was establishing the religious missions (second half of the seventeenth century and the first of the eighteenth century), first with the Jesuits and later with the Franciscans, who were trying to incorporate the Indians to the Portuguese Colonial State. Its villages, in fact, had the purpose of not only converting the Indians to Christianism but also to their assimilation to the colonial units and their way of living – also through the vast miscegenation. These missions would congregate Indians from many different nations, from different areas of the country. Despite the missionary actions, the "Indian wars" lasted the whole colonial period. Notwithstanding, "by the end of the XIX century it wasn't spoken about Indian people and culture in the northeast anymore" (Silva, 2004, p. 24; 3).

According to Dantas, Sampaio, and Carvalho (1992), nowadays the "Indians from the Northeast" are an "ethnic and historical group," in other words, a unit that is connected by several peoples who are linked to the *caatinga* and historically associated with the pastoral fronts and the missionary standards of the seventeenth and eighteenth century. It is part of the process of constitution of the northeastern Indians some cultural and religious manifestations. The most important are the Toré dance and Jurema cult.

According to Oliveira (1998), the Toré ritual allows the exhibition of diacritical signs of indianity that are peculiar to Indians from the Northeast. This ritual was assimilated and transmitted from one group to the next one, by the intermediation of witch doctors' (religious chief) and caciques' (political chief) visitations, spreading everywhere and becoming a unified and common institution. It's a political ritual performed when it is necessary to delimitate frontiers between "Indians" and "white people." This takes place as a counterpoint to the loss of the culture and the miscegenation, and it is an important matter in the process of striving for their lands and acknowledgment they are definitely Indians. In some cases the Toré dance takes place in religious rituals and is associated to the Jurema cult (Nascimento, 1994) (Fig. 2.1).

According to Nascimento (1994), the Jurema cult has religious and spiritual character, and it is practiced in several different ways depending on the group performing it. During the performance a beverage named "Jurema wine" is consumed. This slightly hallucinating wine is made from the root bark of the Jurema tree called Juremeira (*Mimosa nigra, Hub.; Acacia hostilis, Mart.; Mimosa hostilis, Mart.*), a small tree from the northeast arid region. Throughout the whole northeast area,

Fig. 2.1 Xocó Indians dancing the Toré (Bichara, 2002)

these rituals are mixed with the ones with African roots, generating several manifestations as Candomblé de Caboclos, Umbanda, and Catimbó, among others.

Regarding the Indian population, the Brazilian regional division is different from the conventional geographic territory. It is a map geopolitically thought in the history of the Indian population. The Northeast region (also called Northeast-east) excluding the state of Maranhão (which is part of the North) and includes the states of Espírito Santo and Minas Gerais. For this reason it is included in this chapter a research done with Indians from the state of Espírito Santo.

The Northeast region (or Northeast-east) is the home of about 80 Indian peoples. According to the data from the Brazilian Institute for Geography and Statistics (IBGE, 2010), Bahia is the third state in amount of Indian people in Brazil and the first in the Northeast with a total of 56,381 Indians. Pernambuco is the second in the region and the fourth in the country, with 53,284.

To illustrate the Indian presence in the Northeast through the children's plays, we describe researches done in three distinct Indian groups: Kaimbé from Bahia (Queiroz, 2013), Xocó from Sergipe (Bichara, 2002, 2003), and Guaranis from Espírito Santo (de Oliveira, 2007; de Oliveira & Menandro, 2008).

Kaimbé People

Among the Indians from the Northeast of Brazil, it is found the Kaimbé de Massacará, one of the 14 ethnicities in the state of Bahia. They are a total of 829 individuals, about 412 children and adolescents living in 8 areas of their territory and possibly some others in transit or living outside their area (data from Dom Jackson Berenguer Prado Indian Kaimbé State School for the Yby Yara Educational Observatory of Indian School Education, 2012 – Queiroz, 2013).

Its origin goes back to the Mission of the Holy Trinity for Massacará from the seventeenth century, one of the most ancient from the Northeast, possibly founded in 1639. Initially administered by Jesuits and later transferred to the Franciscan, it existed until 1758 when the government ruled the withdrawal of the missions from the country (Souza, 1996). In this mission there were Kariri, Orí, Catrimbós, and Massacará Indian people, which were early considered "angry Indians," who performed collecting and hunting activities in a wide area where they wandered and counted on the necessary resources to their survival. The Kaimbé people today is possibly a subgroup of the Kariri linguistic family (Queiroz, 2013).

Through the Decree No. 395, the Indian Territory was marked and homologated comprising an area of 8020 ha. It is situated 32 km away from Euclides da Cunha city headquarters, 311 km from the state capital in the northeast region of Bahia, semiarid area in Brazil. Its delimiting process was based on the Alvará Régio from the year 1700 which conceded for the Indians in the villages one league in regular octagon of 6600 m toward the cardinal points, totaling 12,300 ha; thus there is still remaining a parcel claimed by the Kaimbé.

The social organization of the Kaimbé is by family nucleus, and the community policies include caciques and advisors. Some people work as teachers in the territory, and even today it is commonly the exit especially of young people to cities nearby in the southeast of the country, mainly to São Paulo searching for work. The Kaimbé people live by the subsistence farming planting manioc, beans, pumpkins, and potato. The animal farming developed by the Kaimbés is basically subsistence and comprises a small amount of bovines, caprines, pigs, and chickens (Côrtes, Tarqui, & Queiroz, 2008).

Xocó

The Xocó Indians are not originated from the state of Sergipe. They were brought to the village of São Pedro by the São Francisco riverside (second largest in Brazil) in the seventeenth century by Capuchin friars living with the Indians from other ethnicities until the end of the nineteenth century, when they were separated by the violence of farmers in the region (Dantas, 1991). Part of them migrated to the neighbor state of Alagoas, bounding with the Kariri Indians where it is still formed the Kariri-Xocó. Another part continued in the areas of the old village, today denominated Caiçara.

Since the termination of the village, the authorities began denying the existence of Indians in Sergipe (Dantas, 1991) which lasted until the 1980s decade in the twentieth century. Throughout this period, it is seen on the records, mainly in the census, the category "caboclo" to refer to the inhabitants of the villages.

The Xocó group that remained in Sergipe, after several attempts to become acknowledged as land owners, returned definitely to San Pedro Island in 1979, and according to statements the village reappropriation process happened also with armed conflict. They were restricted to the small island of São Pedro waiting for the

possession effectuation of the Caiçara people for 10 more years, which took place in 1991 (Dantas, 1991). Nowadays, not only the São Pedro Island but also the Caiçara are Indian areas regulated and limited by the FUNAI (National Indian Foundation).

Currently the village counts with about 250 Indians that make a living through agriculture, cattle raising, fishing, and pottery. They speak Portuguese, and their way of living is very similar to the rural population in the region, including the appearance, for their long living with white and black people resulted on changes in the biotype and cultural interlocking. From their culture it is still current the use of medicinal plants, the Jurema cult and the Toré dance.

The Guarani

The Tupi-Guarani people was first acknowledged at the beginning of the European conquest of South America – between centuries fifteenth and seventeenth – through the reports of adventurers and chroniclers and from the letter exchanges among religious people as the Spanish and Portuguese Jesuits (Fausto, 1992). Those reports show that when they came to this continent, the European people found a relatively stable reality culturally and linguistically speaking along the Brazilian coast and in the bay area of the rivers Paraná-Paraguay and Uruguay. This "homogeneity" was subdivided into two major blocks:

- Northeast to Southeast: from the coast of the current Ceará state to Iguape, at the current São Paulo state, live the people generically called Tupi.
- South: from Cananéia at the current state of São Paulo, to the Paraná-Paraguay Bay, live the people generically called Guarani.
- According to de Oliveira (2007) in the sixteenth century, the Guarani, yet not exclusively, occupied a large part of the territory that includes the current states of Rio Grande do Sul, Santa Catarina, Paraná, São Paulo, and Mato Grosso do Sul, also parts of some neighbor countries as Paraguay, Uruguay, and Argentina, with areas in the seashore and in the countryside.

Schaden (1962) states that migration in most recent times is of three groups of Guarani Mbya which during the decades of 30 and 40 in the twentieth century left Paraguay; two of them reached the shore of Espírito Santo. Part of them remained in the state; however, some went back to the village in Rio Branco-SP. This migration process is still current, families constantly move throughout the Guarani territory.

According to the current Guarani population in Brazil is estimated to be more than 34,000 people, from 3 different subgroups, among them about 18,000 to 20,000 Kaiowá, 8000 to 10,000 Ñandeva, and 5000 to 6000 Mbya. That provides them with a situation of a wide territory, not continuum, and intense contact with the gathering national society. For those reasons they had to develop tolerance and diplomacy in addition to their own strategies to maintain their traditions and at the same time keep their relationship with the non-Indian world.

Although the Guarani occupy this wide territory, the research reported here is in reference to the members of the Guarani settlements in Espírito Santo, which are organized in this state in three villages: Piraquê-Açu, Boa Esperança, and Três Palmeiras, located at an Indian area of 7500 hectares in Aracruz-ES. In this area live about 250 Guarani (Mbay), divided into 56 families (de Oliveira, 2007), 56% of them are 15 years old or younger.

Generally speaking, the Indians who live by the shore, either from the northeast, south, or southeast area live a great paradox of being under pressure to adopt standards from the national society regarding education, health, work, housing, etc., at the same time they must remain ethically and culturally distinct in order to maintain their rights guaranteed.

The Researches

The three researches herein reported were performed through systematic observation of the natural environment of spontaneous children's plays as the main research method. Along to those observations Queiroz (2013) made use of pictures and short videos. All the observations were performed in the external areas due to the criterion that they were playing there.

In the three researches the authorization to perform them was obtained with the cacique. Among the Xocó and Kaimbé people the way to reach the village included conversations with the State Secretary of Education in charge of the Indian education.

In all the cases the play episodes were qualitatively analyzed regarding the form and content. The plays were classified as type of play, objects used, dialogs, and make-believe themes, among other aspects. The main objectives were related to searching elements of analysis for the connections between play and culture among these communities.

The Plays

In the three villages researched, there are some distinct characteristics: all the children play throughout the external areas and have freedom to explore areas and objects, and their play reflect, largely, their living in the community. In none of the villages there are parks or places designated for the children, all the areas are collective, for everyone, including the children. It is noted an intense process of appropriation of several places, whether the river, the beach, the crops, and the soccer field, among others, transforming them into "children's place," as stated by Rasmussen (2004), to distinguish from "place for children," areas organized and prepared by adults for the children.

It was also observed a wide appropriation of objects of many sorts as work (shovel, knife, hoe, pans, and others), waste (plastic containers, clapboard), objects from the nature (leaves, sticks, rocks, earth, water), artisanal toys (shuttlecock, sling, ceramic objects, among others), and manufactured toys (dolls, bicycles, marbles, plastic balls). Generally, these objects were adapted and transformed to serve the goals of the plays.

In the three villages, it was observed the formation of broader groups, mixed regarding the age, however segregated regarding the gender. This segregation was *clearer* among the Xocó. In this village besides the segregation, it also called the attention the fewer amount of girls playing in the open areas. This happens because girls, since very young, help their mothers on house chores and on the care of younger siblings. It was very frequent the observation of girls, after lunch, going to the river to wash the pans followed by their siblings. These were the moments when it was seen a larger amount of girl plays.

Typical Indian Theme

As stated at the beginning of the chapter, the Indians from the Northeast lost their cultural traits along the five centuries of resistance; for this reason, it would be *naive or romantic* to expect that typically Indian plays or that specific cultural contents would emerge on their make-believe plays. What is noted is that their plays are similar to the ones of children in their region where the villages are placed. However, extraordinarily, some more explicit or implicit mentions to traits of a specific culture emerged.

Among the Xocó, after the whole village danced the Toré, in celebration to the Indian's Day, it was seen in the school area the children mimicking the dancing, the singing, and one child representing the cacique and the other representing the witch doctor. Among the Xocó this was the only opportunity in which it was seen the specific Indian culture in the children's play (Bichara, 2002).

Neither among the Kaimbé these contents were observed in plays; only some references in conversations, as for example, the cause of a crack on a rock (*a serpent's scream given a long time ago* – explained one of the children), in this community the children would follow, or even take part, in manifestations as "cortejos da zabumba," in Toré, and in Dança do Boi Araçá (Queiroz, 2013).

Nonetheless, among the Guarani it was found a more complex scenario. Due to this people's own history and of the current group settled in Aracruz, moving to Espírito Santo from Paraguay, all of them are bilingual, including the children who speak Portuguese and Guarani. They make use of several expressions in Guarani to name plays as "yy tata play!" (hot water) and making chipá (typical loaf) (de Oliveira, 2007).

The "yy tata play" was described by the children explaining that hot water was like "lava that comes down from the volcano" and burns everything. When a child comes running yelling "hot water!" everyone should find a place to hang from

(usually threes), to escape the danger. After some moments, someone would sign the danger was already gone and everyone could climb down (de Oliveira, 2007). As in Brazil there are no volcanoes, we imagine this play must have been brought from other regions the Guarani people have circulated.

The fact that not many plays directly related to activities or typical Indian cultural values were seen doesn't exclude the pondering of how the children represent and re-signify their community's culture and their own region while playing. A large amount of their make-believe plays registered represented concrete activities performed by these communities and not a "romantic indianity." Playing house, fishing, hunting, planting, and treating the horses and oxen, among others, were frequently observed in all three villages.

On the other hand, it calls attention the presence of plays inspired by external theme to these communities, also to Brazil, influenced by the daily living with the population from around the villages as for the presence of TV. It was observed among Xocó some singing plays with a plastic tube making believe it was a microphone and a floater from the irrigation as a stage and playing cop and thief swimming on the river, even though there is no police violence in the region. Among the Kaimbé, in addition to building castles, it was seen a play where a turtle named Michael Jackson was hurled. The Guarani made objects with plastic bottles leads they named beyblade.

Traditional Plays and Toys

Traditional plays as flying kites, marbles, spin top, "hunting" with a sling, jumping rubber band**,** tag, and others were very frequent. According to Carvalho and Pontes (2003), these plays are at the same time universal and specific as cultural practices, in other words, even though they are very traditional and found in many communities they are adapted and renovated by the children who play them anywhere.

To exemplify de Oliveira and Menandro (2008) make reference to spin top, in which according to Zatz, Zatz, and Halaban (2006), the clay spin top was found by archeologist in Babylonian tombs dated from the year 3000 AC. They were also found in Greece, India, Russia, Japan, among the aborigines of New Zealand, and medieval Europe. Carvalho and Pontes (2003) refer to several other ancient plays that are played all over the continent until today. One of those plays is marbles, which was already played by children in ancient Egypt.

In all three villages investigated it was observed the presence of these plays; in several occasions the children would build the toys to play with them, adapting objects they found as junk, or natural objects, besides exposing the awareness of seasonality of some of them. In one of the reports, a Kaimbé boy said to the others: "the spin top time is ending… the time for kite is coming." It is noteworthy stating that the boys in this village built their own kites from plastic bags, sticks from a palm tree called pindoba, and thread.

Among the Guarani the slings were produced in the village by young adults or by children, using several materials as wood, rubber bands, and tape. The spin tops, however, were handcrafted; even the ones made by the children used junk as pots leads, bottle leads, pen, pencils (as axis), and car wheels. They were frequently called *beybleide* by the Três Palmeira's children.

The Xocó children used wood boards as boats to play navigation by the river, and the girls of these villages used junk, rocks, leaves, and other materials to play "house."

To de Oliveira and Menandro (2008), the examples of these toys could be thought, then, as an update along the cultural production of the process effectively accomplished by the children while playing, agreeing to the basic fact that culture is dynamic, as it is related to a vision of world and a cluster of meanings that are alive, for they are linked to life.

Final Considerations: Playing and Culture – Peer Culture

All the data here presented refer to the important bond between culture and children that can be noted in the traditional popular plays and games, mainly the plays that occur spontaneously, in open spaces as streets, squares, common areas, rivers, and others (Pontes & Magalhães, 2003). The so-called traditional plays, as mentioned before (sling, spin top, marble, etc.), have several elements of the sociocultural environment where it takes place, passed through generations, undergoing transformations that all cultural practices go due to the dynamic relations it is subjected to.

Culture here is understood as it was defined by Carvalho and Pontes (2003, p.17) who consider it as "a set off actions and consequences of the human action, which transmitted from generation to generation form the identity of a human group, and at the same time the environment it is in, and through which it is built the identity of its members." According to these authors, the children's play may be considered cultural practice and product, which accentuate its importance, and on top of that, the importance of children as agents of transmission and reedition of the cultural elements through playing.

In this sense, we consider the children as active beings, who interpret and repeat the information they receive from adults and their practices in a creative and innovative way. Thus, the concept proposed by Corsaro (2006) of "peer culture" is fundamental. The peer culture is understood as a stable set of activities or routines, artifacts, values, and interest that the children produce and share in the interaction with their peers (Corsaro, 2009). Therefore, this author presents the conception of children as agent and co-builder of its development by demonstrating in its empirical studies that by playing with its peers the child is capable of producing culture in a process of creative apprehension of the greater culture (Corsaro, 2006).

Therefore, by playing the child actively contributes to the cultural production and change, while their childhood and thus their plays are affected by the society and culture they are members (Corsaro, 2009). The children from the three villages

here described validated these premises for using creatively the toys, areas, and several cultural practices.

It was already stated here that not many plays directly related to cultural values considered typically Indians were found; nonetheless, we believe it could not have a different outcome, for these children live in concrete contexts, typically from the northeast. Kaimbé and Xocó are in the semiarid area of northeast (region of long droughts, little rain, and the local population struggle to survive) surrounded by poverty. The Guarani are in a less dry area (closer to the seashore) but equally poor and in constant conflict with a large industry of cellulose located in the same municipality.

The most important, in our opinion, is to understand that under some aspects the children of the three villages, though poor but not at a social vulnerability situation, are privileged; they have free access to several environments in both communities, to their parents' activities, and contact with nature and companions that are very difficult to be lived by urban children.

Comparing the data described here to the ones found by Morais & Otta, 2003:17) in Itamambuca (descendant from Indians, non-villagers, living by the seashore of São Paulo), we consider some of the children's behavior to be similar for: "focus on the play, balance between cooperation and competitiveness, apparent amusement, joy, happiness, and adjustment to school, which can be explained by four main factors: 1) frequent contact to nature in many of its elements: earth, sand, water, woods; 2) freedom of space and to play, enabled for their parents know the neighbors, for easily knowing where the child can be, and by the absence of intense fear of violence present in large cities; 3) intense contact with friends, relatives, and neighbors of several ages; and 4) stability of principles and rules that are characteristics of a subculture guided by traditional values."

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Chapter 3
The Riparian Children's Play on the Tapará River, Santarém, Pará

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Introduction

According to Angotti (2008) playing is a language which belongs to childhood. It's a bridge to fill in the gaps and thus understand the world in which children are inserted in as well as a social process. These processes, in turn, establish the children's culture that is tied to the group's culture in which the child is in. At this point, it should be emphasized that through plays new possibilities of action, new constructions, and arrangements are created by children in their surroundings.

Playing has some features as interpersonal communication, rule management, and character performance assumed by the children; such elements contribute to the affection, the appropriation of social signs, and the construction of the child's consciousness, due to the complexity required in the relations with the world. Children's interaction with each other, with their own body, and with objects has been seen as a ludic action in which children give meaning to the object by making a leaf dry on a plate, a piece of wood on an ox, and a boy on a fisherman. Meanings are spontaneously and actively created while playing and shared by peers.

As stated by the comparative research of Martins (2000), playing represents what is inherent to children, likewise Pinheiro's (2008) research which says that children want to be children for the sake of the possibility of playing. In another study to recognize the meaning of childhood, physical spaces, and children's culture based on their speeches in the "Mártires de Abril do Movimento dos Sem Terra (MST)" settlement, in Mosqueiro, district of Belém, PA, Brazil. Findings suggested that childhood is a time for playing and that to be a child in the MST settlement is a playful experience of struggling for the rights of the excluded. Researches reveal that, even in different settings, the majority of children have reported the play as typical from childhood.

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In the floodplains of Pará, Tapará River (Amazon River affluent), the water flow determines and limits economic and social activities, as well as family possibilities along its banks. Concerning to children: How has their playing taken place as water level rises achieving the floors under the stilts? Or even when the low waters bring a new settings for the same community?

This paper displays findings of a research carried out in Tapará Grande community, about 35 km from the city of Santarém, state of Pará, Brazil. It is a reference for the riparian families that live in its surroundings. It is possible to reach the community by speedboat, ferry, and boat, in a journey that might last 50 min, 2 h and a half, or even 3 h and a half, respectively. Although it takes longer, the boat journey has been such an important choice, since it is the only transport that makes the loading and unloading of passengers along the river. Despite of the risk, some of them jump out of the ferries to the *bajara*, a typical regional small vessel, which slows down speed to allow such practice.

The research was carried out by observing 5- and 6-year-old riparian children's routine, focusing on the play of this group. The paper begins by showing theoretical framework aspects used in the research, participants' features, the *locus*, tools, and the procedures adopted for the data collection and analysis of the results.

The results are composed by the section "Background and Play in Flood and Drought" which is discussed according to Martins (2000) and Pinheiro (2008) references to Early Childhood Education, which brought out childhood-based results. The theoretical perspective lies on Bronfenbrenner's (2011) bioecological systems approach, although not all the instances drawn by this scholar for the data analysis were taken into account.

Bronfenbrenner (2011) asserts that a specific setting and its social group strongly influence people and that they are also influenced by it, as well as by children. He also suggested that parents, social support network, and the family community have a great impact on children's development. According to Franco and Bastos (2002), field research in this approach seek to understand mankind in a contextualized way and in their natural environment, in order to understand reality as close as possible to how it is experienced and realized by the subjects that are part of it.

Alves (2002) implies that child development is a complex product of all qualities shared with systems such as parents' occupation, in addition to all interactive effects and consequences derived from the relationships with others. This view does not, however, rule out the fact that the setting in which children are raised has also been complex and full of social actors. Therefore, it is necessary to understand not only the dimension of environmental aspects under development but also how they interact with each other.

Methodology

Participants

Sixteen 5- and 6-year-old children participated in the study, seven boys and nine girls from Tapará Grande community. They were chosen based on two criteria: age and residence in the settlement. Data collection was performed in group, and according

to age range. In this stage, 2 parents however were not found; thus it consists of 14 parents followed by information of their 14 children.

Study Area

The research was held in Tapará Grande which is a floodplain community with an extension of approximately 5,000m^2. It also has approximately 600 inhabitants spread in 154 families. It is located on the right bank of Tapará River (reference from the direction it flows). Its area is bordered to the north by Santana do Tapará community, to the south by Santa Maria do Tapará, to the east by Tapará Mirim and Ilha do Flechal, and to the west by the Costa do Tapará community, surrounded by woods, lakes, and *igarapés* (streams).

Regarding the health aspects, the community uses pharmaceutical drugs which are very common combined with home remedies for different purposes. Water is retrieved from the river and treated with bioactive filter and chlorine. There is a local public health center that holds a head nurse, a nurse technician, an assistant nurse, and two community health agents.

In terms of school system, there were no schools at the beginning of the community foundation, hence children used to study in homes provided by local people for class time. Afterward, it was built a community shed; in addition radio lessons were provided and broadcast through the Rural Radio of Santarém. São Jorge County School, located in Tapará Grande community, was founded in 1970 and started operating with at about 60 students held in multigrade teaching. It currently attends from Early Childhood Education to Modular Curriculum Delivery High School.

The school building is made of wood upon stilts and consists of three bathrooms, one for employees; a kitchen; a pantry; a storage room; the lunchroom, where workshops take place and students usually eat; a lounge called by the employees as "mother's heart," since it is shared by the principal, school officers, school coordination, the teachers' room, archives, and school supplies. There are six classrooms where school chairs and desks are also made of wood, and there is a whiteboard in each of them (Figs. 3.1 and 3.2).

There is no electricity in the community; hence, the power generator engine has been placed close to the lunchroom. The school has a garden that has been held by the More Education Social Program. It was built with discarded canoes, and it is maintained by a monitor who earns a financial aid, along with 70 students from the program. According to the principal, all the employees have also been involved in the garden care, thus it is supported in both seasons: river flood and drought. The employees who work in the school and in the health center are from the community, studied in Santarém and then returned there to work.

The community has been provided with a recreation center where meetings and parties are held, in addition to a soccer field and four churches, a Catholic one and three Evangelical. Nonetheless, the predominant religion among the participants was Catholic, since only one child claimed to attend the Evangelical church.

Fig. 3.1 São Jorge County School, Tapará Grande. (Source: The author (April/2015))

Fig. 3.2 São Jorge County School, Tapará Grande. (Source: The author (August/2015))

Therefore it is understood that most of the community members are Catholic and have St. Joachim as patron saint whose day is celebrated every October.

Data Collection

This paper reports data from Tapará Grande community, located in Santarém, state of Pará, Brazil. In order to be able to collect the data with all the children together, the São Jorge County School was used, because some of them live very far from

school, or even in the narrow streams, which might make difficult gathering them in a moment other than class schedule.

During the flood season, transportation depends only on boats, even for children who live near or are school next-door neighbors due to the extensive area submerged by the waters. Thus, the school also provided logistic support to this researcher, who could go along with the children over the school boat journeys.

With respect to the community, it was noted the school plays a role beyond the expected so that it has been a place where inhabitants usually visit to be informed about child attendance frequency or even discuss about ordinary issues by turning it into a meeting place for the community members. Therefore, the school supported this research accomplishment in two aspects: on the one hand, good rapport with the community members, once the researcher's presence provoked their interest, and, on the other hand, regarding transportation needs, since it was possible to count on local people's help who used to guide their *bajaras* and canoes along the river toward the school.

Methods and Materials

It was conducted a questionnaire survey to collect data on the children's families which asked about profession, age, family members, income, and social benefit. The questionnaire survey was applied to parents for considering them to be important variables that influence children's development background.

Regarding the children, it was employed focus group interviews with open-ended questions. To this section, only data related to play were organized, ruling out the other topics raised by the children. Thus, it was used Gaskell (2002) statements to close survey application, which say when a certain subject reaches its saturation, i.e., when the researcher realizes there are no new perceptions, but only repeated data, this is the moment to stop to collect them.

The researchers also made use of a diary to record observations and formal and informal communication in both community and school. Observations included physical facilities, means of transport, difficulties, and possible adaptations made at each visit.

Data Collection Procedures

At this point, it should be highlighted a meeting was held with the children and their parents before data collection so they were informed about the research goals and to get their consent to participate; hence an informed consent form has been signed by all parents.

Data collection started in April and May targeting to establish a closer relationship with children and the community and to know the routine during the flood period; however, classes were closed by the Municipal Secretary of

Education of Santarém because water level has risen sooner than expected. The study was disrupted due to the lack of security for the field research. River flows reached the floors of the houses and community sights. As a result, families had to be temporarily evacuated to land areas, bounded to stand sheltered in their relatives' houses.

In August, during the drought season, it was possible to conduct observations and monitor the children's routine at school and when they came back home in the afternoon. Thus, the application of the instruments took place in accordance with the following steps:

- Children's approaching and routine observation.
- Meetings with children to apply the focus group interviews during the flood season.
- Meetings with children to apply the focus group interviews during the drought season.
- Socioeconomic survey: Data were collected in family homes or even in São Jorge County School, with meetings scheduled in advance, according to the parents' availability, and via semi-structured interview protocol, which were filled in by this researcher herself.

Data Analysis

Focus group interviews were analyzed according to Huberman and Miles (1991) narrative interviews which are considered adequate for case studies, since it is an analysis in the sense of the term, a narrative framework, in which data will compose a new narrative. The description and interpretation of this case study is sustained on the analysis of cultural background by depicting its setting; temporal and spatial contexts of participants as an essential element in the narrative framework; care that was taken to participants' action, activities, and decision-making; character features; the account rebuilding; and whether the narrative is clear and conceivable.

Therefore, the findings were obtained in accordance with the children's descriptions, their activities and plays, and what is allowed or not to Tapará Grande students. Flood and drought seasons references were crucial so that results will be described according to what children said by considering their gestures, background, and developed dynamics over the interviews.

Background and Play in Flood and Drought Seasons

Getting Started with the Children's Families

With regard to the father's profession, ten (71.43%) are fishermen, and one (7.14%) is a housekeeper and fisherman. Concerning 14 mother's profession, 7 (50%) are housewives, 4 (28.57%) are fisherwomen, and 3 (21.43%) are smallholder farmers.

There are three situations upon family income: eight (57.14%) individuals reported receiving less than a minimum wage; five (35.71%) reported receiving a minimum wage; and one (7.14%) earns more than a minimum wage. It was clear in the reports the important role played by social benefits from federal government as an income, such as unemployment compensation, unemployment insurance of the closed fishing season, or *Bolsa Verde* Program, even when they are not paid monthly.

The response rate upon getting social benefits was 42.86% for *Bolsa Família* Program (family allowance), followed by 35.71% for the fathers who are fishermen associated with the local fishermen's colony; thus they receive unemployment insurance of the closed fishing season, and their wives are beneficiaries of the *Bolsa Família* Program. Those who receive *Bolsa Família* and *Bolsa Verde* Program benefits are 14.29%. There was only 1 (one) family (7.14%) that reported receiving the Benefit of Continuous Provision, disabled person, and unemployment insurance of the closed fishing season, since one mother is hearing impaired and the child's grandmother is a fisherwoman.

It was found that men are involved with the main economic activities and sources of income, such as livestock, fishing, and agriculture; women, in turn, help them or produce for family subsistence. From October to March, it is the closed fishing season; hence it is more effective from August to September. According to the principal, that is such a quite touching moment when fish migrate upriver to spawn, a phenomenon popularly known as *piracema*, all the students ask teachers to leave the classrooms to see the event, and it is also when the older students are usually absent to fish with their parents, increasing yields and family income.

Most ordinary plays among boys on the riverbanks were when the adults threw pieces of wood on the banks, and ropes to loop them, the younger ones watched and root for them. This play consisted of pretending to be a rodeo rider trying to grab the bull, so that who managed to fetch it would be admired by friends. Younger children manage to mimic adult activities as fishing and cattle raising in their own way by creating novels outdoors in the play areas. Regarding the children from rural areas, Silva, Pasuch, and Silva (2012) claim that to keep children in touch with nature and parent's labor clearly raise as a set of play for them who live together with their families and neighbors.

Children's Play

Sarmento (2011) asserts that playing is inherent to childhood, and Tapará Grande community provided the opportunity to find that it is a pleasant activity which represents both adult and children's daily life to the extent that it portraits ordinary life in the community and children interaction. In his research with urban children, the interest for playing was the most important element found by Martins (2000). assertion implies that playing means, for children, movement, life, knowledge exchange, and children's culture development. Thus, playing has become a vehicle and interaction among playmates, besides to the construction of the child as a subject.

Children in different sights and moments reported a set of play so that for the flood season focus group interview followed: "Let's picture that you are at home in the

flood season, and you are sleeping, but just about waking up, sunrise has come so you are awake. What did you do in that day?" Five-year-old children report was taken at their homes in the flood season. After getting out of school, children reported the following activities: three of them said it was "snack time"; four girls said that they would play with dolls, while boys would play with a ball (to play soccer for them) and hide-and-seek. They also supported they would play at home or at their friends' home. While 6-year-old is allowed to play, jump into the water, and play ball in it.

Next question: "Let's picture it is Saturday, or even Sunday, those days away from school. You've just woken up. What you are going to do?" Survey responses conducted to common spots for playing and trips to relative houses: "We just play." Girls said they "play with dolls," and boys, "play with a ball"; two of them said they play with each other. At this point, one of the children's responses was "I went to the city to play with my brother." Children also assert it is possible to play during the flood, but another one disagrees: "I play in the water," and "Players do it as well," to refer to the group of community players.

Assuming that children are historical subjects with civil rights, hence their personal construction and collective identity might not rule out the importance of ordinary relationships and experiences, since a child is the one who: "Plays, pictures, fancies, wishes, learns, realizes, experiences, reports, inquires, and constructs meanings upon natural world and society, where culture lies on." The weekends distinguish for each child by enabling them to interact with other people and settings, in activities other than those from school, like going on trips with parents, visiting relatives, or downtown Santarém.

For the drought season, inquiry was: "Now think you are at home, flood has gone, here comes the sunrise, and you jump out of bed. What would you do on that day?" It was realized that over the drought season school was as a set for playing. It therefore happens because of activities like playtime and physical education classes. Three boys describe it: "Play with a ball," "running," "play tag" also known as "it," "competition," "racing," and "kite." To sum up, "It's playing." On the other hand, girls just answered "Play with dolls."

In this sense, young children education requires the implementation of a curriculum and a modern pedagogical approach which corroborate children as active and able subjects. Antunes (2012) points out that the essential Early Childhood Education rule is care and recreation. That is to say, playfulness is imperative. The 6-year-old children defined playtime at school as the time to "play tag" and "kite." It implies that play might develop abilities and creativity and establish application rules in the social context, similarly recreation activity.

Children assure even before classes, during the drought season, it is possible to play in the school yard, according to boys, and play house, as stated by girls. The description below was given by two children: "When levels were low, I jumped into water, just head out"; in the beginning of flood, "I walked in it."

When children come back home, they said it was time to play: "tag" or "in the *igarapés* (streams)," "in the wetlands," "jumping into the water," "ball into the water," or simply "play." With regard to playing into the river, there were different opinions about adult supervision. One of the children said, "I jump into the water

with my dad"; the other ones: "I jump into it on my own" by saying there was no danger, with whom the other children agreed. Nevertheless, Julia argues that:

"There was an alligator at school."
Researcher: "Really?"
Jorge: "And it was huge!"
Julia: "And there was another one under that classroom."

None of the children disagreed about the presence of alligators or changed their mind that playing in the water might be harmful. To investigate the weekends during the drought season, children were asked: "Think today is Saturday or Sunday, water level is low, you don't have to go to school. What are you going to do after you wake up?" Girls' response: "Play." The same answer was given by 5-year-old children, without saying the kind of play, or even to whom, they just said "play." Six-year-old children also reported when there are no classes, they "play." One of them said she plays by her own. Town girls answered they play with their sisters. A boy said: "I play soccer with my uncle. We play in a goal my dad made." Other three boys stated they "play with a ball," "running," and "on the ground"; one of them said his family watch him playing soccer in the community field.

Sarmento (2011) asserts that there is a correlation between playing and learning, in which the former is a synonym for the second and defines childhood as a time to learn by playing. As can be seen, playing always takes place somehow, no matter if it is flood or drought season. In an interview section, a mother reported the lack of transportation during the floods, when there are only boats or stopgap bridges between houses. She was asked if children complain about it, and she replied there were no complaints and they play fishing during the floods and run in the yards in drought season.

Proceeding with the fifth question: "What is usually possible to do?" Children reported they "play" and "jump into the water." Three children highlighted that they enjoy watching television: "I like cartoons," "I enjoy watching Western Movies DVDs, got nine of them," and "I watch *El Chavo del Ocho* and cartoons." Children who can watch television programs are those with a satellite dish at home, not available for homes, what explains the boy's responses he watches DVDs.

The survey also includes two reports of 6-year-old boys: "play tag," "play school," "play with a ball," and "play into the water." About playmates they indicated "My cousin. I play with him in the water" and "I play on the beach." Children brought up the "urban plays" in Santarém, where there is "the funfair" and they "go on the merry-go-round" and "to the Bumpy car."

Still concerning about "urban plays," they also reported it is possible, "in the funfair," "go to the bouncy house," "celebrate birthday," and "play with a ball." Another setting referred by children "for fun" is the "island." Their fathers go fishing coupled with the family; a boy said "go to island" and "eat bananas."

Research proposals should recognize the way of life of the group as an important element in the country child's identity construction with social actors: smallholders, gatherers, small-scale fisherpeople, riparians, settlers, land reform settlers, *quilombola communities*, *caiçara*, and forest peoples. Under those circumstances, it demands

sustainable practices and a more flexible schedule in order to respect family economic activities; hence, São Jorge County School conducts a special calendar. For this reason, classes go from August to late April, and transportation can be done with the school boat, even in drought season; it supports particularly young children.

According to the surveyed children, it was obtained responses below: "climbing trees," "gather mangoes," "eat guava," and "tree planting." A boy referred to fishing and what a child can do to support adults in it, like "Go fishing with my dad" and "Fishing with my uncle during the flood season", and he also helps to "take *piaba* fish out of the fishing net" or even "withdraw *piaba* fish from the *bajara vessel*."

Sixth question: "What is not allowed to be generally done?" "Play in the mud" and "jump on the bed." Regarding handrails, quite common in silts, they answered: "It isn't allowed slip, because it can be harmful" and "jumping off the roof, not at all. No way." Children think: "Why not?" Thus, they concluded: "I can't jump from the window 'cause it hurts."

It was found that children were forbidden outdoor: "climb up orange tree" and "go to the woods because of Bushmaster snake risky sting." They depicted animal danger through legends, such as "The danger of stingrays," "And snakes," "We cannot pursue them," "Alligators might gobble us up," and "Likewise Amazon river dolphins" which can "become a man." This "pursue" children referred to was the *Pucú* loch, located behind the school, where adults go fishing, even with their children, despite warning that they cannot go there alone due to harmful animals like snakes and alligators.

Children also reported prohibitions upon the river: "It's not allowed slip, because of the risk of falling down," and "it's not allowed to go to deep waters" so that children "must use buoys" and stay only "on the riverbanks." However, of them said they did not need buoy once "They can swim." This report also contains description of older children who slip out into the water. Families usually build bridges across from their homes in order to make easier to get to waters far from the shore, thus cleaner, to wash clothes, dishes, anchor boats, and *bajaras*. For children, bridges turn the bath into a play "on the riverbank." They are used as trampolines.

Bronfenbrenner (2004) posits that features of background that mostly influence physiologic enhancement are those meaningful for each person. Thus, family, school, and institutions might provide distinguish contents for development. When considering bidirection, the bioecological model assumes that in the relationship between people and the background, children act on their surroundings and are influenced by their symbols and meanings while they do a new activity or begin an emotional bond with someone.

In contrast, 6-year-old children concerns lie on the water resources. In 2004, the school conducted a project that was water care-oriented and taught about water consumption and pollution. The school principal informed that the children got involved and became propagators of the project. When necessary, they warn people upon not throwing trash in the river. For example, some parents reported that children stored the garbage to be burnt.

According to Martins and Szymanski (2004), even if under parental wardship, children might influence their parents on social and personal behavior. As they grow

up, parents therefore are faced with novel situations. Notwithstanding, these differences are not standard; they are primarily related to the shared culture of a group, hence the importance of analyzing the relationship between background and its consequences for children in different cultures (Nunes, 2005).

The differences between genders appeared in children's speeches as girls said "they play with dolls" and boys informed "they play with a ball." A boy who said girls also play on the soccer field with a "pink ball" gave further detail. Ballve (2010) also mentions such aspect by asserting that in children's self-image, they distinguish what belongs peculiarly to boys and girls. Yet, there are some common preferences, for instance, "jump into the water."

It was noted in this study that the children's relationship with nature has been about care. This research revealed that natural world is considered a setting for playing in which the coexistence of environment and children is of amusement. In these floodplain areas, the "slide-and-fall plays" are taken on the embankments formed by river waters.

Therefore, it was found that children may render the context they live and grow up, as well as their habits; the speech; relationship with nature and the river, which is the major means of transportation; and the family livelihood. Floodplain settings also depict children's interpretations and conceptions. Regarding the surveyed children, despite the fact that they know the urban area of Santarém and some television networks, life on the riverbanks was most commonly mentioned; thus it became a setting for playing and children culture.

Concluding Remarks

The ultimate goal of this research was, therefore, to investigate in West Pará 5- and 6-year-old riparian children's plays reported by themselves and analyze the background influence upon it. Findings suggest that children's playing was strongly bound to flood and drought seasons and coupled with nature-imposed shifts. Thus, children turn settings and playing suitable to their needs.

It was also noticed these plays ranged in accordance with high or low water levels. During the flood, they play at home and in the river. Otherwise, they play at school, which is rendered as a recreation and leisure setting, as well as their backyards. Further results showed gender aspects. On the one hand, girls "play with dolls"; likewise boys "play ball," even though some reports concede girls might "play ball" as well. Both genders reported that "playing in the water" is fairly appreciated among them. Although plays occur in both seasons, there are different setting features (on the riverbanks, in the shallow waters, in the deep waters, no swimming in Pucú loch) and parental care about aquatic animals.

Regarding the constraints, the most pronounced being age group selection, though the number of participants represented nearly all the children in the community aged between 5 and 6 years, it might achieve more accurate results with a broadened age range. It was possible to demonstrate in two groups with similar age range that children

have different degrees of autonomy, plays, and rapport. The research was accomplished, thanks to São Jorge County School time, site, and surveyed children concession.

The data collection period turned into another constraint due to the gaps during the flood season, so it would be important to know the regional natural features before starting the survey. The parent's availability was in accordance with their free time, since they were not found when fishing season began. Hence, it is crucial to develop an advance survey schedule suited with local peculiarities.

These findings can contribute to current researches, which focus first on children by widening the theoretical framework. This research brought features of play through elements of nature, represented by the river and its flood and drought seasons. Children's play is adapted to the natural environment conditions.

Secondly, it raises the issue of the methodological field of research. Focus group interview, traditionally employed with adolescents and adult people, was used in this study with young children participants. Considering the groups analysis unit, results were satisfactory. The aim was to pursue collective concept. As stated by Martins (1991) children are able to manifest their own ideas clearly and loosely.

Research counted on children's parents, the school, the institutions, and the children themselves as attendants. For the parents, the experienced knowledge from the results might influence how children's thoughts are rendered in family's daily life and thus in the community.

The school plays an important role in children's life so that how they understand it may guide pedagogical strategies and teacher's behavior. There must have been a learning process in which children's opinions and questions are taken into account. Findings are relevant to indicate for institutions how children development is tied to their background knowledge.

As for researchers, not only the results but also the survey process was successful, as well as the interaction with the children. Surveyed participants used to come up with new ideas and answers even after interviews, what meant their interest and commitment.

For the future, it is showed the demand for further studies that should aim to comprehend/understand children from specific settings. As stated by the researcher must be careful about misreads and previous background knowledge by pursuing to learn from what appears to be obvious. Contexts assume vital importance in developmental issues; thus childhood research-oriented approaches based on the bioecological concept of development (Bronfenbrenner, 2011) within these contexts are essential. It is suggested other works with institutions, as well as comparative studies between schools and different settings that include different social classes, and communities that experience a peculiar routine.

To sum up, in terms of goal it was intended to broaden discussions on childhood development in order to highlight its particularities so that it is possible to ponder about other approaches.

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Chapter 4
Playing Through Generations

Vera Maria Barros de Oliveira

Telling our story is both a pleasure and a great emotion because it makes us relive moments long lived with people who are part of our lives, even if they are gone. This pleasure and this emotion are even stronger, if we turn to our games, for they bring with them living memories of places, times, moments, and emotions that we feel. It is interesting to observe how the play, so well defined by Caillois (1992), a classic of ludic studies, as a free activity, situated out of the everyday life of our daily routine, totally absorbs the one who plays, and, moreover, we dare to say, it becomes an inherent part of our lived history, our memories, and our self. Also in this sense, and further expanding, Huizinga (2004) has already indicated the cultural function par excellence of the game, which precedes, accompanies, and marks the different cultures, through history, until their most civilized levels. In this sense, I look briefly in this essay to follow the trajectory of my family, for six generations, with its two main generating lineages, of my father and of my mother, recalling moments in which the play evidenced and strengthened their ties, their values, their joys, and their yearnings.

I was born in São Paulo, part of a large family. My mother was the daughter of a Portuguese woman, from Lisbon, with a Brazilian, and was born in Bahia, in the Brazilian northeast, because my grandfather at the time worked there in the wholesale trade of jerked beef and codfish. Bahia, which housed the first capital of Brazil in Salvador, welcomed, witnessed, and experienced the arrival of breeds and breeds of black people brought from Africa at the time of slavery, which lasted until the end of the nineteenth century, in 1888. Salvador, more than a hundred years ago, had, as today, its low, commercial and its high, residential parts. They lived in the Red River District. They used to ride in a car, with a small hood, pulled by two horses. The families were numerous, and they went for a sea bath in a

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beautiful, deserted beach, called Mother of God, all surrounded by cashew trees. The cashews were very sweet. After sucking them at ease, the children played of throwing the fruits at each other.

At that time, my mother told me that one of the children of my grandfather's partner, Zeca (José), was kind of fat and funny. Once a circus came to town and began announcing the shows. There were clowns, ballet dancers, magicians, and some animals. The circus owner offered the boys a free ticket for anyone who helped advertise. Zeca dressed up in one of his mother's skirts, painted his entire face with anil and started dancing and playing with the people on the streets. In the end, the circus owner liked him so much that he offered to hire him. The currency at that time was the "réis." Zeca went crazy to go, although his father was a man of many possessions, but the family did not allow him. Stubbornly, he ran away from home and went on with the circus. It was a black person, his milk brother, who succeeded in bringing him home. The milk brothers are those who, without being brothers, actually suckled from the same "mother." (Note – sometimes I use the word "black person" in these accounts, because that is how I heard it spoken, and so I repeat it without any discriminatory connotation.)

The children loved playing make-believe of a grocery shop. But as there were many children, in one afternoon all good positions were already taken. There was the owner of the shop, the deliveryman, the cashier, the buyers, etc. Zeca wanted to play and had nothing to do. He decided immediately, "I know, I'm going to be the dog of the store." He lay down and stayed there. All his life he was continuously with a good humor. It is interesting to observe how the memories of these games are kept alive over time, and, when recalling them, they come with the freshness of that time, conveying to those who tell and to those who listen to them, their joy and magic. Following the reading of Caillois (1992), which illuminates and inspires us, we see the richness of symbolic or make-believe games, which are not organized in fixed rules but which presuppose the freedom of improvisation, whose greatest attraction is to play a role, to act as if it were such or such a character, a horse, or an airplane, for example. Caillois still ventures to suppose that the feeling of acting "as if" you are someone or something replaces the rules, because the combination would be precisely to make-believe and, therefore, maintain the magic, attraction, and enchantment of the situation. In the above example, we see how the symbolic play has already acquired a social character, with the children representing different roles, a rich and expressive source for a more in-depth psychological approach that is not relevant at this moment.

At that time, the children played a lot, but also, in more traditional families, they had their routine separate from that of their parents at times, so until the age of 7, they ate separately in the pantry. Then they went to the table of the elders, but they could not say a word: at eight-thirty in the evening, they went to bed. They studied a lot in boarding schools, with a weekly, and sometimes even monthly, day off. When they did not behave, they had the day off canceled. There were also the semi-boarding schools.

The experience of having lived for some time in Bahia, in northeastern Brazil, with its customs, traditions, and superstitions influenced by the African culture of

the slaves that had arrived there in the nineteenth century, left marks and memories in my mother's family. My maternal grandmother was very fond of plants, especially rose bushes, with which she knew how to make grafts, which she had learned in Portugal, including the creation of new types of roses. One afternoon in Bahia, she told us that she was in the garden, when a black woman asked for a seedling from the plant of the jar, which was on the pillar of the gate. My grandmother said, "You can take whatever you want." The black woman became embarrassed and said, "Sinhá, my hand will kill the plant." Grandma did not believe it and told her to take the seedling. The plant died right away. This and other stories that were told often fill the imagination, and we do not yet know, for sure, what caused the plant's death. However, as Huizinga (2004) explains, the attribution of enchanting, beneficial, or evil powers to persons or things, personifying them in a certain way, is also a ludic function and a spiritual habit, of which we are still far, even as adults, to be free, even in our current daily lives, for they are part of our most remote past. The games, as Huizinga teaches, were already present long before human culture or language, which means that the imagination and the personification of objects are immemorial.

My mother, who was born in Bahia but left there still very young and liked the Bahian cuisine, with much seafood such as vatapá, with shrimp, fish, coconut, palm oil, and chili pepper, also seems to have assimilated, without realizing it, many of the superstitions of that culture, mainly in the matter of games. If she was in bad luck, she would light a match and take a spin with it on, around the chair where she was sitting, to send the bad luck away. She had a horror of "busybodies," people who were "meddling," watching the game closely, and sometimes venturing their guesses. She had many other superstitions. She would never use anything that was made of crocodile skin, mostly wallets. She said they never saved money. She did not like being wished for good luck when she was going to play. She had nothing home made of animal skin, such as sheepskin rugs, jaguar skins, ox leather, and so on. Of stuffed animals, she was horrified. Of some living creatures too, she did not like aquariums with ornamental fish, peacocks, and feared snakes. Some animals, she thought she should have at home to attract the bad looks and liberate people, are like little canaries. She worried very much over ferns. When two people were celebrating their birthdays together, they should not blow candles on the same cake, because it would take each other's luck away. I recall these superstitions because these and others were also when playing cards, which she liked very much to do. But in spite of all these customs, rooted in popular beliefs, she had a deep and true faith, as well as an immense generosity, joy, sympathy, and affection for all with whom she dealt with. God bless her!

Some of the oldest memories I have are from when I was 3. I vaguely remember the house where we lived in and the yard where there was a large nursery of colored parakeets, which I enjoyed watching them fly, "talking" endlessly, eating, taking their baths in the water vessel, and shaking their feathers to dry, which I loved. I also remember the man who passed with a little goat, selling milk that mom bought for us, and also the man with the barrel organ, with a parrot that would guess your luck, and how much I liked and admired myself seeing the bird "draw" with the beak a

colored paper among many others. Nowadays I realize how much the animals filled my childhood with joy and why psychology recognizes that children identify themselves with the animals and use their images in their projective tests, such as the Children's Apperception Test (CAT) (Faust & Ehrich, 2001).

At home, we lived with Rita, the girl who helped with the domestic services, who stayed with us for 20 years and helped raise the children of the couple, the three of us. She also played with me, and I loved her with all my heart. She braided my hair, ironed my clothes, and told me stories. Also she cooked very well; it was beautiful. She made a couscous with everything in it – fish, shrimp, sardines, chicken, palm hearts, hard-boiled eggs, and olives – and it was very moist and very wet. She was a storyteller. Stories were both experienced and heard, coming through several generations by oral tradition, that I have remembered until today and that I have transcribed. Of her life, I do not remember the details, but I recall that she told me that her father was black and her mother was white. She was a small, light-skinned mulatto girl. She had a twin sister. She said that they lived near a river, half way from the city, which I believe to be the Paraíba River, and that, from time to time, her father went canoeing with basketries to sell and brought back salt, brown sugar, jerked beef, and calico. They had a vegetable garden there, where they planted a few things and raised chickens and pigs. Later, when her parents became ill, they moved to the city, where they passed away. Each daughter was raised by a family. Rita stayed with two teachers, who were very good to her, but they did not teach her how to read. And it was I who, at the age of 10, taught her literacy, a short time before she died from a heart attack. Above, we can see how, in telling her stories and playing with me, Rita also told us her life and her history, inserted in a time and space that were very different from mine, and how, when listening to her, I felt that I was visualizing this river and her pain of losing her parents. Storytellers and adults who play and talk with children, respecting their sensitivity, freedom, creativity, and spontaneity, open to them deep channels of communication and dialogue, which are preserved for life and gradually introduce them into the current of time that does not retrieve but that propels them forward, aboard a ship named culture.

When we moved to the Estados Unidos street, very busy today, in 1943, it was very quiet, and there, which had once been a swamp, still got flooded when it rained heavily. We made paper boats from newspapers, with and without hoods, and we let them out into the water on the street. When it was a flood, all the boys on the court wore shorts and, equipped with a kind of surfboard, would go sliding in the water. They had simple planks, straight and smooth, just a large piece of wood. My brother and I also played with tin soldiers. We put the little soldiers on the newspaper boats and dropped them in the rainwater that ran down the street. Rita, still alive at that time, would be wearing a soldier's hat and newspaper sword. There were always some cousins or friends playing with us. In the backyard, we played with the cousins of catch-one-catch-all, hide-and-seek, and rode bicycles. The toy I liked best was a little house. I had a little room in the yard, just for myself, with furniture, dolls, everything. Rita would light the charcoal stove in the yard and cook with me. Back there, too, was the chicken coop. Dad, as a doctor, always received from his clients baskets with chickens, turkeys, and even live piglets that the butcher would

slaughter. The turkeys drank sugarcane rum before they were beheaded. Some customers sent fresh eggs from the farm, homemade cakes, etc. When a basket arrived, coming from a distance, the chickens inside were in a pitiful state, hence, the expression "walking like a chicken out of the basket." On top of the chicken coop, there was a small roof where we climbed to steal blackberries from the neighbor. Our neighbors were a couple of German Jews, very nice, who had no children. As my siblings sometimes broke the windows of their winter garden, with ball kicks, mom, who had already apologized a lot, paid the glazier's bill and everything turned out peaceful again.

Besides playing house with my dolls and little pans, I enjoyed throwing a ball on the wall, reciting and making the corresponding positions: order, your place, no laughing, no talking, one foot, to the other, one hand, to the other, clapping, pirouettes, and falls. Sometimes, before the falls, I would include a half-turn. I also scraped a lot of hopscotch with chalk or charcoal on the ground and also snail, which is another type of hopscotch, both with the heaven. These games, much loved by children, derive from a combination of three great ludic modalities, that is, the sensorimotor, the symbolic, and the rules. In the games mentioned above, we can see that they involve balance and body agility, precise viso-motor coordination, and spatial notion; they require respect for the rules and also contain a symbolic territory called "heaven," a place of deserved rest. The evolutionary curve of the play accompanied by Piaget (1964) in his reading of the formation of the symbol and that, for some time, I had the opportunity to research and follow closely (Oliveira 1992) shows how the sensory-motor games of the little children, in their coming and going in space and time, provide precisely a dip in historical-cultural time, creating progressive conditions for the emergence of symbolic manifestations such as language, memory, imagination, creativity, and sociability, achievements that are gradually evident in their make-believe plays, which begin to emerge and grow in time and structural and dramatic complexity, creating the conditions of social games par excellence, with games that require acceptance and respect for the rules.

The games with my cousins at my paternal grandmother's house were also very amusing. My grandparents lived in a large house, which had in the upper floor seven bedrooms, two balconies, and "one" bathroom, with an immense white, enameled bathtub, where the pilot light of the gas was gently lit. On the ground floor, there was a large balcony in L. The entrance hall was tiled. In the dining room, which formed a kind of oval veranda with colorful "vitraux," there was a lovely English clock, a table for more than 20 people, a cupboard, and a corner cabinet with a large mirror on top. Mom said that on Sundays the family would gather for lunch and talk for a long time – "At the table, you do not grow old." At coffee time, Grandma served each plate, and it went from hand to hand, all around. Sometimes Grandma, who also liked to play, put salt in the place of sugar in one of the cups and had fun not knowing who was going to drink from it.

The house had a habitable basement, and there was a cellar, immense and dark, to preserve the wines that, when they came from Europe, Grandpa brought, because at that time it was very difficult to get them here in Brazil, unless you imported them. In the basement, later, a ping-pong table was set up and we all played. Outside,

the garden surrounded the house, with plenty of space. There, we, the grandchildren, could run and ride a bike at will and play catch-one-catch-all and hide-and-seek. We, the granddaughters, also baptized our dolls in their white dresses, some made by our mothers and grandmother. We performed the ceremony with a ritual, at the foot of a tree, our favorite to climb. In the back, there were several fruit trees, like jabuticaba trees, which we enjoyed sucking the little fruits. There were also banana trees, where we, during the June festivities, the eve of St. John or St. Anthony, would put a knife on the stem to see the letter that was engraved, which would be the initial of the young man with whom we were to marry. We dripped molten candle wax into a water dish to see a letter formed, which would also be the initial character of a future bridegroom. We turned the orange peel saying the alphabet, to see in which letter the peel would break. With the orange peel too, we liked to squeeze the juice and light a match nearby to make little stars, at the June festivities. The games were part of the rituals of the great religious festivals, with their pagan roots and full of magic, and have continued throughout our human acculturation trajectory, creating and strengthening social bonds (Oliveira 2006).

At Easter time, Grandma and uncles hid chocolate eggs in the garden for us kids to look for. The Christmas festivities were also beautiful. There was always an uncle or an older grandson dressed as Santa Claus, and there was a present for each one. Later, we all danced. With time going by and the increasing of the family, my paternal grandparents, who had 13 children, had close to 100 grandchildren, adding together the great-grandchildren. We were really a rabbit family.

On ordinary days, when there was no special party and we were there after dinner or on rainy days, we, the grandchildren, used to play mimicry, games of nonsense or a game called “Little Fire,” in which each of us sat in a chair, forming an open circle, and one of us, randomly chosen, ran the wheel and went one by one saying “Little Fire” and the “visited” child had to answer “Little Fire, its neighbor” and point to another child. And while the “chosen one” went to the indicated child, the others should change places quickly, and the chosen one should try to sit in one of the vacant chairs, as fast as possible. We also played “Male Friend or Female Friend,” a game in which a child should leave the room and the others then would choose a word (always a simple and concrete noun) to be discovered. When called back, the child who had left would ask the group “Is it a male friend or a female friend?,” that is, male or female. Then he would ask one by one, “How do you like it?” And then, one by one, “When do you like it?”; “Why do you like it?” The children’s responses should follow the original meaning given to the word, for example, with a name with more than one meaning, for example, “Bark,” which could be either the outer covering of a tree or the sound a dog makes; the child when he was to respond should follow, in the answers, the first meaning he had given the name. Today, I realize how this game has taught us to think coherently, clearly, and objectively, as well as being quite funny. Grandma also taught us to speak in the language of “Ai-enter-imes-ober-ufat,” that is, substituting the a-e-i/y-o-u. Thus, for example, when one means “Mary has a doll,” it is said “Emeaierreimes agaaiesse ai deobereleele” (M ai R imes / H ai S / ai / D ober L L); I do not know how it would work, but in Portuguese, we grandchildren used to speak fluently and quickly.

Still at Grandma's, at night, after dinner, sometimes when we were having dinner there, Mom, who was very playful and funny, used to play chasing after us in the dark, sometimes even with a denture made of orange peels in the mouth. It was a shout. This house no longer exists, today there is an apartment building that I went to visit some time ago, to recall the good times, at least of the place and the small garden that was left.

I still remember very well how Grandma Ursula's Christmas was so beautiful, full of joy and poetry when we were children and even adolescents. Grandma was very religious. The younger uncles spent a whole month earlier buying gifts. There were gifts for everyone, and we were more than a hundred. There was the Christmas tree; the crib, sometimes only with Baby Jesus in the manger; and, the most important, Santa Claus, all dressed up in character, who came and sat on a chair calling us one by one and distributing gifts. One of my brothers, who was fat and funny, was often the Santa Claus, and when he was handing out the gifts, he kidded with each one. We sang Holy Night. Dinner was very yummy. Then the uncles danced and told jokes. The children played.

Grandpa died a long time before Grandma but she never mourned. Grandpa died on the farm, where he spent his holidays. When he started to get worse, we, grandchildren, made a promise of not eating mangoes. When he knew it, he thanked us very much, but, however, he asked us to change the promise. He would like us to make Polliana's "Game of Content." When Grandpa died, I, at the age of 11, felt as if the farmhouse, that was so large, started to shrink, shrink, and darken. I did not yet realize that it is people who make things great. Grandma Ursula was a quieter person, but she was very dear. She has always paid close attention to her family. She had in her bedroom closet a box with spools, skeins, buttons, and a lot of nice things for the smaller grandchildren. She told stories and always did her crochet. I really liked being petted (cafuné). Grandma played crapaud very well and taught it to her granddaughters, but I think only I kept the taste for the game and also taught my grandchildren. Crapaud, which means frog, in French, is a game of logical reasoning and strategy-making. It has this name because, for more complex moves, the player moves the cards by jumping to various positions, just like the jumps of the frog. As she had little spare time with her many children, playing provided her with a special treat, and so she surrounded it with a ritual, in which she sometimes allowed herself to drink a black beer she had learned to like when she was newly married, in Germany.

Some games, particularly games of chance, with or without cards, really carry us to a different reality, an avoidance of the here and now, a distancing such that, being felt so lively, can generate much pleasure and involvement, emotions that, when repeatedly experienced, can compromise our ties with reality and reduce or even cancel our perception of risk of possible losses, that is, compromise our cultural and existential identity. In other words, they can become an addiction, difficult to be abandoned, hence, the great importance of letting the child play freely, without teaching or interfering. Play consists precisely in the time and space that are yours by right and that will create conditions for you to deal with your imagination without losing ground on earth, as well as dealing with rules and learning to lose and wanting to play again in order not to lose the company of other children.

Many of our vacations, we, the cousins, spent on a farm of one of our uncles, Uncle Tá. It had once been a coffee farm, but at that time it was already of dairy cattle. It was a beautiful farm, cut by the Atibaia River, which we liked to cross over, jumping over its stones. It had a large and varied orchard, with many kinds of fruit, such as orange trees, mangoes, avocado, jabuticaba, banana, guava, and many others. My aunt and her servants at the high season of the guava made their jams, a guava paste, just simple or "cascão," that is, with pieces of the fruit peel, in a special room for that purpose, with a huge pot and a firewood. They would spend hours and hours with big wooden spoons, and after they had reached the right consistency, they would put an amount in small wooden boxes on the kitchen counter to dry.

We, the children, followed this process closely, but we only helped when it was time to pick the fruit and then to eat the paste, which was really delicious. The boxes with the guava paste were also offered to relatives and friends.

In the orchard, the children also climbed up in the trees, and sometimes we girls played in the house, each one living in "her own" tree. Sometimes at the ripening time of the lime orange, which is quite sweet, we would stay there, near the river, sucking the oranges galore and making maps with their bagasses on the ground. Or we would go up and try to make a bamboo cabana, which never worked. There were days when we woke up very early to go horseback to a neighboring farm, as all the farmers in the area knew each other.

In the evenings, we played the guitar and sang our old songs, from the countryside, which my uncle liked very much. We also played cards, played mimicry, or danced. But what gave us more joy, and also a little fear, was playing hide-and-seek at night in the darkness of the large rooms of the farm. When my mother was there, then, it was very exciting and funny. She hid in unusual places, like the night when she laid herself over the dining room table and then the table toppled with her and the flower pot, pouring water on the floor and causing a lot of laughter. On the rainy days, we played hide-and-seek indoors, too. My aunt, very dear, was very patient with the children and nephews. By the way, we from my family, both maternal and paternal, have always liked children very much, and we love playing games and joking with them, as well as between us. On the country house, there was no television at that time, and so the guitar or the games played their part, with a great advantage.

We also spent our holidays at my grandfather's ranch, which was further away from Sao Paulo and could be reached by train, which at that time took several hours, up the mountain. It was still a coffee farm, and my grandfather suffered when, in colder years, the frost burned the harvest. The coffee plant is a very beautiful plant, especially when it is flowering, with its small white flowers, its skirt that drags on the ground, or when it is already loaded with coffee, which when ripe, the fruits turn red and are already sweet to suck. Gazing at the coffee plantation, in a beautiful afternoon, at sunset, is a very lovely sight. Families from São Paulo, such as mine, kept for many years the habit of having a coffee stand in their garden, right in front of the house, next to the gate. Coffee really is part of our history, our life.

There in the farm, we girls loved to climb up the big trees in the orchard and help Grandma make doll clothes. The boys, on a rainy day, made mud war until they could stand no longer. They also liked to make "hanged," which were dolls molded

with a mass of moistened paper, wheat flour, and soap, to which they fastened a string around the neck and threw them up to the porch ceiling to hang there. We also liked to sit and swing in the hammocks, playing and singing. Grandma, who was always with a needlework in her hands, sometimes told stories. Her favorite was Tarzan's. Grandma easily mastered the language of Ai-enter-imes-ober-ufat and sometimes talked to us in that language. Today I see how she retained much of her acuity and mental agility, as well as her joy at living until she was 80, thanks to the plays and games she had with her grandchildren.

We also spent the summer vacationing on the beaches. Brazil has an immense coastline with beautiful beaches and with very white sand, many of them lined with coconut trees. Coconut, however, is not native here. The origin of coconut palm is Southeast Asia. The plant was introduced in Brazil through the state of Bahia (hence coconut-of-Baia), spreading over the northeastern coast. Most was brought by the slave ships, that is, by the slave trade brought from Africa, before 1888, in which the coconuts helped on the ballast of the vessels, balancing them. When they arrived here, the coconuts were left spread on the beaches, and in contact with the soil and the favorable climate, they rooted all through our coast. They are a remarkable presence and inspire us to relax and admire the view. The oldest souvenir I have of a beach is from Guarujá, a beautiful São Paulo beach, which for many years was sparsely populated, and we used to collect shells of various types and also snails, which we collected and later decorated the castles of sand we built. These castles evolved and began to have towers and ditches, through which we passed water that we brought from the sea with our buckets, water that the sand absorbed and that we would replace countless times.

Playing is surely an infinite remaking that children enjoy and that prepares them for persistence and patience in life in the face of the obstacles encountered. In this play, the aesthetic concern of children is also perceived, in decorating their castles, as well as their intelligence aimed at building them, their towers and ditches, attentive to the material used, sand and water, to their engineering and resistance. Modern architecture, with its high tech and its new aesthetic tendencies that exhibit an innovative fantasy, somehow exposes echoes of children's building games, such as their potential school, as Bordes (2012) reminds us, who mentions, among several examples, the toy built by the German engineer, Artur Fischer, to be presented as a Christmas gift to the clients of his company and that achieved great popularity and repercussion in the architectural circles.

Returning to Guarujá, where the sea is not calm, we played jumping over its waves, diving under them, or even "catching a wave," or "an alligator," as we called it, that is, to use its strength so we could be carried back to the sand, with or without a board. On another beach, Itararé, a quieter sea, we used to play around the Porchat island, jumping over its stones. Summer vacations on the beaches were part of our lives.

Those were good times as are also the present ones, because today, repeating our history, I am the one who plays with my grandchildren and even my little great-granddaughter. They already come in here with their eyes sparkling because they know they are going to play at will!

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Chapter 5
Children in Shelter Care at the Amazon Region: Play, Spaces, and Interactions

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Shelter Care for Children in Brazil: A Short Contextualization

Human development may take place in several contexts, among them the institutional sheltering emerges as a space that favors the observation of development of children at early ages. This assertion is supported by the fact that institutional sheltering for children is considered full protection environment to infants sheltered by them. Moreover, it is stated that the stay is temporary, what happens to be unlikely in Brazil, for a large amount of children spend long periods of their lives in these institutions.

According to Art. 19 of the Child and Adolescent Statute (ECA – *Estatuto da Criança e do Adolescente* – 1990), institutional sheltering for children is a temporary and exceptional measure to guarantee the protection of the children as a transition to family reestablishment, when it is not possible, then to a foster family, not implying on the deprivation of liberty.

Children institutionalization has coexisted in several cultural contexts in societies that are developed, underdeveloped, and through development. According to UNICEF (2011) in Central and East Europe, in 2008, about 1.3 million children lived under the state care, less than half of them lived in sheltering institutions or boarding schools. It is estimated that more than 300.000 children are under institutional care in Middle East and Africa (UNICEF, 2009).

Even though they present a slow deinstitutionalization process, Latin American countries have engaged on a critic debate on the institutionalization of children and adolescents as a response to problems as negligence, lack of resources both human and material, mistreatment, abandonment, orphanage, and other reasons that threaten the physical and emotional integrity of children (UNICEF, 2003).

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In Brazil, there has been taking place a similar process to other countries in Latin America, in other words, a restatement of the policies which hold the rights of children and adolescents under social vulnerability. Institutional sheltering in Brazil is due to several factors as abandonment, neglect, and mistreatment, among many others; hence it has been the aim of several studies (Corrêa, 2011; Gabatz, Padoin, Neves & Terra, 2010; Rossetti-Ferreira et al., 2012; Siqueira & Dell'Aglio, 2010).

The promulgation of the law 8.069, in July 13, 1990 (ECA), was a tombstone for the improvement on the care given to children and adolescents. It was stated that this population would receive full protection with its rights and obligations granted by law. Some of these rights are the right to life; to health; to freedom, respect, and dignity; to live in family and in a community; and to education, culture, sports, and leisure (Brasil, 1990). The CAS also states that children have the right to live with the family; only as last resource the institutional sheltering should be used.

Besides the ECA, other policy changes have been implemented, as the resolution CNAS/ CONANDA No. 1, 2006, which states about the "National Plan of promotion, protection and preservation of the rights of children and adolescent to live in family and community" (*Plano Nacional de Promoção, Proteção e Defesa dos direitos de Crianças e Adolescentes à Convivência Familiar e Comunitária)*, and more recently the technical orientations: sheltering services for children and adolescents (*Orientações Técnicas: Serviços de acolhimento para Crianças e Adolescentes*), elaborated by CONANDA/ CNAS, in 2009, and the Law 12.010/2009, which asserts about adoption.

Nonetheless, the families that cannot fulfil their role to promote emotional and material conditions which guarantee protection, health, and wellbeing of the children might have their children temporarily withdrawn or in extreme cases have their guard temporarily or permanently revoked. In these situations, when there are no other means, the child is sent to shelter institutions and is seen as a fundamental microsystem for the comprehension of the human development.

Cavalcante, Magalhães, and Pontes (2007) discuss how the conception of institutional sheltering has been built and its implications for the biopsychosocial development of institutionalized children. The sheltering institutions are established as social policies to special protection to childhood, for it aims to protect and offer assistance to children in social vulnerability; they can be considered places that still replicate traces of closed institutions, in which the care is collective and the chances for a family and community living are decreased.

Thus, it is understood that sheltering institutions for children might have antagonist characteristics; some considered factors that are protective to the childhood and others that are threats to the development. They favor the child development by offering adequate care that meets the needs of the children, respecting its singularity, subjectivity, offering adequate physical space, capable professionals, and actions to bring together children and their original families.

On the other hand, these contexts become a menace to the development for the following reasons: not offering adequate physical spaces, not providing a sufficient amount nor well-trained professionals to meet the needs of the children; concentrating an elevated amount of children in the institution; also for lacking investments in

strategies to connect the children to their original families, thus maintaining and strengthening emotional bonds.

Therefore, it is fundamental for the institutions to provide a wide variety of activities, opportunities to interact, and adequate physical spaces and, specifically, must stimulate and promote the free or structured play as a means to guarantee the complete child development.

About a Sheltering Institution for Children in the Amazon Region

The research was performed in an institution placed in the metropolitan area of Belém, in the state of Pará, intended for the sheltering of children ranging from 0 to 6 years of age, who were at social and personal risk or had their rights violated due to neglect, mistreatment, violence, and/or abandonment, imposing their isolation from the original family permanently or temporarily. When entered in the institution, the children were separated by dormitories, following criteria as age and health conditions.

The daily and complete care of the children was carried out by 92 caretakers/educators, 52 of them worked on 12/48hs shift, 30 educators worked 12/60hs shift, 3 coordinators that worked on the supervision and coordination of activities developed by educators, and 10 housekeepers that worked 6 h a day.

Throughout the space there were several areas for interactions; two of them were chosen to carry out the observation of children who were between 5 and 6 years old, both genders, sheltered in the institution from 1 to 12 months. These places were chosen because they were already areas the children used to play, for they were also part of their routine; besides they had different characteristics: one was indoors, here named structured context (SC), where the toys were displayed in quadrants, represented by the toy library, and the other was outdoors, where the semi-structured context (SSC) was a wider space including the covered patio, playground, and swimming pool.

The structured context (SC) represented by the toy library named "Brinquedoteca Bidu" was built with the help of funds of the Federal University of Pará (UFPA). The staff training was done by professors from UFPA and Centur (Centro Cultural Tancredo Neves). The toy library was launched in April 2006, in a 54-square-meter room, at the end of a hallway next to the dormitories, and transferred, later on, to a larger room.

The toy library operation hours was from Monday to Friday, mornings and afternoons, for 60 min to each dormitory, exclusively for children older than 3 years old. The optimal number of children attended at once was eight; if there was a larger dormitory, the period was equally divided. Each dorm had its prearranged schedule, and the children would be conducted there by the caretakers/educators responsible for the dorm.

One of the employees of the institution, caretaker/educator, was responsible for the room. This professional acted as facilitator of the playing process, monitoring the children, in addition to the resolution of possible conflicts and registering the children's behavior during this period.

The areas that were part of the toy library were divided in quadrants: Q1 (relational life area), Q2 (means of transportation), Q3 (handcrafts, reading, and secretary), Q4 (dressing room), Q5 (theater), and Q6 (toys and games). This area was thought and structured to favor and motivate the children to come into contact with varied toys, broadening the opportunities for social interaction and engaging in socio-motor and cognitive activities.

The semi-structured context (SSC) was composed of three areas: covered patio, playground, and swimming pool. The patio was an outdoor recreational area, brick-built, and wide and covered by shingle, with no walls and had cement flooring. There was a small wooden stage with three-step-stairs on each side to reach the top of the stage, two wooden benches to the left of the stage, a small basketball hoop, and a tiny plastic house.

The playground was located outdoors, to the side of the covered patio, partially covered in grass, with thin and white sand, partially forested by five trees. Five iron apparatus were installed: three seesaws, a slide, a bridge (also called ladder, a kind of a runway where children can go from one end to the other), a swing set with a wooden seat and rope attached to a tree, as well as a wooden house with doors and windows on the sides and front.

By the playground there was also a swimming pool, made of glass fiber, oval-shaped, with no steps inside, surrounded by railings throughout its extension. The railings were yellow and were kept locked, so the children would not have access to the pool, conditioned to the supervision of an adult.

In this observational study, it was targeted to register behaviors of interactions and play spontaneously displayed by the participants in structured and semi-structured environments of the institution; on that matter, the focal-subject sampling was used (Altmann, 1974).

The Plays in Institutional Context: Environment and Interactions

The process through which the play takes place is mediated by the culture and by the dynamins of the interindividual relations, overlapped by regional cultural characteristics from the context where it takes place (Gosso & Otta, 2003; Marques & Bichara, 2011; Seixas, Becker & Bichara, 2012; Reis, 2007).

It was observed that the types of play would continuously change in an episode, as well as the theme, the peers, and the chosen objects that would become toys as soon as the subject would attribute such role to it. Therefore, it was sought to know the categories of the plays presented in both contexts (Table 5.1).

Table 5.1 Play categories registered in the contexts

Play categories	Time (minutes) SC	Time (minutes) SSC	Total	Total %
Symbolic play	183	70	253	43.24%
Exploratory play	40	9	49	8.37%
Turbulent play	4	–	4	0.68%
Physical contingence	10	195	205	35.04%
Social contingence	1	6	7	1.19%
Construction plays	40	–	40	6.83%
Rule plays	7	20	27	4.61%

Note: SC (structured context), SSC (semi-structured context)

The analysis of the table enables identifying that the favorite play was the symbolic play, also called make-believe (43.24%), followed by the physical contingence, also called motor play, (35.04%), and the third one was exploratory play (8.37%).

According to Vygotsky (1998), through make-believe, the children want to satisfy certain desires that usually cannot be immediately satisfied. The symbolic play allows the child to test and experiment different roles in the society (father, mother, children, worker, etc.).

The themes of plays were separated in categories, the same ones used in Moraes and Otta (2003): (1) physical contingence/sensory motor (climbing up and down, running, swimming, velocipede, bicycle, dancing, carrying objects, swinging, jumping rope, hula hoop, painting), (2) social contingence (mimicking, construction plays, puzzles, docking games), (3) symbolic plays (house, mom and daughter, making food, worker, school, super hero, princess and witch, hairdresser, doctor, photographer, shopping, assassin doll), (4) rule games, and (5) turbulent play (fighting and chasing). In addition to these ones, it included the (6) exploratory play (the ones which the child would handle a toy/object and would lose interest on it a few seconds later, choosing to do other things).

Several studies relate gender to the chosen play; preponderantly the symbolic plays were chosen by the girls, and the more vigorous plays by the boys (Santos, 2005; Wanderlind, Martins, Hansen, Macarini & Vieira, 2006; Santos & Dias, 2010). Our data corroborate the literature on the type of play according to the gender.

For the male gender, the most common plays were the turbulent plays (fighting, chasing), the themes of the plays were super heroes, car, pilot, and driver, among others. On the other hand, the girls would spend longer time on plays related to the domestic chores (taking care of the house and preparing and serving food); make-believe plays between mother and daughter; going shopping; among others.

Such results revealed the gender stereotypy also found by Bichara (2001); her study demonstrated the boys' preference to plays related to transportation (riding a horse, driving a car, truck, etc.). Differently, the girls demonstrated preference for plays related to domestic chores (house, food, mother and daughter).

It was furthermore found that the play the children were more frequently engaged to varied according to the context. For example, the physical contingence had a lower frequency in the structured context by the fact that it was a limiting place for more expansive plays (running, jumping, climbing up and down, and swinging, among others). Nonetheless, in the context where it was possible due to the settings of the space, the physical contingence plays were more frequent.

In less-constricted environments as the streets, squares, parks, patios, and schools, it is common for children to engage in plays that involve physical/motor aspects (running, jumping, kicking, dancing, climbing up and down, swinging, etc.). The study of Cordazzo and Vieira (2007) corroborates the previous affirmation; the authors found that the most frequent play engaged by the children on their school sample was soccer, basketball, and catch. Those plays require the children to develop a series of movements and physical activities as running, jumping, leaping, kicking, shooting, catching, etc.

The results from Marques (2010), Luz and Kuhnen (2013), and Cotrim and Bichara (2013) confirm the influence of the context to the chosen play, prevailing the physical contingence plays (motor exercises) in outdoor contexts with little architectural barriers. Therefore, it is observed that the children seem to enjoy the availability of more spacious spaces for engaging in motor plays (running, jumping, sliding, climbing up and down, and swinging).

On the other hand, the symbolic play was registered in both contexts, which demonstrates a large interest of the participants to that category of play. Age is another factor that impacts on the choice of the plays, the participants aged between 5 and 6 years, a period that the children show great interest by the symbolic play, also called make-believe (Piaget, 1971; Vygotsky, 1998).

The experience in the sheltering institution also enables the children to come into contact with many other children at different ages. It was similarly observed that occurred mainly interactions among coetaneous (children at the same age), besides the natural proximity of children to peers of similar ages, as the children were placed in dorms with age criteria.

However, the plays with coetaneous and non-coetaneous groups would occur at a moderate rate. In these situations it was noticed how the younger children would admire the older ones; and the leadership they had over the younger ones. Some conflicts were observed, in general, for the dispute of toys; they were mediated by caretakers/educators that explained that the toys were collective and the importance of letting the other play as well.

Still on the topic of interactions, it was observed that the partnership of the children with its siblings wouldn't take place in the structured context, for the children attended the area in different schedules, according to their age. Nonetheless, the semi-structured context, for not having the fixed time constriction, favored the encounters of non-coetaneous children and their siblings, which is very beneficial to the development and stated by the Brasil (1990) through the policy of "do not dismantle groups of siblings." In this sense, the proximity of groups of siblings must be favored in several activities, for the ludic moments are essential to the preservation of the bonds and increase of the emotional bond.

The Role of the Educator During the Children's Play in Institutional Sheltering

The adults represented by the caretakers/educators had several roles during the play episodes. Some of them seemed to be more concerned about maintaining the safety and integrity of the children by emitting behaviors that would stop some of the children's actions (climbing, jumping, and running), restricting their roles to imposing limits, and taking part only as observers. In this sense, it was noteworthy the little participation of the educators in structured context (toy library) during the children attendance. It was noted that most of them would only take the children to the room and take them back at the end; the time in this context that could have been used for interaction and proximity between the actors, educators and children, was unappreciated.

A possible explanation to this absence is the fact that the toy library is provided with a professional, an educator (toy librarian) who would stay exclusively at the space, which could have generated a distorted interpretation from the other educators that its presence is dispensable, when, in fact, the presence of such professionals is crucial for a better appropriation of the possibilities of interaction, diversity of resources and plays, offered by the space.

However, it was noticed that other educators used the moments of play as opportunities for recreation and for them to come closer to the children, teaching rules, and motivating the players to keep engaged in the ludic activity. The availability of an adult, emitting emotional behaviors, offering support on the moments of fragility and frustration of the children is highly beneficial for them to acquire the feelings of safety, of pertaining to a group, of care and zeal.

Researchers as Daunhauer, Coster, Tickle-Degnen, and Cermak (2007) and Tirella et al. (2008) presented the importance of the educator to be part of the play with the children, which promotes the engagement in the ludic activity in a more competent and effective way. With regard to the difference in attitude and behaviors of educators, that fact signs for the need of further training for those professionals to become more aware of the importance of their role to the children's daily lives, to the extent they may stimulate the acquisition of physical, cognitive, and emotional abilities, aiming at a healthy development of the children.

The analysis of the observations carried out at the semi-structured context showed that the children's exploratory attitude (playing with water, earth, plants, and climbing trees) was associated to pleasant sensations. The contact with different materials, as well as the experience with different body postures, is crucial for the global child development. However, it is frequent that this kind of experience causes concern to the adults by the risk of accidents; Episode 1 presents one of these situations; the child named P5 climbs a tree at the playground and is followed by P4.

Episode 1

Play	climbing trees
Participants	P5 and P8 (boys), P4 (girl), all aging 6 years; educator
Context	semi-structured
Local	playground

Fig. 5.1 Photo of P4 and P5 climbing up and down the tree

> P5 is on a guava tree, and P4 starts to climb the tree while singing. From the top of the tree, P5 observes her, and P4 is climbing and then says to P5: "Excuse-me P5." P5: "Climb already P4, like I did." She continues climbing the tree. P4 reaches P5, both stay on the tree, and P4 continues singing. P4 and P5 continue on the tree; P4 hangs using only the hands, and P8 approaches: "I wanna see you both falling, P4 already fell from up there, she was all bruised." P5 and P4 go a little higher on the tree, when they heard P8 say they could fall. P5 says: "I'm not gonna fall, I'm holding myself." P4 says: "I'm gonna go down." P8 starts to yell: "aunt, aunt" (calling the educator to see the children on the tree). […] An educator yells: "Get down!" P4 and P5 go down sliding through the tree trunk. P5 rapidly puts on her sandals and say "come, come, come have a snack" and leaves running. The educator says to P4: "don't go get yourself another one, you already have your mouth all broken." P4 runs and goes to the cafeteria to have a snack.

Figure 5.1 illustrate the episode.

Another aspect that calls attention is the role of the educators that monitored the children's activity having a higher rank, who the children must respect. That fact is seen in Episode 1, in which P5 (a 6-year-old boy) and P4 (a 6-year-old girl) are climbing a tree. P8 (6-year-old boy) observes the play and remembers a time P4 got hurt for climbing trees and also that it is not allowed in the institution. In fear that P4 would get hurt again, P8 calls one of the educators in the attempt to stop P4 and P5's behavior. The educator approaches and stops the play due to the eminent risk of a fall.

Similar situation happens in Episode 2 when P5 starts to throw mud at a clean area of the playground; quickly the educator calls her attention. P5 tries to convince her that she would clean it by saying "we get the broom and sweep it". Though, shortly the child complies with the educator's request and returns to where she was playing before.

In the institution the educators would take turn on the care of the children; consequently the children would be in contact with several ones. It was noted that during the plays, the roles would vary among the educators; some would impose more limits and zeal for the safety of the children and interacted little during the plays (as seen in Episodes 1 and 2; others would propose plays and actively participate in them). Examples that the educators would actively participate, proposing and supervising the plays, are shown in Episode 3 (illustrated by pictures 3 and 4).

In Episode 3 the educator proposes a soccer game at the playground, in an open area with a dirt ground. The professional divides the children into mixed groups

Fig. 5.2 Photo of the educator and the children jumping rope

with boys and girls, explains the rules and acts as a referee, and organizes and motivates the children to keep engaged to the play through behaviors as complimenting, clapping, and celebrating when they scored goals. After the recordings, the educator spontaneously said she considered important to propose sensory-motor activities because some children have the experience of playing on the streets and miss this type of activity in the institution.

It was once again noticed the influence of the context for some plays to be performed; the playground has, besides the areas with recreational apparatus (seesaw, slide, swing set, etc.), an open area with sand ground, enabling the occurrence of behaviors as running, jumping, hanging, swinging, and some rule games as soccer.

In Episode 4 two educators propose plays on the outdoor covered area, making available objects as hula hoop, ropes, and balls, and for the environment to be more cheerful, there was children music playing constantly (Fig. 5.2).

Episode 4

Play	jumping rope
Participants	P4, P7, P9 (6-year-old girls), P5 and P8 (6-year-old boys), C1 (5-year-old girl), and educators
Context	semi-structured
Local	outdoor covered patio

One of the educators sings the nursery rhyme: "the man knocked on my door and I opened it" (*customary nursey rhyme sang at jumping rope around Brazil)*; she swings the rope along with P9. P8 jumps and manage not to step on the rope until the song is over; the educator asks everybody to clap to her. The educator says to P8: "Well done!" Now it is P5's turn to jump; she fails it and steps on the rope, and the others are waiting for their turn. P7 then starts to jump. P8 waits its turn and asks to go again. The educator tries to organize the children turns, as everyone wants to jump. P8 and the other children are waiting for their turn; C1 tries to jump but fails, and P4 is now jumping. While waiting for his turn, P8 quickly plays ball with the educator that is on his side; he returns and jumps aside from the rope listening to the rhyme. P4 ends up stepping on the rope and already asks for another chance; however the educator says its P8's turn, who already starts jumping. While P8 jumps, P4 sings along with the educator. When P8 fails the educator says "Now it is P4's turn." C1 fights with P8 over who is going to hold the rope. C1 throws herself to the floor. Educator: "but child you can't" (meaning that the child doesn't know how to swing the rope for the others to jump). C1 continues to whine, and the educator says to P8 to give the rope to C1 so she can hold it for a while.

> Now who is jumping is the educator, and the children continue to sing the rhyme "The man knocked on my door and I opened it, ladies and gentlemen, put your hands on the floor, ladies and gentlemen jump on one foot." After that P8 jumps again.

Once again it is noteworthy the role of the educators in influencing the children, becoming essential to demonstrate their participation. Some educators were concerned about and would propose diverse activities for the children, as it happened on Episode 4, in which the professionals used objects that were not used on a daily basis (ropes, hula hoops). It was noted a strong motivation of the children to engage in such plays; the educators, besides proposing, would in the same way take part on it.

It could be noted that several factors as culture, care practices, values, context, and personality have influence over how the children and adults engage on the plays, the roles they assume, and how they interact with their peers. Corrêa (2011), a study about the care practices in a sheltering institution, indicated that the rate educator-children influenced on the play practices. During the ludic situations, there are usually one or two educators for a group of five to ten children. The author identified some strategies used by the educators to minimize the unbalanced rate between the caretaker agent and the child, which consists in forming a group and motivating them to engage into plays that favor the interaction in large groups. In addition, the results show that the educators would invest more on collective plays, involving all the children from the dorm or a large amount of them. This strategy may be used as a control method and maintenance of the group, chiefly in open areas.

The clear difference in approach of the educators during the plays is an alert that invites us to ponder about their actions. In order to level the professionals, some courses should be provided for the sensitization on the multiple factors that have influence on the healthy course of development of preschoolers.

Presuppositions to Motivate Plays in an Institutional Context: Challenges for the Future

Despite the efforts from the government, scholars, and society at large, the duration of stay of children and adolescents in sheltering institutions in Brazil is yet long. Several aspects contribute to that situation: justice slowness to judge the cases, lack of state structure to provide foster homes, and insufficient investment to provide the minimum dignity for families with low income to furnish their children with emotional and material support. Facing that reality some measures are necessary to make the stay in the shelter a beneficial experience, promoting the children global development, bringing the family closer together, and giving a new meaning to fragile family ties.

One of the possible measures is to motivate the play and create mechanisms for it to be experienced in different contexts, in some moments at areas with architectural barriers, with toys that stimulate many competences (motor, cognitive,

sensory, and emotional), and also in less structured places, the sensory-motor exploration. Only the contexts are not sufficient; it is required the presence of professionals that are capable and sensitive to several peculiar demands of each child, who can also support and motivate the plays, becoming potential peers, and at the same time, zeal for their physical integrity.

Another extremely important factor is to bring the children and their original families together, arranging visits in welcoming environments that motivate ludic activities as the toy libraries. Many parents don't know the potential gain the play brings to children; to inform and make them sensitive to it is an additional challenge.

Therefore, this study revealed that regardless of the context, children play, which demonstrates the universal nature of this behavior. The children's play in sheltering institutions were similar to the plays of children at the same age who live in urban areas, noticing that the context and the gender may have influence on the types of play chosen.

The study of and the sensitization to the importance of providing areas that enable the engagement to play in more structured and wider places in institutional sheltering, with the help from adults who assist and provide instruments for the children during the play, is of paramount relevance due to the fact that the children in institutional sheltering have fragile family ties, which can lead to impairment to their developmental process.

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Chapter 6
Fairy Tales and Integral Education

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Integral and full-time education in schools intends to promote today, in a holistic way and with the amplification of daily school time, the joy of the coexistence, the creativity, and the satisfaction of the scientific and cultural discovery, materialized through the pedagogical directives course constructed collectively and collaboratively in the interest of the community.

Full-time integral education tries to contemplate individuals, knowledge, temporalities, and spaces in or out of school in an interdisciplinary way, articulating the object of knowledge in a globally manner, through the regular compulsory curriculum and some specific and regional diversified activities, giving students varied and playful activities through meaningful and dynamic experiences and learning opportunities.

Time does not determine integral education; however, it must benefit the academic and social emancipation of all students and education professionals involved in the pedagogical practices of the full-day school, legitimizing the right, guaranteed by law, for all to learn and play, more and more.

However, in the school's daily practice, challenges are often encountered that, through teaching practices, end up misrepresenting the proposals and goals of laws and educational ideals.

Among the many questions that can be raised, we want to point out two weaknesses indicated by teachers of full-time and integral education elementary schools: the first refers to the dichotomy between studying and playing, and the second alludes to the educators' difficulty to develop conscious and systematic actions with the students, by which, together with playful actions, can promote both a reflection about the society in which the students live and the construction of values.

For this, it is thought that the curriculum of full-time and integral education elementary schools should not have an overlapping of school periods but rather an interdisciplinary organization of the whole teaching-learning process, so that the

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knowledge, the playful, and the cultural inheritance, transmitted by customs and orality, meaningful in the lives of students and their communities, may be delineated in the various areas of knowledge, since the curriculum of integral education discourses "about" and "with" life.

Elementary education covers children between the ages of 1 and 9 with approximately 6–14 years of age, a period in which a great developmental path can be observed, both in logical and affective structures and, also, in social and moral structures. Thus, it is asked how to work with playful contents that at the same time enable the construction of knowledge through a symbolic language that promotes reflection about oneself and the others and about political, ethical, and cultural values.

About 20 years ago, research was developed using fairy tales, beginning with Carramillo-Going's (1997) *Tales to Write-If*, whose results have been worked on in several schools so far.

The story is a triggering tool, not only for the construction of reading and writing abilities of the pupils of the initial years of literacy but also as a way of presenting greater meaning to the children. These authorless narratives have been assembled and traced back to the history of mankind, therefore, loaded with existential content and problems such as envy, love, fidelity, courage, generosity, and justice, among others, inherent to any human being. The obstacles imposed in the plots make it possible, through group discussion, to think about the choices of the characters, their confrontation, and the solution, bringing to the surface moral and virtuous aspects in a significant way about the decisions done by the hero.

Enabling the use of fairy tales in elementary education through interdisciplinary work aims, according to Piaget (1973), to promote the development of languages, teamwork, autonomy, and discussion of social and political issues. Also, according to Bettelheim (1979), short stories condense important affective aspects in the lives of children, on which they can project conflicts, analyze solutions, and find themselves as citizens.

Other research by Carramillo-Going (2000) and Carramillo-Going and Carneiro (2012) led to the work "One Thousand and One Nights of corporal coercion, curriculum and children in social vulnerability." It was chosen to use the tales of the *One Thousand and One Nights* Galland version. In this work, based on Piaget (1996), among others, the short story aims to observe the discussion of children and youth groups, aged 9–14 years, on moral issues and punishments and how they judge and punish when listening to stories with authoritarian characters and situations of unilateral respect, in which one of the characters is forced to obey the social rules imposed by cultural traditions or even veiled authoritarian contents.

Thus, the focus of this text is to propose the work of the playful in an interdisciplinary way through the tales of oral tradition, guaranteeing the sociability of this symbolic culture through reflection on moral values, ethics, and virtues such as generosity, prudence, fidelity, humility, and perseverance, among others.

However, before discussing oral and symbolic culture in the process of constructing the imaginary and ethics, it is relevant to outline the integral education in Brazil and in the city of Santos in a historical-political and philosophical perspective.

Integral Education in Brazil: Political-Philosophical History

Integral education happens throughout one's life, at school, in the family, and in the community, with the aim of developing the self in multiple dimensions.

The concept and proposal of integral education in Brazil are marked by ideas and experiences conducted by the educator Anísio Teixeira (1900–1971). According to Cavaliere (2010), the pedagogical trend that was brought from Europe and the United States referred back to John Dewey (1859–1952), an American philosopher in the educational field and promoter of democratic ideas and pragmatic conceptions.

Integral education, according to Gadotti (2009), accompanied by the expansion of the child's time in school, conceived by Anísio Teixeira, between 1932 and 1971, in the state of Bahia, Brazil, provided the construction of popular centers of education, composed of four "classroom schools" and a "park school." In the first one, the intellectual activities were developed, and in the second, the practical, sporting, and play activities such as dance, music, theater, games, and gymnastics distributed throughout the day. In the 1950s, Anísio Teixeira took over as director of the National Institute of Pedagogical Studies (INEP), linked to the Ministry of Education, where he prepared the educational plan of the new capital, being the first school park inaugurated next to the city of Brasília.

In the first administration of the governor of the state of Rio de Janeiro (1983–1987), Leonel Brizola, the Integrated Centers of Public Education (CIEPs) were created, thus resuming Anísio Teixeira's proposal to offer full-time integral education.

Darcy Ribeiro, idealizer of the CIEPs, brought as pedagogical proposal, considered as elitist in the public education, the non-failing system. For this, the extended journey should continue the learning process involving playfulness, socialization, and the development of practices that stimulate the citizen's posture.

The government of President Fernando Collor de Mello continued Brizola's project but with a welfare approach, changing the nomenclature for the Center for Integral Attention to Children (CIACs), committing to build five thousand units in partnership with states and municipalities. However, in 1992, he was deposed for a crime of responsibility, and his proposal was forgotten. The Itamar Franco government (1992–1994) lifted once again the proposal also changing the nomenclature for the Center for Integral Attention to Children (CAICs). All centers aimed to comply with the Federal Constitution and the Child and Adolescent Statute (CAS), and the student should be encouraged to remain full time in school.

Public policies in this perspective have in essence a welfare action, which contributes to the confrontation of social inequalities, availability of material, technological resources, and improvement of school infrastructure.

In the state of São Paulo, the mark for integral education occurred in the 1980s with the Program for the Integral Formation of the Child (PROFIC). However, it was in 2002, with the creation of Unified Educational Centers (CEUs), that was proposed intersectoral actions such as education, health, employment and income, sports, culture, and leisure, acting with aggregating environments and beyond the classrooms.

The prominence of public policy as a proposal for integral education has been to offer students access and permanence, expanding the times and spaces of the school; sharing the function of educating with education professionals and social educators through the culture of leisure, playfulness, and other areas of society; as well as using the city as an educative space:

> [...] the school is understood as a sphere of the local power, where diverse people meet not only to carry out the daily task of teaching and learning, but also the function of training citizens to live in society. (Vieira, 2011, p.127)

It is important to recognize that in today's Brazilian society and in its large urban centers, because they present different cultural and regional realities, some socio-integrating educational needs are outlined that take a primary place in the everyday life of the school, such as pluralism of ideas and respect for diversity. In this sense, the scenario of profound diversity cannot impose a closed and uniform curriculum.

Finally, to talk about equal educational opportunities is to be aware that this is an unfinished process, and there is no formula to reach the totality of rights. In this context, the full-time school should use its professionals to work in partnership with students and the local community to combat inequalities in an educational, cultural, and reflexive way.

In this sense, the municipality of Santos, SP, located on the coast of São Paulo, according to the Human Development Index (HDI), measured by the United Nations (UN) based on the levels of life expectancy, in the Gross Domestic Product (SEDUC), has an approximate population of 500 thousand inhabitants, being one of the first places in the ranking of the quality of life of the Brazilian municipalities.

On the other hand, in the educational sphere, SEDUC seeks to ensure the quality of services provided in the 81 units of the network, with approximately 20,000 students enrolled in 9-year primary education (Law No. 11,274, February 6, 2006), consolidating Santos as participant of the international group of educating cities.

It is worth to point out that the National Plan for Education (NPE) in force (2014–2024) provides as Goal 6, to provide full-time education in at least 50% of public schools, in order to attend at least 25% of basic education students.

Thus, with the need to comply with federal legislation, SEDUC instituted the Total School Program of extended hours in the municipality of Santos (Law no. 2394, of May 26, 2006), aiming to increase the time spent by students in the units of education and in educational centers, through pedagogical activities aimed at curriculum enrichment and the opening of schools on weekends for instructional and leisure activities to the community, encouraging voluntary work, integration with society at large, conservation and preservation of equipment, as well as the development of specific interdisciplinary projects, according to the particular realities of each region.

In the 16 educational centers distributed throughout the city, which make up the Extended Day Project of the Total School Program, the 4 hybrid schools (the nucleus operating within the education unit), and 7 full-time schools (including a special education school), children and young people participate in art; creative, playful activities; symbolic games and rules; sports and movement; and pedagogical guidance.

Therefore, in the city of Santos, from nursery school to the final years of elementary school, full-time education in the municipal public network is available, meeting the needs of a portion of the population that would not have access to private schools that, as it is known, are very costly.

Full-time education raises matters of spaces, times, and pedagogical proposals that promote the interaction of actions in the curriculum plans of the extended time, in which all are masters and apprentices in the process of teaching and learning.

Expanding the contact of children and young people with significant interdisciplinary and playful studies and experiences leads to a practice that establishes a dialogue between formal education (schooling) and nonformal education (culturalization), toward the quality of learning and the success of **citizenly** relations.

Amidst such complexity, there is a debt to the learning of emotions, play, skills, attitudes, and knowledge. It is necessary to work in an integral way all these human resources, seeking the empowerment of the apprentice, enabling him to solve situations/problems in his daily life and to glimpse possibilities of self-realization.

It is necessary to convert the school into a space of learning about life, not disciplines, involving knowledge, playfulness, values, and ethics.

> Students learn and assimilate theories, dispositions and behaviors not only as a consequence of the transmission and exchange of ideas and explicit knowledge in the official curriculum, but also and mainly as a consequence of the social interactions of all kinds that take place at school or in the classroom (Sacristán & Gómez, 1998, p.17).

The constant reflection about how integral education is processed in response to the demands of the human being in contemporary society is aimed at understanding and modifying the reality of schools to provide students with meaningful transformations that help build their learning completely. In this sense, Freire reaffirms:

> The more I improve myself as a professional, the more I systematize my experiences, the more I use the cultural patrimony, which is everyone's patrimony and to which all must serve, the more it increases my responsibility to men (Freire, 1981: 20).

Thus, based on what the Law of Guidelines and Basis (LDB) advocates in Articles 34 and 87, the Department of Education implemented the Total School Program with the objective of promoting the development of skills, abilities, and attitudes pertinent to today's society. Their guidelines are defined along these lines, insofar as they emphasize, in addition to academic subjects, non-cognitive contents and skills, with the possibility of experiences directed to the quality of life; to the exercise of solidarity, playing, and reading; and to the interpretation of the world in its constant transformation.

The outline of the program and its actions in the form of projects, "Extended Day," "To See the Band Play," and "Our School," made Santos be recognized as "Educating City" in October 2008 by the International Association of Educating Cities (IAEC) in Barcelona.

Thus, there is the intention to meet the principles of an educating city: to **recognize** the school as a community space and to perceive the city as a great educative space: wise, playful, and happy. Learning in the city, with the city and with the people, valuing the experiential learning, and prioritizing the formation

of values in complementation to the interdisciplinary projects are the suggested motto to the constitution of educational territories for the development of activities through the integration of the school spaces with public spaces.

Educating cities seek the educational rescue of their spaces, squares, streets, and parks, sharing dialogues among the different publics, because it extends the limits of the classroom, transforming the social place into learning communities, as Brandão (2012) reiterates. The educating city of Santos sees that its space is not only of teaching but of new and unexpected ways of coexisting among knowledge, ludicities, symbols, and meanings of life.

Integral Education, Ludicity, and Curriculum

Integral education as a public policy has no guarantee of being fulfilled; for this, it is necessary to overcome difficulties and challenges. It is common in the school space to exist an ambiguity and dichotomy between the school periods of permanence, where at one point there is teaching and at the other, because it is about activities with more playful proposals, there is playing. For many, where the "grade" does not exist, the educational process is not considered.

Expanding the journey from the perspective of integral education does not mean offering more time of the same schooling (Moll, 2012), leading to degradation of educational times and spaces. It means giving opportunities for new experiences, new ways of learning, and a dignified experience in the advancement of the rights of children and adolescents, supported by the time and space of education and play, which allow us to touch the essence of the human being in all its dimensions.

According to Calçada-Kohatsu (2017), based on, teaching based on interdisciplinary practice aims to train students with a broader worldview, able to articulate their studies in a contextualized way to their social reality and, if possible, to globalize, gathering knowledge for problem-solving and for the creation of solutions. It is a conception of the world based on the relation between the whole and the parts, which gives the necessary support to the idea of interdisciplinarity.

The right to play appears in several national and international laws, among them are the Universal Declaration of the Rights of the Child, the LDB, and the ECA.

To do so, playing with short stories, the imaginary allows the child and the adolescent to be able to leave the here and now and to experience a social, cultural, and historical nature, full of meanings, which varies according to the experiences of each being, articulating the diverse social contents, constructing their own worldview.

The tendency in teaching practice is to fill the times and spaces of the extended day with other activities, sometimes non-playful, delegating to the students more obligations, both to the elitist social layers and to the most socially vulnerable, preventing them from having playful experiences.

In the perspective of integral education, one of the strategies as a pedagogical tool to articulate the systematized knowledge is precisely playfulness: play is imitation, pretending, imagination, fantasy, creativity, and games of rules capable of

contextualizing the meaningful content, and, in this sense, also hearing and reading a story are precious moments for the development in which living reading happens, leading the child to an interiorization of their values.

According to Moll (2012), the school is in the process of change, breaking the bureaucratized and dehumanizing logic of daily school life, restricting curricular organization, and starting to recognize the possibilities of development of the diversities and human possibilities as indispensable articulators of the educational process in reciprocity with the knowledge and life stages of the learners.

Times and spaces should be seen as a whole and not as separate parts. According to the activities of the full-time school must be balanced, in order to offer the student the possibility of integral development. Knowledge must be joyful and playful, play is not an enemy of learning, and the child must be respected in relation to its cognitive development through play.

From the perspective of the integrating curriculum of childhoods – to consider the diversity of experiences of Brazilian children – the period that covers from kindergarten education to the initial years of elementary education, integral education needs, in planning and in action, to break with the mind-body dichotomy, guaranteeing the space to play and fantasy, valuing the playful learning that happens in the childhood, through reading, oral, and creative actions.

In this aspect, the extended daily journey as a public policy seeks to care for children in socially vulnerable environments, deprived of the right to play, seeking interdisciplinary actions in the construction of intervention projects in less favored communities. This process has as a goal to provide a curriculum where a democratic relationship with knowledge becomes essential. To the teachers, the focus is the development of the autonomous conscience toward an ethical position, committed with human dignity, in search of the reduction of social and regional inequalities. That is, a movement for a society based on justice, social equity, and the right of the critical citizen.

The new challenge is to transform cognitive and playful experiences into possibilities of human development, broadly and integrally, thus providing an education in which the student is free to discover a meaning for his or her own existence.

Among so many playful forms, fairy tales can be a suggestion for teachers to use as an instrument in the learning process of formal and nonformal school content. Storytelling is a component of the human dimension, and as the child hears or reads these narratives that are transmitted over the centuries, orally, they promote the integration of knowledge and the reorganization of time, space, materials, and experiences that contemplate playing, because they dialogue with different cultures and different contexts throughout the history of the humankind.

As the child listens to a short story, it projects its feelings about the characters, expressing and showing them through different languages and dimensions, reorganizing an inner world, expanding temporality, and allowing the past to emerge into the present and extrapolate into the future, so that a relation between one moment and another becomes possible. The characters and scenarios come to life, they suffer, they face obstacles, they grow, they become victorious, and they perpetuate ancient habits and customs, enabling playful experiences which are essential in the conduct and construction of the integral being.

The fairy tales give the child the respect for their development, in the encounter with themselves in which they are able to face, through the imaginary, their complex psychological problems, often experiencing their fears, losses, and everyday conflicting situations.

The literature of tales transmitted orally through time and through significant research efforts has been considered by several areas of scientific knowledge. The folktales were recorded and organized by literates dedicated to the preservation of this universal oral content, and for that, they searched for previous scholars or listened to the storytellers of the place of origin, such as Giambattista Basile, Italy, about 1600, the book *Tales of the Tales* or *Pentameron* – his most famous work; Charles Perrault, in France in 1697, published *Tales of My Mother Goose*; Jacob Ludwig Karl Grimm and Wilhelm Karl Grimm, Germany, published the complete collection *Tales and Legends of the Grimm Brothers*, 1819; and Hans Christian Andersen (1805–1875), born in Denmark, became a traveler and storyteller, and with this "gift" he reworked popular content creating new stories, projecting in his works, his romantic ideals, and his human generosity.

One could also mention researchers such as Leite de Vasconcelos, Amadeu Amaral, Herskovits, Câmara Cascudo, Nabham, and Coelho concerned about the possible loss of precious material that had been transmitted orally from generation to generation; they endeavored to compile it by listening to the local storytellers in order to record everything in writing.

Fairy tales have been transmigrated through time with innumerable reinventions, but not losing the universality of the theme. The transformations passed by different spaces and times and the different narratives loaded with the contents, needs, and customs of a given people are woven with plots that report conflicting situations between the characters involving unilateral power, violence, passions, virtues, and moral situations that have guaranteed their acceptance in different places and times.

In order to clarify the concern and seriousness of the various researchers as literates, psychoanalysts, historians, folklorists, and philologists, among others, we highlight an excerpt from a letter written on July 3, 1819, by the Grimm brothers in Kassel (s.d).

> When, after a gale or other cataclysm sent by the sky, a whole harvest was destroyed, we rejoice to see a little corner in the bushes, where some stalks managed to stand. If, later on, the sun is favorable to them, they grow lonely, unnoticed. No early strife cuts them into the deposits, and in the summer when they mature and appear full, poor hands seek them and, placed next to each other, are carefully tied and more prized than whole bundles. Taken home are, during the winter, the only food and, perhaps, the only seeds for the future.
>
> That was what it seemed to us, when we noticed that there was nothing left of anything that flourished in other eras, to the point of almost all recollection being lost, except among the common folk , some songs, a few books and legends, and these innocent household tales. The fireplaces, the kitchen stove, the attic stairs, the parties still alive, the cattle tracks and the woods in their calmness, but above all the pure imagination, were the shrubs, the fences that guaranteed them and transmitted them from generation to generation. It was time, surely, to register such legends, for those who were to keep them were becoming rarer and rarer. Of course, those who still know them repeat them, because men die, and they do not. This custom, however, decreases day by day ... Where it still lives in such a way, it lives that

> no one reflects whether the tales are good or bad. Everyone knows and loves them, because they have been so transmitted, and all rejoice with them, without noticing the reason. It is so wonderful the living custom ... We do not want to praise such legends or defend them ... Simple existence is sufficient to protect them. (excerpt from the letter of the Grimm brothers in Kassel, July 3, 1819)

This letter, written by the Grimm brothers, aimed at sensitizing Achim Von Amim, one of those responsible for the publication of these short stories, which at that time were definitely not for children but were told to several listeners and most of the time were used, even though veiled, with politico-social intentions or cultural resistance.

According to Carramillo-Going (2000), many peoples used histories in an attempt to mythically explain the migration of hunting animals or some natural phenomenon that they could not uncover scientifically, as well as the fact that the tales were passed on again and again orally by the lower rural strata of feudal society, projecting the need to distance themselves from the social oppression of the time and desiring an experience of more familiar relations.

For Naban (1990), tales are the heritage of life that remains in the memory of the people. The real and the imaginary weave a web of knowledge of oral tradition that welcomes history, religions, customs, ludicity, and literature. Carramillo-Going (2000) quotes Tierno Bokar, a traditionalist from Mali, when he states that "[...] writing is one thing, knowledge is another. Writing is the photograph of knowledge, but not knowledge itself. Knowledge is a light that exists in man. The inheritance of all that our ancestors have come to know and that is latent in everything they have transmitted to us."

In this sense, the oral testimony transmitted through the ages, from parents to children, has no lesser value than writing, because it is the loyalty of individual memory and the value of man and his truth with society. Culture, also understood as fruit of the inherited tradition, was maintained for many centuries basically by oral traditions. One of the vehicles most used was the popular narrative, enabling man to construct real and fictitious images in an exciting rethinking about self and others, as well as about our role in society.

In this sense, the public policy of increasing the length of time spent in school, from the perspective of integral education, the integrated curriculum, and the planning of the learning opportunities offered by the experience of the play, contributes to the development of children and adolescents in the period they are in school. Through fairy tales, they relate to aspects of their own personality and, through the imaginary, project fantasies, products of mental constructions of the unconscious. Working with this symbolic language, loaded with millennial contents, can comfort them in the adversities that are presented to them, with possible solutions, and give them hope for better days. These narratives can speak to them more than any other language and are perhaps one of the few that they can understand and reflect upon themselves at this stage of life.

The municipal education network of Santos covers innovative projects and programs referenced in Brazil and worldwide, such as the "Total School" Program, full-time education, an example for many Brazilian cities, and the recent Law No.

3.371, dated July 11, 2017, which establishes the public policy of restorative justice, based on the logic of mediation and conflict resolution through dialogue between the parties involved and respect for differences, contributing to the culture of peace within schools and the community.

In the students' daily life, telling tales such as the *One Thousand and One Nights* or the versions of the Grimm brothers, followed by group discussion and judgment of the characters' actions so that they can think symbolically about their own decisions when facing of the conflicts presented in the narratives, can contribute to a culture of peace.

Narratives present contents of injustice, expiatory punishments, unilateral respects, as well as decisions about events that are often taken by one subject alone in a story without others being able to participate. There, justice remains arbitrarily in the hands of one, and the order is restored by revenge: the guilty receives, by immanent justice, a punishment similar to their crime or a witchcraft, or even a greater king avenges the hero, killing the villain of history or transforming it into an object or animal.

Therefore, the discussion about the decisions made by the characters collaborates with the thinking of the child and the adolescent in relation to violent actions among the members of the group.

According to Piaget (1973), when there is a possibility of dialogue between peers, the teacher promotes, in addition to the exchanges of thought based on the oral transmission of truths presented by the colleagues, the exchange by reciprocity and effective cooperation, as opposed to the simple submission of the thought of coercion by a school official.

In this sense, the logic of the child, as a system of assortments, will act in situations of cooperation of interindividual operations, meaning that there will be operative exchanges with other individuals and, on the other hand, the de-centration of individual logic, joining their own solutions to the problems presented by the opinion of peers.

The formal logic in the subject has three conditions: (a) common scale of values, (b) conservation, and (c) reciprocity. In the absence of one of them, the conditions for cooperation between the partners are not present. It is noted that cooperation, defined by the law of equilibrium as opposed to egocentrism, and oppression differ from simple exchange, since spontaneous exchange can lead to individual or group failure. The notion of cooperation implies de-centration in relation to moral intellectual egocentrism and liberation from social constraints.

Furthermore, the author states that cooperation diverges from simple exchange (this freedom is illusory), since it implies a system of norms. True cooperation is fragile and rare "[...] in the social state, for it is divided between interests and submissions, just as reason remains so fragile and so rare in relation to subjective illusions and the weights of traditions" (Piaget, 1973, p. 111).

In fairy tales, good is clearly differentiated from evil, and although the outcome is the triumph of good over evil by moral values, mutual respect for the happy ending of heroes, the beginning of the narrative, most often, presents centralized power in a character who acts and judges by coercion and unilateral respect and opts for expiatory punishments. This power is usually represented by a witch queen, a

genius, an old man, and a sorceress. With the happy ending and confrontation of the hero's tests of confrontation designated by the villain, the child is able to face all their fears, insecurities, and shortcomings, through the success of the hero.

The unconscious follows the story, creating projections, defense mechanisms, and interpretations of the facts. Listening with a contextualization, as a whole, with beginning, middle, and end, with a logical but symbolic sense, will be a facilitating process for the child to organize his/her inner chaos.

Policies like these are the ones that encourage action in the perspective of integral education that fosters the biopsychosocial development of students.

Over time, knowledge has always been the cause of social inequalities. With that in mind, a folkloric tale was chosen to develop a reflection on the teaching profession, the role of the teacher in the distribution of knowledge, on the issues of violence, and on the promotion of mutual respect among the child and youth population.

What is my role as an educator, immersed in an ethical, political, and epistemic human education system? For the interpretation of the tale were selected and adapted excerpts from the narrative *The six servants of the prince* of the Grimm and + Grimm (n.d) version.

The Six Servants of the Prince: The Challenges of Teachers

In very remote times, there was an old queen who was a sorceress and her daughter was the most beautiful creature in the world. The old queen sole concern was to attract men to harm them; she informed them that if they wished to marry her daughter, they should first decipher a divination; if they did not, they would die. Many young men risked themselves, but as no one succeeded, without the slightest mercy, she had their heads cut off.

The story begins with an alert represented by the old queen on the dangers of innocence in judging the skills, as teachers at the beginning of the professional life. The daughter, the most beautiful creature in the world, can represent the quest for perfection during the process of teacher training without straining. The passionate prince in the pursuit of the ideal, who will die if he does not reach it, means an ideal to be pursued, in which a fantasy that becomes the basis of desire is elaborated. But beware of the illusion of knowledge, because as Cortella warns us (2010), one must be cautious when one does not have humility, to know what one does not know, and when one pretends to know.

A prince, hearing of the princess's beauty, said to the king, "My father, I want the princess's hand. - Never! answered the king; – If you go there, you will go straight to death. The young man fell severely ill for seven years; Then the king gave in, and the young man got up well and set out.

The prince is not frightened by the witch queen who can represent the society already unveiled. The king represents wisdom, who tries to warn him about pretending to have knowledge and be ready to face the unknown. Symbolically, he spends 7 years in the process of interior construction to be able to decentralize self-centered

thinking about knowledge and to develop the capacity for reflection to recognize virtue in the other one, know the obstacles, and decide to face them while knowing the risks of the profession. In this sense, the king warns him about the illusion of the certainty of winning, the certainty of being ready for the profession in a competitive, cruel world that seduces the unknown and hurts the naive trader who does not recognize his own inability to deal with needs and political and social consequences of life. One loses its head. This realization of the hero granted by the king can mean the recognition of the guiding master for the beginning of the teacher's journey, which, when entering into its internal searches, is strengthened by the meeting of its potentialities hitherto unknown and banished by society, represented by the six abandoned servants along the way. The hero enters and walks through the forest, telling us that he begins his inner journey, creating a new state, in which he needs to find internal forces, represented by the six servants who will help him in his goal of achieving the ideal.

On his horse he sees a mountain, but it was the belly of a man lying down. The Stout One got up and said, "If you need a servant, take me to your service. "What am I going to do with such a clumsy man?" "If I fully stretch myself, I'm three thousand times fatter still." Then perhaps you can help me; come with me. It was not long before they found an individual lying on the ground, his ear pressed against the grass. - What are you doing there? "I listen to what is going on in the world, because nothing escapes my ear. "Tell me, then, what do you hear in that old queen's court?" "I hear the hissing of the sword cutting the head of an unfortunate suitor. The prince said, "You may be useful to me, come with me." Further along, they saw two feet very long legs laying on the floor as far as their eyes could see. After walking a lot, they saw a trunk and finally the head. How tall you are! - If I stand straight, I am taller than the highest mountain in the world. "Come," said the prince. A short time later they found someone sitting blindfolded. The prince asked him, "Do you suffer from sight, that you cannot stand the light?" "I cannot remove the blindfold, for such sharpness have my eyes, that they tear down anything on which they land. - Come with me. And all together they kept walking. Further on, they found a man in the blazing sun, trembling with cold. "How could you be so cold, with such a hot sun?" asked the prince. - I am of a nature different from that of others; the more the heat, the colder I feel, and the ice penetrates my bone marrow - if you want to serve me, follow me. They went on together, and beyond, they saw a man who was panting heavily and looked out over the mountains and woods. Intrigued, the prince asked him, "What is it that you are watching with so much interest?" "My sight is so acute that it reaches beyond mountains and valleys, and can see what is going on in the world.

The six servants represent the abilities of the group in coping with the obstacles and adversities imposed in the daily work of school in the pursuit of their ideal to achieve perfection. Knowing one's own limitations and believing that one can count on the other's help can give strength to overcome the obstacles in life. The group walking through the forest represents a process of self-knowledge of construction. Becoming aware of their potentialities, like Foresight, means knowing how to look and discover new possibilities; the Listener represents knowing how to listen and to select what to listen that can help them achieve the ideal, through love; Stout One

stands for swallowing and digesting immense problems without leaving a single crumb, without solving them. Long means to see far, to see ahead of time, the distant dangers. Frosty could be the majoring equilibration and moral autonomy (Piaget, 1994), to understand all economic, social, and political difficulties and have the wisdom and the balance to face each situation. The Sharp Eyes has the courage to select and opt for an ideal, removing from its front what deceive and mislead us. In education there is no neutrality. Freedom of choice as teaching practices. Life choices imply the rationale for existentialism: conscience, freedom, will, responsibility, and consequence.

So, accompanied by the six servants, the prince arrived, introduced himself and declared, "If you grant me the hand of your daughter, I will do whatever you impose on me."

T*he witch-queen rejoiced that he had fallen into her clutches. "Three times I will give you a contract; if at all times you carry on as you wish, you will be lord and husband of my daughter. - What's the first one? "I want you to bring me the ring I dropped at the bottom of the Red Sea." The prince went to the servants and said to them: "The first task is not easy. Advise me what to do. Then, Foresight went to look into the depths of the Sea and then said:*

"It's at the bottom, stuck on the edge of a rock. Tall said, "I could fish you if I could see you." Stout One One lay with his mouth in the water; he drank all the water from the sea, leaving it as dry as a meadow. Tall bend down and picked up the ring. The prince ran to hand him over to the queen. She was astonished; Then, she said, "Yes, that's the ring."

This story also warns us about leadership in the school space. The queen is sure of victory, an authoritative leader, that is, the unilateral authoritarian power of the system, forcing the prince to execute a task that is impossible for him, to find a ring on the bottom of the ocean. This ring represents the contract established by the profession, the ethical commitment. A leader has to know how to work in a team. It is not an easy task, that is why leadership often turns into authoritarian power, subduing the other, into the temptation to be superior. The prince is humble and asks for advice from others in the task of dealing with the difficulties of the profession. They needed several people to accomplish the task, having vision beyond the horizon through Tall One to reach the ring, seeing beyond the ploys of exclusion in the learning process, as well as acting as the Stout One does, that is, swallowing many waters to be able to recognize within himself what he wants for himself and his students and thus reaching the ring that represents an alliance that seals the contract established by the group in search of a common good, an alliance that seals the first test: the proof of ethics and professionalism.

You did well the first task, now you have the second. In front of my castle there are three hundred oxen grazing, all very fat; you must eat them all, including the hide, the horns, and the bones. And in the cellar there are three hundred barrels of wine; You have to drink everything. If there is one left over from an ox or a drop of wine, you will lose your beautiful head. The prince asked, "May I invite some diners?" The old woman smiled wryly and said, "You can invite only one, not one more." He invited Stout One, he ate the three hundred oxen, drank all the wine even by the barrels. The second venture was complete.

The second test, the Stout One swallowing something so heavy, symbolizes the moment that the group had to go through a whirlwind of challenges, choosing paths. They had to digest the barriers and the limitations, re-signify all the contents and transform them into new knowledge and possibilities, and, with new strategies, won the second task. A proof of the affirmation of knowledge, partnership, eating and drinking together. A proof of the union of the group.

You have to perform the third. "Tonight," she said, "I'll take my daughter to your room." You have to embrace it; but be careful not to fall asleep while you are holding each other. I will arrive at midnight sharp; if she is not in your arms, you are lost. This endeavor is very easy; however, he summoned the servants and explained to them the demand of the old woman, saying, "One must be prudent; stay at the door and pay close attention so that the princess does not leave the room. At dusk, the old woman arrived with her daughter. Tall lay down in a circle around them and the Stout One stood in front of the door. So the two remained hugging, and the girl did not utter a word. He was looking at her, passionate and happy. This lasted until eleven o'clock; then the old woman cast a hex on them all, causing them to sleep; immediately the girl disappeared. They slept until midnight minus a quarter, when the spell's effect ceased, and they all woke up. Everyone moaned with sadness but Fine Ear said: - Shut up! I want to hear and exclaimed, "She's sitting on a rock three hundred hours from here, and she's crying her fate." Tall, if you stretch yourself, two steps will get you there. - but Sharp Eyes you must accompany me to destroy the rock. He carried the man blindfolded, and in a flash of lightning found himself before the enchanted rock. Immediately Tall drew the blindfold from his companion's eyes, and he placed them on the rock and broke it into a thousand pieces. He took the princess in his arms, and in a moment took her to the castle. Before the midnight twelve o'clock rang out, they were all in the castle, glad and happy. The queen had nothing to say and she was forced to give him her daughter's hand. But she whispered in hers ear: "What a humiliation for you, having to obey an ordinary person! And not being able to choose a husband worthy of you!

The third test is apparently simpler, the proof of love. But often we are betrayed by our impulses or certainties, and we only become aware in final moments. The previous predictability, the step-by-step construction of the process cannot be destroyed by a naive, magical search. One may think that one is close and that they attend to the needs of the students, but isolated, we often contribute to the system in the reproduction of the same; in the maintenance of inequalities; in the disrespect to the child, wrapped in the production of school failure; and in a continuous movement of symbolic violence (Bourdieu & Passeron, 1982) and naive professionals useful for the service of the maintenance of power.

According to Severino (2017), on the one hand, man needs the social group to ensure that he becomes a humanized being, and on the other hand, society resists the autonomy and freedom that guarantee his identity; in this sense there is a contradiction between development of the autonomy of being and the oppression of power over the subject.

Listener locates perfection, which represents the sensitivity of knowing how to listen to what others do not listen to. To have a fine ear is to know how to listen

distantly, to know what is happening far away, and at the same time to "hear" the inner side. Tall reaches the mountain and knows how to solve the problem; it means that the group needs moments with great energy and confidence in the decision of the steps it will take, with its peers, to compensate for the naivety or excess of self-confidence in the professional responsibility along the path that will be crossed with the students. Sharp Eyes breaks the obstacles, the weight, and the dichotomized school, between knowledge and play, between knowledge and happiness.

It is necessary to rethink the role of the teacher as a reproducer of symbolic violence and to free them for critical thinking, the construction of an interdisciplinary work, in the attempt to escape the solitude of the mountain determined by the witch society. The group of teachers anchored in the joint work, in which knowledge includes the playful, in the spaces and times of integral education. An unbiased look that respects as equal and necessary all the partners who comprise this job.

As Fazenda (1996) affirms, interdisciplinarity can be understood as an act of exchange, of reciprocity between disciplines or sciences or, rather, of areas of knowledge. Interdisciplinarity would have been the answer insofar as the great problems of the time could not be solved by a single discipline or area of knowledge. The school is structured in a more cohesive way, revitalizing and re-signifying the pedagogical activities in the child's time in school and valuing all the curricular components and their participants.

In her heart, the proud princess revolted and was filled with anger; then she premeditated a great revenge. The next day she ordered three hundred carts of firewood to be packed, telling the prince that although he had done all three, she would only marry him if he stood in the middle of that firewood and was able to resist the fire. "We've all done something; now it's up to Frosty to do what he's got. The flames went up into the sky for three days, "I've never been so cold in my life!" - he said. "If this fire lasted a little longer, I would end up dying cold.

The beautiful Princess was forced to marry the young stranger. On the way to the church, the old woman sent the army to her, with orders to tear down those who came to the front and bring her daughter back. But the Listener, who had listened to this secret order of the old woman, said to the Stout One, "What shall we do?" He vomited behind the bride's carriage the water of the sea which he had swallowed, forming a lake, where the soldiers died drowned. When she heard this, the sorceress sent out her knapsacks, but the Listener heard the command, and Sharp Eyes threw off the blindfold and struck down all the enemies. The bridegrooms, then, received the nuptial blessing in the church, the servants bid them farewell. Before the castle, there was a village and there was a pig keeper watching over the staff. When they got there, the prince said to the princess, "Do you know who I am?" I am not a prince, but a keeper of swine; The one who is there is my father. We should help him at work and care for his pigs. In the morning, when the princess awoke, she found nothing to wear; then the hostess gave her an old dress and a pair of spoiled wool socks. She became a keeper along with her husband, but she thought, "Well, I deserved all this because of my pride and presumption!" At the end of the eight days some strangers appeared and asked her if she knew who her husband was. "Come with us, let us go to where your husband is, and take her to the castle." When she

entered the hall of honor, she found her husband richly but she did not recognize him until the prince, taking her in his arms and kissing her, said to her, "I suffered greatly for your sake, so you had to suffer a little for me." They prepared a great wedding party, and whoever told this story wished he had been there.

In the end, the last test for the princess is that of humility; the teacher has to know how to distribute the art of knowing and loving. The conscious teacher of the art of knowing no longer considers himself as belonging to a certain social class but as knowledge propagator for everyone. The tale conveys the message that through the hero's inner journey and daily construction, teachers can more consciously confront their limits and the political and social issues surrounding education.

Working through the interdisciplinary process with fairy tales as a tool that enables integral education is to bring to light what exists in man, is to rescue in a symbolic and playful way the cultural heritage of all that society has built, and is to enable the child the projection of their own fantasies, the result of mental constructions of the unconscious. This process prepares you for life and for the world, with a social commitment to overcome differences and promote equity. Thus, students are offered the possibility of developing multiple intelligences, and especially emotional intelligence, because the student is considered as an integral being when given the opportunity to live in a group, valuing the simple things of life.

Integral education, while global, recognizes that each student has the condition to find their identity, meaning, and purpose in life while connected to the community, nature, and values as playfulness, peace, solidarity, love, happiness, and gratitude for life.

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Chapter 7
Play in Public Urban Contexts in Brazil

Paula Sanders Pereira Pinto

Introduction

Playing is a phenomenon typical of children. It is only found in species that have a long childhood, protected immaturity, and a great learning ability. Among human beings this behavior comes from a trajectory of growing complexity, with an increase in childhood length due to the need to learn more to adapt to the environment (Pellegrini & Smith, 1998). Studies highlight the importance of playing for different dimensions of a child's development, such as cognition, language, affectivity, motivation, and social interaction (Johnson, Christie, & Yawkey, 1999; Vigotski, 1966/2000; Hansen, Macarini, Martins, Wanderlind, & Vieira, 2007).

Studying the environment in which the plays occur is of key importance to understand the phenomenon of playing. Among the play spaces, we can mention the urban public spaces. Studies indicate that the use of public spaces is vital for the development of the child since it fulfills different functions such as meeting friends, hanging out, practicing sports, contemplating the nature, and playing, among others (Oliveira, 2004), without the prediction of any sort of inequality. Those are favorable contexts for the intense exploration of the environment, discovery of challenges, participation in group plays, and much fun. The child makes use of such spaces as far as they promote well-being, cultural richness, and social integration (Cotrim, Fiaes, Marques, & Bichara, 2009).

The engagement of the child with space goes from the private domain toward the public domain, with a process marked by successive stages. According to (Cardoso & Daroda, 2011), the stages include the participation in the following physical spaces: (1) house, (2) space immediately outside the house, (3) neighborhood, and (4) the city as a whole. It is in the public domain that the child starts a public life, first contacting strangers, becoming familiarized with risks,

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learning to deal with the adversities and experiences, and developing notions of citizenship and civility (Cardoso & Daroda, 2011).

Despite the decrease in frequency when compared to four or five decades ago, it is still possible to see children playing spontaneously in streets, parks, and public playgrounds of cities. These behaviors in Brazil happen mainly in neighborhoods of low socioeconomic status, where houses are more common than buildings and the internal spaces of the houses are limited or with few opportunities to have fun. In this country, due to the socioeconomic differences of the population, children are found occupying public spaces in different ways. But in which public spaces do children play? Which plays are more common in such contexts? These questions and other relevant aspects regarding this subject are problematized in this chapter through the presentation of widely accepted theories and research studies about playing, focusing on empirical studies about how children play in urban public spaces in Brazil, thus aiming to help understand this subject.

Where Do Children Play?

In the Brazilian territory, children can be observed playing in different urban public spaces. Some of these places can be considered safer for the presence of children, such as squares, parks, and soccer fields, while others are less safe, such as streets, alleys, and avenues due to the absence or presence of vehicle circulation. Such spaces can yet be classified as planned or unplanned for children. Planned spaces present an adequate structure for leisure, sports, and/or plays, with the presence of playgrounds or spaces for games, adventure practices, and fun, differently from unplanned spaces that lack structures for children. However, it is noticeable that children play in planned and unplanned places, taking advantage and making use of places that are many times considered by the adults as inadequate for children.

Cotrim et al. (2009) recorded 21 episodes of plays occurring in public spaces of Salvador-BA-Brazil. Among these spaces, the most recorded ones were flower beds in large central avenues of the city (10 records), followed by streets (4) in places very close to the circulation of vehicles. Bichara, Modesto, França, Medeiros, and Cotrim (2011), in a study that was also conducted in Salvador with 39 children between the age of 6 and 10, considered of a low and medium socioeconomic status, identified that only children of low socioeconomic status mentioned the streets as an optional space for playing, corroborating the study of Arruda and Muller (2010a) that observed children of a neighborhood considered poor and a neighborhood considered rich in the city of Maringá-PR-Brazil. The researchers determined that only the children from the neighborhood considered poor play in the streets, pavements, and empty lots. Other children were not found in the neighborhood's public spaces.

The street can be understood as *the space that exists between the houses for the passage of people* (Oliveira, 2004, p. 74), not as a passage only through the neighborhood but also toward adulthood, as the child matures with lived experiences (Cotrim & Bichara, 2013). In the street groups, the children organize themselves according to their criteria, without so many impositions from the adults, making the

space more adequate to less hierarchical friendship (Silva, Pontes, da Silva, Magalhães, & Bichara, 2006), where children of different age and social, economic, and cultural statuses play together.

We highlight here that in order to play with autonomy in the streets, the child needs an environment that provides independence, as well as a minimum age that allows freedom of movement and space use. Cultural and socioeconomic factors affect this decision. Some Brazilian families consider that the child needs to be at least 10 years old to move freely through the streets (Araújo, 2016), nevertheless with restrictions due to urban violence. Until about five decades ago in Brazil, the streets were considered a place for children to play, and many children had free access to them. According to Araújo (2016), the famous street plays in the streets of big Brazilian cities, such as São Paulo, which were typical of the decades of 1950, 1960, and 1970, were slowly pulled to controlled environments, such as schools. The streets were places that allowed the coexistence of children with great social differences regarding religious beliefs and ethnic, economic, and cultural origins. According to Oliveira (2004) and Araújo (2016), the coexistence with diversity helped them to develop a greater respect and understanding toward differences and helped in their abilities of socialization and autonomy, thus decreasing social violence.

For several children, it was in the streets that they found their friends' house, the empty lots, the soccer field, the sun, the rain, the trees, the bakery, and the bar, among other elements of the daily life in an urban zone. There were also other reference streets, such as the grandmother's street, the school's street, or the friends' street. The more central street, or the one where most of the friend lived, was chosen for them to play in. The steepest street was used for skateboarding or riding the bicycle. The floor of earth allowed them to play and fall without hurting themselves too much. Hence, the children made use of their neighborhood and established a mental map of the place, with reference points that they were able to locate in space (Oliveira, 2004).

Currently, with the increase in the verticalization of cities and the emergence of vertical and horizontal gated communities, which started in the 1970s in Brazil, the urban public spaces became passageways, a place that people rarely use to meet, talk, rest, make exchanges with nature, or play. The leisure activities in external public spaces that were once performed in squares, parks, or even in the streets were transferred to shopping malls, which became an alternative for all age groups, or areas of common use in the residences (Lima, 2007; Quadros, 2008), which include different leisure spaces depending on the socioeconomic status of the constructions. In the previously cited study by Bichara et al. (2011), the researchers identified that by playing outdoors the children that lived in buildings of medium socioeconomic status indicated the playground as the most frequent place to play when they were not playing at home.

The behavior of playing in the streets has been harshly decreasing in medium-sized and big cities due to the risks of car accidents, robbery, theft, violence, and drug use encouragement, among others. Public spaces and open areas are rarely used, and outdoor spaces are considered insecure and violent. This withdrawing of the children from the public space also represents a need to protect them, since

childhood is considered the period of highest vulnerability (Cardoso & Daroda, 2011; Karsten & Vliet, 2006).

Children have been showing much less autonomy to attend public spaces freely, being usually under the supervision of their parents in such contexts, and, therefore, public spaces started to lose their function as a children's domain. The increase in parent supervision and the lack of autonomy by the children currently happen in all socioeconomic levels, since the increase of violence and activities in the cities is a worldwide phenomenon. However, this decrease in playing in the streets is usually more intense among children of higher socioeconomic status (Karsten & Vliet, 2006).

In a research study conducted in Rio de Janeiro-RJ-Brazil, Bittencourt (2010) investigated ten groups of six children each, composed by girls and boys of medium-high and low socioeconomic status that lived in a noble area and in a poor community, respectively. The author aimed to understand how the children saw their neighborhood and the other neighborhood with socioeconomic characteristics that were opposite to their own by constructing an image panel with drawings and collages. The results pointed to an emptier perception of their neighborhood by economically favored children, who showed not to know the street areas for social interactions and plays, while children of low socioeconomic status had a broader experience in their neighborhood, since they circulated in it, taking the bus and walking. Such children had a more playful and creative appropriation of public spaces, recognizing the unfavorable conditions of their urban lives.

In 2017, Pinto and Bichara published the results of a research study conducted with 28 children aged between 7 and 11 years that lived in different neighborhoods of Salvador-BA-Brazil. The children reported playing in urban public areas, such as parks, squares, soccer fields, streets, slopes, and alleys, with a preference for places near their homes. However, there was a difference between children living in gated communities and children living in houses of working-class neighborhoods. The first visited urban public areas much less frequently and had no knowledge about the route followed to reach the parks and squares of the city that they had already visited. On the other hand, the children from neighborhoods of low socioeconomic status had a great knowledge about the streets of their neighborhoods and the routes to reach closest squares and parks.

Due to the inadequacy of public spaces for children in the urban zone or even the lack of options of public leisure places that provide safety, as mentioned by Araújo (2016) while interviewing 20 families of Vitória da Conquista-BA-Brazil, there was an increase in the number of children that often play indoors, with the freedom to transform spaces of their homes, such as the living room and corridors, into leisure areas. Elsey (2004) problematizes that currently children are spatially restricted to environments that are designed to them, such as schools, playgrounds, or inside their houses, merely inhabiting spaces inside a world built by adults.

Public playgrounds appeared in Brazil in 1935, first in São Paulo, by adopting the North American project Reform Park with changes to adequate them to the profile of the Brazilian population in order to obtain a greater social impact. With this purpose, the playgrounds were built in squares with a good location in the neighborhoods, having a strong emotional and civic appeal and offering playground

equipment, game fields, swimming pools, and utilitarian landscape. The activities were organized and constantly supervised by professionals of recreation and social hygiene. These spaces aimed to reach mainly the less favored population and had recreation and assistance activities (Arantes, Cruz, Hora, & Cardoso, 2005; Niemeyer, 2005).

Gradually, the number of playgrounds increased and spread to other states and cities of Brazil, such as Campinas, Ribeirão Preto, Distrito Federal, Porto Alegre, Niterói, Minas Gerais, Manaus, and Bahia (Arantes et al., 2005). Over the years, new needs for children in urban areas were perceived, and the playgrounds were modified. From 1956 on, the proposed model for playgrounds started to lose importance with the emergence of municipal primary schools, and, in 1972, they ceased to serve schoolchildren and became responsible solely for preschool children. At this moment the welfare and medical assistance and the recreational character were abandoned, and the school started to favor a teaching practice that would prepare the child for literacy, assuming a more pedagogical character. Currently, the playgrounds became Municipal Schools of Early Childhood Education and, following the European and North American tendency, ended up creating a new version of playgrounds, which are the current models found in open public spaces in Brazil (Arantes et al., 2005; Niemeyer, 2002).

Current playgrounds are usually built with wood, metal, and plastic equipment and can be classified into three types: (1) traditional playgrounds, (2) creative/contemporary playgrounds, and (3) adventure playgrounds (Johnson et al., 1999). Traditional playgrounds consist of open areas, covered with earth, asphalt, or concrete. Its location is isolated and contains equipment such as hanging bars, swings, slides, seesaws, and carousel. They are the most common playgrounds in the Americas and started to be built at the beginning of the twentieth century. Their advantage is that they require little maintenance, and their main disadvantage is that they only stimulate global motricity, becoming little attractive to children, who rarely use them or do it only for short periods that do not stimulate social interaction. Such equipment is also usually dangerous for children because of their metallic composition or their working mechanism.

The creative playgrounds, also known as contemporary playgrounds, were developed to provide children with an environment containing a greater variability of stimuli for playing. They are made of wood or plastic, with some metals selected to hold the pieces. The equipment usually includes climbing platforms, ladders, nets, hanging bars, ring grips, closed places for dramatic games, wide swings, slides, and traditional swings. The parts of this equipment are not isolated; they form a single structure and may be found in three surfaces: (1) hard surfaces of concrete or asphalt for the use of ride-on vehicles, (2) soft surfaces such as sand or sawdust under and around the equipment; or (3) lawn for the children to sit or play. The adventure playgrounds, on the other hand, use a natural environment, with disposable material in their equipment. The structures are temporary, and the children build, destroy, and reconstruct their own structure. Many different playing activities are allowed (Johnson et al., 1999).

According to (Johnson et al., 1999) the structure of a playground must contain:

1. An adequate surface that is safe and allows different kinds of plays.
2. Safety of the place.
3. Building material that is adequate for children.
4. Supervision of an adult to provide security.
5. Adaptations to children with special needs: children with any difficulty of physical accessibility must have the same opportunities as other children.
6. Physical space and equipment that promote diverse playing activities.

Research studies point to the risk of accidents that playgrounds and their toys may cause if they are not properly structured, (Harada, Pedreira, & Andreotti, 2003; Herrington & Nicholls, 2007), such as falls caused by equipment intended to develop agility or collisions due to the slides, inappropriate surfaces, or yet bad conservation. Such situations could be avoided if some simple preventive measures were taken, such as the installation of rubber surfaces under or around the equipment (Harada et al., 2003) or a more constant supervision by adults.

Although there are security norms for toys and equipment in playgrounds in Brazil (ABNT, 1999), in practice it is noticeable that the community does not respect or does not know such norms. A study conducted in eight playgrounds of kindergarten schools in Fortaleza-CE-Brazil verified that all had changes in some toys, such as protruding and accessible screws (57.1%) and loose connections (71.4%); none of the slides had the minimum recommended height of the lateral parts; only 33.3% of the kindergartens had swings with the adequate distance between the seats, and 62.5% of the floors in the playgrounds were composed of sand and 25% of drainage concrete (Morais, Tavares, Dodt, Martins, & Ximenes, 2012).

The supervision of adults is a factor that assists in the safety of children in playgrounds, generating a lower frequency of accidents. However, it is worth considering that this behavior may remove one of the playground's features, which is the children's domain (Karsten & Vliet, 2006). A research study by Cotrim and Bichara (2013) in playgrounds of Salvador-BA-Brazil verified that the adults not only accompanied the children but also helped in the plays, pushing them in the swings or putting strength on the seesaw. Such intervention often interfered with the interaction between the children.

What Do They Play?

Brazilian research studies indicate that children play differently in areas that are planned and unplanned to them. In this analysis we will consider the classification of Moraes and Otta (2003) that identified at least six types of play: (1) physical activity, (2) social contingency, (3) construction, (4) rough-and-tumble, (5) with rules, and (6) pretend, among others. The plays might fit more than one category. Physical activities are plays where the children exercise a set of behaviors and

spatial and causal relationships and learn the function and strength of the objects that they handle. Examples include running, rolling tires, bouncing a ball, jumping rope, riding a bicycle, and skateboarding, among others. Social contingency includes plays in which there is a scheme of social relay apparently motivated and reinforced by the pleasure associated with the capacity to produce contingent responses on others and to respond contingently to the others, such as in hide-and-seek, tag, mimicking, and tickling, to name a few. Construction is characterized by the combination or modification of toys to generate a new product, such as playing with building blocks. Rough-and-tumble plays include behaviors of fight, pursue, or escape. The laughing distinguishes them from real fights. In plays with rules, there is a determination of roles and representation of predetermined scenes, such as in soccer games, shooting, seven stones, and domino. Finally, the pretend plays, where the children treat objects as if they were other objects and may assign properties that are different from those that the objects have, create imaginary scenes and assign different roles to themselves and to others. Examples include playing house, playing with dolls, pretending to be princesses, and so forth.

According to Ellis (2004), there are certain types of spaces that may facilitate social interactions, develop the identity of children and young people, facilitate the creative game, and contribute to cultural development. These potential spaces must be (1) stable and predictable and have characteristics that show identity, (2) flexible enough to allow creativity and exploration, (3) provided with components that are attractive to different age groups, and 4) be physically, psychologically, and socially safe enough. In these places, it is possible to play in a creative way and promote culture through plays, with the potential of being transformed by the children (Ellis, 2004). However, when regarding places that are not planned for children, such as streets, empty lots, and city reserves, despite security not always being assured and the presence of circulating and parked cars reducing the useful place, there are other attractions that make children play in diverse and creative ways.

In the study by Pinto (2016), four children that played together in a street in Salvador-BA-Brazil indicated that the place in which they played the most was close to a shoe factory. It was there that they had more space for their plays that, according to Moraes and Otta (2003), could be classified as physical activities (running), with rules (soccer, seven stones, volleyball, colorful elephant), and of social contingency (tag, hide-and-seek). They were unable to play on the pavement due to the number of parked cars and even in front of the factory the presence of cars or people circulating usually hindered some activities as soccer. Arruda and Muller (2010a) identified, among children playing in the streets of a poor neighborhood in Maringá-PR-Brazil, popular plays such as hopscotch, jacks, tag, soccer, bicycle, and slingshot, with the prevalence of collective plays. A 7-year-old child, when asked about where he liked to play the most, at home or in the streets, answered: "Playing in the streets with my friends... because there are times that I play soccer, it is more fun. It gets boring to spend the day watching TV."

Cotrim et al. (2009) identified, in streets, city reserves, and squares of the city of Salvador-BA, that 86% of the 21 observed children used these places for plays with rules, the most frequent one being playing with kites, which was performed in the

city reserves and demanded a wide space and an adequate wind condition. This play depends on a higher sensibility of the children to the rhythms of nature and to the social environment. It is a traditional, although seasonal, play. In the streets the children played more often with a ball, playing soccer and volleyball, for example (Cotrim et al., 2009).

Regarding plays in spaces planned for children, Johnson et al. (1999) point out that several characteristics are currently taken into consideration to evaluate the diversity of experiences that an environment designed for children provides: the impulse it gives the child to start a play, as well as the complexity of the number and variety of reactions that the equipment promotes. According to the authors, the playgrounds must have some features that provide diversity and complexity to the plays:

1. The equipment parts must be grouped, resulting in an increase of social contact among the children.
2. Flexibility of the material: the more flexible, the more the children will be able to perform activities with it.
3. Gradual change in difficulty for each play: equally important, allowing children of different age groups to play.
4. Variety of experiences: number of different activity types available in a playground.
5. Types of promoted plays: the ideal is that the playgrounds have an equipment that provides opportunities for all sorts of play, such as global motricity, strength, balance, coordination, construction, dramatic or pretend plays, and social interaction.

Cotrim and Bichara (2013), after watching 111 play episodes, 91 in playgrounds and 10 in places not planned for children (streets and city reserves at avenues), identified that in the planned places, the children engaged mainly in physical activities (moving up and down the equipment, sliding, jumping, among others), while in non-planned places there was a prevalence of games with rules (soccer, volleyball, kite war, and so on). According to Johnson et al. (1999), the type of space, its shape, and the available equipment may stimulate the performance of plays with much movement and repetition, such as going up and down the slides, jumping, hanging, and swinging.

In a study by Bichara, Fiaes, Marques, Brito, and Seixas (2006) in which 910 play episodes were observed in two playgrounds in the city of Salvador-BA, it was found that the type of performed plays and the spaces used by the children in the playground were highly related to the available equipment, as well as with the physical shape of the space. The children showed that they understand the limits of the playground as a place for children. They used the equipment in most episodes, first with an exploratory use and for physical activities and later giving them new meanings, generating pretend plays, and seeking interaction with other children that were in the playground.

To explain such variation in the play episodes, it is important to quote the study of (Borges 2008) that indicated that the plays in playgrounds consist of three stages:

1. Functional game: in this stage the child experiences the function of the equipment itself, and this process may repeat several times until the child assimilates the environment and learns how to deal with it and 1 day the conventional use of the equipment becomes tedious.
2. Technical game: The child starts to improvise and creates its own manner to play with the equipment. The child stands on the swing or climbs the slide.
3. Social game: In this stage the structure of the equipment is only a mean in which the play occurs, providing a greater interaction between friends. The better projected the equipment is, the greater the offer of play diversity.

In a research study conducted with 40 children of both sexes in 4 squares in Criciúma-SC-Brazil, Luz and Kuhnen (2013) verified that space use, types of interactions, and plays chosen by the children were directly associated to the characteristics of the studied place, such as the presence of equipment and its maintenance. The children remained longer in the same activity and had more social interactions in structured spaces, using multifunctional equipment more often than traditional equipment. On the other hand, in less structured places, there was an increase in play diversity and children remained less time in the same activity, thus interacting less with other children and having more interaction with nature. However, the total time spent in the square was not altered in both situations, demonstrating that children need space to play and not necessarily a structured place. The length of permanence was at the same time related to the child's age, the presence of a supervising adult, as well as its distance to the child's home.

The above study is corroborated by the study of Bichara (2004) in squares and parks of Salvador-BA-Brazil. The researcher verified that the equipment of playgrounds directed the children's play because when an equipment was present, the children played with it. Such plays were usually physical activities and occurred more often in pairs or solitarily, and, depending on the type of equipment, the plays and social interactions were different. However, the author also notices that places without equipment favored a higher diversity of plays and social interactions and in places where the children were known to each other, the plays showed a greater variability.

Regarding gender, Brazilian studies indicate that, in planned places, girls and boys tend to engage in different plays more often, while in unplanned places there are more instances of boys and girls playing together, which demonstrates that there is less gender segregation in the streets (Cotrim & Bichara, 2013; Pinto & Bichara, 2017; Silva et al., 2006). When girls play in the streets, the plays happen most commonly in mixed groups of boys and girls due to the small number of girls (Silva et al., 2006). Silva et al. in their study in the streets of Belém-PA-Brazil found that boys were older than the girls. Most of the boys playing were aged between 7 and 12 years, while girls were aged between 4 and 9 years. According to some authors, this difference may be related to the increase of domestic activities for girls while they grow older and also due to the pressure for a more self-restrained behavioral pattern for girls. Regarding

the toys, the authors identified typically masculine plays (including a high degree of activity and/or confrontation and challenge between the participants). In such plays, the girls participated as well, but in a more limited number than boys in public spaces.

How Do They Appropriate Spaces?

There are many places in children's spaces that have a subjective meaning known only by the child, presenting how they appropriate those spaces (Rasmussen, 2004; Tuan, 1983) and reinforcing the notion of children as active subjects in the construction of their development (Vigotski, 1966/2000; Sarmento, 2002). When a space starts to play an important role in the formation of the child's identity, there is a feeling of belonging in the child regarding the space, turning it into a place, their place. The place thus represents subjective characteristics in the relationship of humans and space, bringing an idea of identification and identity (Araújo, 2016).

The concept of appropriation was developed by Pol (1996), a theorist of environmental psychology, and includes two aspects: (1) action transformation (transformation of a strange space and attribution of meaning) and (2) symbolic or of identity (recognition of the transformed space, allowing stability and continuity of the identity). In order for a person or group of people to appropriate a certain space, it is necessary that psychosocial processes are involved, such as cognitive, affective, symbolic, and aesthetic aspects that depend on the relationship with other individuals or groups and of these with the space and everything that exists in it. The relationship of the individual with the space may happen from a perception of joy, which generates pleasure, possession, and accomplishment, or of annoyance, which may lead to oddness and the sensation of randomness to the space (Pol, 1996).

It is noticeable that in Brazil many public spaces are structured or repurposed without taking into account the demands of children. However, it is important to question what makes children appropriate such spaces when they are not projected based on what children consider important but on projects elaborated by adults. In this sense, Rasmussen (2004, p.155) indicates that it is important to differentiate *places for children*, which are places planned by adults for children, and *children's places*, which are spaces that children appropriate, attributing their own meaning to them. Within this proposal, places are conceived as part of the space, an area with specific attributes and meanings. According to the author, there are many places in children's spaces that have a subjective meaning known only by the child.

Bichara (2004) states that, according to evolutionary psychology, "play is an important adaptation for our species and one of its main functions is to promote behavioral flexibility" (Bichara, 2004, p. 34), the main flexibility of our species being the ability to create and recreate things, i.e., culture, which may be perceived during play episodes.

Thus, we can argue that children have conditions to change places elaborated by adults for them in children's places while they recreate and transform these spaces

during play time. Studies with Brazilian children also demonstrated this capacity to appropriate places planned for them, changing them into *children's places* (Bichara et al., 2006; Luz & Kuhnen, 2013). Bichara et al. (2006) determined in play episodes performed in two public playgrounds of Salvador-BA-Brazil that after using the equipment for plays classified as physical activities, children gave new meaning to the equipment, spawning pretend plays. Such results corroborate previous studies (Bichara, 2004; Luz & Kuhnen, 2013).

Souza, Carlos, and Pinto (2015) performed a study before and after the restoration of a public playground located in the city of Salvador-BA-Brazil. From the observation of play episodes, they understood that children used creative plays before and after the restoration due to the small number of toys and little variety of options to play. They performed a combination of actions, re-signification of equipment, and experimentation of the new and took risks. The children before the restoration transformed the broken equipment, creating *a bridge* in the place of the seesaw and a *staircase* in the place of the slide, or used the equipment in a more inadequate way, making a functional use of the equipment only where it was adequate to use and for a short time. After the restoration, the little equipment that the playground had was fixed, allowing the children to make a functional use of it at the beginning of their plays. However, after some time, by exploration they started a creative use of the space.

According to Rasmussen (2004), the choice of places to play depends on individual characteristics of the child, such as age and gender and also social aspects. The author also states that *children's places*, in general, are less evident than *places for children*, being perceived many times as unorganized and inappropriate places for children according to the adult's perception.

By playing in the streets, children create their playful strategies to play. In spaces that are often considered inadequate for them and precarious in terms of structure, they play in a creative way, challenging economic, social, and spatial limitations. Children often reinvent the spaces through plays (Arruda & Muller, 2010a).

In the study of Pinto and Bichara (2017), conducted with 28 children of Salvador-BA-Brazil, they identified that children gave a special meaning to small corners of the street or informal places: "I like to play in the sand. We put the food in the sand and turn, make a leap" (Gustavo, 10 years old). "There are a lot of plants and a palm tree. I sit there and chat" (Marcelo, 9 years old). "I play with skates and dolls outside the home, on the bridge. There is a sewage below. There is an iron to hold, for not fall" (Rose, 10 years old). It is considered that the values attributed to play spaces are what transform these spaces into places with a special meaning known by the child. It is an affective, not only geographical or territorial, link (Rasmussen, 2004; Tuan, 1983).

Pinto (2016) showed in her study with children that played in a street of Salvador-BA-Brazil that the children were suitable to circulate through the spaces of the street with freedom and spontaneity. In a scale model, the children attributed diverse meanings to the street space: *The factory where they play soccer*, *The staircase beside the factory*, *Our home*, *The stand's building*, *Neneu's workshop*, *The beauty salon*, and *The soccer game*. In this context, it is argued that the children seem to

speak of a place in which they are properly adapted, either by occupying or by modifying it from their meanings and cultures.

Although many Brazilian children still have control over the street by playing and interacting with their peers and with the environment, it is possible that the current configuration of the cities, where children have been displaced to increasingly safer and more planned spaces, causes on them a feeling of a decreased right over the public domain. According to Bartlett (2002), one cannot deny the positive effects of the creating of spaces for children in the cities, since they protect them from risks, but it is noteworthy how much children feel segregated and excluded from public spaces.

In a discussion regarding the studies about the inclusion of children in urban spaces, Bartlett (2002) indicates that children always resist to the tendency to segregate them in cities, clearly showing their preference for self-determination and for spontaneous plays near home and near the family's and neighbors' daily life. The playgrounds and areas of child recreation may belong to the urban tissue and respond to the children's needs, but they often hinder the potential for free games and for the diversity and flexibility to which children look forward, as seen in several Brazilian studies (Bichara et al., 2006; Cotrim & Bichara, 2013).

While the context influences the development of the play, the public space needs to be a stimulating environment in order for the children to use it as its playing space. The space must be well planned, offering opportunities for the spontaneous participation of children, as well as their interest in playful activities. It must contain a free area for the children to assign a certain use to it. For this purpose, it is necessary for it to be flexible and adjustable enough to include different ways to play, enabling the appropriation of the space by the child (Oliveira, 2004).

Perceptions and Suggestions of the Children

The use of public spaces by children is often prevented by the adults due to the inadequacy of most spaces to be used by children, mainly regarding the lack of security and access. Such prevention generates a lack of autonomy of children as citizens (Elsey, 2004) and decreases their preference for using outdoor places (Castonguay & Jutras, 2009), although public and outdoor places are of utmost importance for child development, especially for children of low socioeconomic status, as it is a non-expensive leisure option (Elsey, 2004).

In a research study conducted with children of São Paulo-SP-Brazil, Oliveira (2004) verified that, despite the fact that children currently still have fun in the streets, they often need to interrupt their plays for the entrance or exit of vehicles: "I come here to play soccer because in my street there are cars passing." The pavements became small and full of holes or families forbid them to play in the street due to the violence of current urban life: "My mother is afraid of the violence" (Oliveira, 2004, p.76).

Alleys and staircases are too narrow in neighborhoods of low social status and are often too steep, not allowing certain plays. Squares and parks are often poorly distributed. The sewer is often open, leading to health problems and the risk of accidents, and there are limitations imposed by the violence with which children live very closely, such as drug traffic. Nevertheless, the children play with other children of different ages, circulate everywhere building a mental map of the place where they live, and appropriate spaces of their neighborhood, which are highly disputed between children and adults (Bittencourt, 2010; Oliveira, 2004).

The adult-centered vision present in the contemporary society makes us give little importance to listening to children, to what they have to say. Childhood sociology considers children as fully social beings that have the capacity to express their opinion regarding public spaces of the city (Arruda & Muller, 2010b). In a study published by Arruda and Muller (2010a), the authors report a research study in which they observed 13 children aged between 5 and 13 years and interviewed 8 children aged between 7 and 10 years that lived in Maringá-PR-Brazil. The children saw the city as inadequate for their plays since they did not have leisure spaces and equipment constructed for them. A 9-year-old child signaled "there is nothing in the nearby playground, there is nowhere to play, so it is bad" (p. 8). Other children suggested the construction of squares and playgrounds with equipment such as slide, swings, and merry-go-round, as well as sports courts, all near home: I wanted "a playground nearby to play... for our mothers not to be worried." The authors problematized that the cities are planned and built by adults without considering the suggestions of children. According to Arruda and Muller (2010a), there is this difference in the daily life of poor and rich children. While one group plays with whatever it wishes to play, the other group plays with whatever it has and especially with what it does not have, making them distinct childhood experiences.

In the study published by Pinto (2016) with children aged between 8 and 11 years, living in a neighborhood of low socioeconomic status in Salvador-BA-Brazil, the researcher determined by means of group interviews and building of scale models with the children that they identified, in the street in which they played, situations that reflected the lack of organization and respect in the collective occupation of public space, such as the excess of cars parked on the street, the private occupation of the pavement, as well as the lack of safety due to drug traffic, urban violence, loud sound in the houses and cars, religious rituals that let the streets dirty, and lack of a soccer field and a playground. Such situations ended up influencing the time and space available for their outdoor plays in the streets. All reported problems were very serious and reflected the difficulty of using the space collectively and a deficit in public policies.

The right of children to give opinions and influence public policies of their cities is something under discussion since the UN General Assembly in 1989 and guaranteed in 1990, in Brazil, by the Child and Adolescent Statute (BRASIL, 1999). According to Arruda and Muller (2010b), adults need to think of ways to include children in the use and planning of cities. It is necessary to build or adapt public spaces in order for children to have the freedom to use them, increasing their capacity to learn their rights and to reflect and evaluate their own decisions. Children may

contribute greatly to the city, indicating new configuration forms for it, with a more playable structure, allowing the typical spontaneity of childhood to express itself. However, the existence of such spaces is not enough. They need to be safe and accessible for the entire population.

The participation of children in terms of voice and action is essential for the construction of a social statue of childhood, according to theorists of childhood sociology. This proposal aims to recover the interests, needs, and rights of children from political, social, and scientific views (Sarmento, 2002). It is understood that new knowledge regarding how children learn and develop help in the expansion of the concept of child, making the countless possibilities and specificities of childhood clear.

Ever since children started to be considered citizens, several projects have emerged throughout the world aiming to evaluate, together with the children, the environments which they live in and think of a way to improve them (Bartlett, 2002; Chawla, 2002; Riggio, 2002). One of the existing projects is the *Child-Friendly Cities* proposed by UNICEF, and that was implemented in several countries, including Brazil. This project aims to guarantee the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, making the city a place *for children* through legal, institutional, monetary, and logistic measures to support this project. Among the rights guaranteed in the engaged cities, one can mention the rights to influence in the decisions about the city, express opinions about the city they want, move around safely in the streets on their own, meet friends and play, have green spaces for plants and animals, and be equal citizens with access to all services.

Final Considerations

This chapter presented and problematized some results of research studies on plays of Brazilian children in urban public spaces, which are contexts of utmost importance for their development. Many children of different socioeconomic levels have been restricted to enclosed environments in their daily life, such as houses, gated communities, or schools, losing the benefits provided by attending public spaces, such as interaction with peers of different sociocultural origins, the possibility of occupying the city, and their rights as citizens.

Despite the decrease in the number of children playing in the streets when compared to decades ago, the research studies herein reported showed that Brazilian children occupy in different ways spaces that are either planned or unplanned for them in the cities. Children show a variety of plays in squares, parks, playgrounds, empty lots, streets, and city reserves, bringing in their speech and actions much fun and creativity, but also the perception of physical and social factors that hinder their plays and suggestions for improving such spaces. With this work, one can notice that children are able to express what they think, contribute with city planning, and exercise their rights as citizens, highlighting the importance of understanding childhood from the point of view of the children themselves.

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Chapter 8
Play and Early Childhood Education: The Construction of Childhood by the Children Themselves

Sabrina Torres Gomes and Shinata Alvaia de Menezes

A Brief Contextualization of Early Childhood Education in Brazil

In Brazil, the environments in which children in preschool year spend most of their time are institutions of early childhood education. In such spaces, which are currently prepared for them, there are many opportunities for the development of young children, with special highlight to playing.

Following the concept of child expressed in the National Curricular Guidelines for Early Childhood Education—DCNEI, acronym in Portuguese (Brasil, 2010)—which establishes early childhood education as the first step of elementary education, offered in kindergartens and preschools, and encompasses children between 0 and 5 years old, a child is understood as a "subject of history and rights that, through the daily experienced interactions, relationships and practices, builds his or her personal and collective identity, plays, imagines, fantasizes, desires, learns, observes, tries, narrates, questions and builds senses on nature and society, producing culture" (Brasil/DCNEI, 2010, p. 12).

Thinking of children as active and competent historical subjects, considering their concreteness that is forged in the conditions of existence, makes us amplify our vision of childhood by perceiving them in their own development through different historical moments in the most diverse cultures, recognizing their permanence and continuity as a social and structural category of changing quality that is conditioned to the characteristics of distinct periods (Qvortrup, 2010a).Thus, one can say that childhood, as a category, is a social space through which we all move and that is built by different childhoods (Qvortrup, 2010a).

The multiple childhoods tell us about striking differences in the living conditions that generate social inequalities. Here we highlight the conception and promotion of

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public policies directed to the Brazilian early childhood education, from the supporting and/or philanthropic initiatives without pedagogic purposes since the Colonial and Imperial Brazil, passing through the changes that happened by the implementation of the Republic, when the first preschools appeared, to the 1970s, when the military dictatorship implemented, following the USA model, the policy of compensatory education for children between 4 and 6 years, based on the theory of cultural deprivation that advocated the cultural and economic need of children from the grassroots classes. The offered education was characterized by the lack of theoretical background and lack of commitment with educational quality (Santana & Cassimiro, 2015). In the 1990s, the Education Law (Lei de Diretrizes e Bases da Educação Nacional; Lei n° 9.394/96—LDBEN) was approved, and the Forums of Early Childhood Education in Brazil were created, leading to the organization of the Interforum Movement of Early Childhood Education in Brazil (Movimento Interfóruns de Educação Infantil do Brasil—MIEIB), a leading actor until the current days.

As explained by Arelaro and Maudonnet (2017), the Forums were spaces of social mobilization, discussion, active fight on behalf of 0- to 6-year-old children to have access to quality education, proposition, and monitoring of public policies in the area. It is worth highlighting the influence of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) in the Brazilian educational guidelines and policies, such as in the municipalization of the early childhood education. This scenario, in face of the precarious financial situation of most municipalities, plus the incidents of corruption and misuse of public funds have caused serious difficulties in the implementation of what is advocated in the legal documentation, such as the Federal Constitution of 1988 and the National Education Plan (Plano Nacional de Educação—PNE). One example is the incapacity to meet the demand for admissions, which generates a historical deficit that explains the educational neglect and abandonment generated by several governments (Ferreira, Mendes, & Costa, 2015).

In 2005, under a new political project that moved away from the orientations of the World Bank, the Ministry of Education defined the priorities including all levels and modalities of basic education, i.e., childhood education, adult education, and high school. In 2006, the federal government launched the Basic Infrastructure Parameters for Institutions of Early Childhood Education, which focused on the specifications of the physical structure of kindergartens and preschools. In 2007, the National Program for the Restructuring and Equipment of the Public School System of Early Childhood Education, known as Proinfância (Brasil, 2007), was implemented, which aimed to fund the construction and restoration of kindergartens and units of early childhood education, as well as to acquire the adequate accommodations for such institutions (Santana & Cassimiro, 2015).

From the second semester of 2016 on, a setback was established in the social policies. Regarding early childhood education, during the current government, “informal” low-cost programs that take the responsibility for the care and education of children away from the State are being implemented. One example is the “Happy Child” Program created by the Ministry of Social and Agricultural Development,

which focuses on the familiar education of babies and small children, without perspectives of investing in the expansion and qualification of kindergartens and preschools (Arelaro & Maudonnet, 2017). This being only one example, we state that such an action is not an isolated case. Similar proposals are multiplying and reaching all levels of education, including the renovation of high school and the restriction of public and free higher education, which is translated into the reduction of scholarship and a limited access to activities of research and teacher formation. The same logic, or same political project, reaches other areas, such as health, culture, and, of course, economy.

The current context indicates a threat to the historical achievements in early childhood education, with the possibility of a return to practices and programs that show little dialogue with research, experts, and social movements, demanding that instances such as the MIEIB, among others, redefine forms of collective action and confront (Arelaro & Maudonnet, 2017).

In this brief retrospective, it is clear that currently the childhood education in Brazil is facing many challenges, from the inadequacy of physical spaces and the lack of specific formation of teachers and managing teams, which difficult the organization, in kindergartens and preschools, of spaces and routines (Santana & Cassimiro, 2015), to the experience of antagonistic social processes with which we have been living since the country's redemocratization process, whose reflex in the childhood education appears in the form of conflicting policies directed to this area. The proximity with the school context through research activities is a promising and hopeful path because it leads to a partnership with the educator and an exchange of experience and knowledge, thus creating the possibility of sustaining the conception of child described in the DCNEI as explained above.

Play in Early Childhood Education

In school, children do not only interact with their classmates but also with adults (educators) and the physical environment, which inform them about the disciplinary rules that must be followed, thus playing an active role in the children's formation. In this regard, the spaces that are reserved to them in the educational environment arise as places where playing is related to opportunities to learn under the supervision of qualified adults. The school generally provides play areas (playgrounds, toy library, among others) in which, during short periods previously scheduled in the school calendar, the children may enjoy moments of spontaneous play, although with some restriction, as it happens with the rough-and-tumble play, usually forbidden. This kind of play is more frequent among boys and includes behaviors of fight, pursuit, and flight without the intention of hurting. Children play about fighting, and the constant laugh among the participants makes it clear. But there are other kinds of play (Moraes & Otta, 2003): those that involve intense sensory motor movement, of great range, such as running and jumping, in which the child exercises spatial relations and understands the strength and function of

several handled objects—they are often seen in playgrounds, for example. There are also symbolic or imaginative plays, also known as make-believe, in which the child develops plots, invents, and assumes characters, experiencing the "as if"—playing house. Example is also the construction games, such as Lego, and games with rules, such as soccer, in which the children follow a ritualization of roles and representation of predetermined scenes. Among those games, it can be highlighted some traditional ones, such as hopscotch, kite, marbles, and others that, as a heritage from ancient traditions, are rich in meaning and carrying the mark of popular culture, entered the school with restrictions. Many of them "suffered a process of pedagogical asepsis and their cultural contents were removed and many times replaced by others with a prominently 'pedagogical' character" (Vasconcellos, 2008, p.50). Without disregarding the pedagogical use of play resources, here we problematize the schooling tendency of early childhood education and its repercussions on the children's play in school.

Going back to the history of early childhood education in Brazil, one can notice that, while previously there was an attempt to surpass the custodial and philanthropic assistance of the service, the adopted school model is still discussed nowadays as if it were the only and best model by considering early childhood education as a preparatory stage to the school years ahead and highlights the role of the teacher in the process of teaching and learning, without a similar appreciation for the active and creative role of the learning (as well as teaching) child (Lordelo & Carvalho, 2003). It is in the flow of this schooling tendency that the play becomes a hostage of curricular activities, without taking into consideration that it, by itself, has its own senses and meanings, i.e., is self-motivated. Thus, it is noticeable, among the professionals that act in early childhood education, the presence of difficulties and ambivalences regarding play activities, even though it occupies a prominent place in early childhood education for both teachers and children (Almeida & Sodré, 2015; Gomes, 2016; Lordelo & Carvalho, 2003; Marques & Sperb, 2013; Martins, Vieira, & Oliveira, 2006; Menezes & Bichara, 2015; Pedrosa & Carvalho, 2009). For example, there is, among the teachers, a consensus regarding the importance of watching the children play, even though this practice is not common. Indeed, playing can indicate the complexity of peer interactions (shared routines, communication, negotiation of interests, hierarchical relationships). One can also understand gender differentiations by identifying situations of segregation (when some formed groups are uniquely composed of boys or girls), stereotypes (when the children's behavior follows certain social patterns that identify them as either boys or girls), and typification (when the choice of toys or other objects follows social patterns that consider them typical of (and adequate to) either boys or girls). It is also worth noticing that, by playing together, children develop the peer culture that contrasts with the adult culture in the school represented by the educators. They create several strategies of conversation and negotiation of interests by means of collective playful projects that guide the occupation of available spaces to play at school, violating rules in many situations.

To watch the children play is, therefore, to see them in the full development process, which is the object of study of many different knowledge fields that con-

tributed and still contribute to discussions on the notions of childhood throughout history and on what one must expect from children during their experiences in this part of their lives.

Developmental Psychology and Childhood Sociology

Within these abovementioned areas, due to the proximity of their objects of study, developmental psychology and childhood sociology gain prominence. The first is interested in the ontogenetic processes and, therefore, in everything that is related to the child and the experiences it carries out throughout its life cycle, while the second tries to understand the aspects that are shared in a social context by groups of children throughout historical times and cultures. But would it not be a constraint to think of these sciences in such a limited way?

Developmental psychology certainly recognizes the relevance of the social context, especially if it is healthy, so that the child has the minimal developmental opportunities, including not only the physical and cognitive aspects but also the social and affective-emotional ones. What defines it as a behavioral science is the direction of its look that goes from the individual to the society, although it recognizes the extreme relevance of social interactions for such construction (Qvortrup, 2010a). Similarly, childhood sociology recognizes that the individual characteristics of the child considerably affect the understanding of its social interactions. However, there is a way that better translates the practical approximation that exists between these conceptions, and this is to see them as psychosociological studies (Mauss, 2010). Thus, although their particularities must be respected, regarding the child/childhood relations, both sciences are essentially complementary.

As stated by Sarmento (2004), children always existed as biological representatives of human youth. On the other hand, the conception of childhood as known today, especially the one that understands it as a plural social category, arose through the countless representations of children that were built during the evolution of societies. In this sense, it is worth highlighting the necessary relationships between the notions of child and childhood while at the same time understanding more clearly the origins that distinguish them. According to Qvortrup (2010a), in the course of history, there was a disregard for both categories, including from psychology and sociology, this being the reason for the little consideration with children research.

Despite these recent changes in our way to perceive children within their developmental contexts, the tradition visions of a protected childhood that prepares to the future still prevail, reinforcing the idea of incompleteness and negation in relation to adults (Qvortrup, 2010b; Sarmento, 2007). These conceptions are so prevailing in the history of societies that institutions for children as kindergartens and the first daycare facilities were created to offer care when the mothers started to enter the labor market (Qvortrup, 2010b). Recognizing the strength of history in keeping the idea that children must be prepared for the future instead of fully living their childhood or being recognized as influent in the formation of societies, the

developmental psychology has been advancing in the understanding of childhood as a structural category (Qvortrup, 2010a, 2010b, 2011), avoiding projecting the abilities developed by the children to their adulthood.

By recognizing the importance of playing in the process of child development, one can notice that these activities allow children to explore the environment that surrounds them. They express appropriation and understanding of the culture of which they participate and are able to recognize their meaning, showing their active role in the contexts through which they transit (Cordazzo, Martins, Macarini, & Vieira, 2007).

It is noticeable that playing constitutes the prevailing activity of children in their daily routine, its occurrence being intimately related to the view about the plain, or not, experience of their childhood. Thus, it is a constant object of study in research on human development. As said before, in the educational context, playing seems to be predominant as a learning resource, reinforcing the idea of developing abilities for the future, even though development is an admittedly open process; hence, it is not determined by childhood events (Lordelo & Carvalho, 2003). Beyond the educational environments, plays may help in the development of social competence between peers (Colwell & Lindsey, 2005) as well as in the development of psychological processes that may assist learning in early childhood education (Oliveira, 2011).

Understanding how children play, as well as the main elements that compose this activity, becomes a key element when one intends to investigate childhood and to identify several aspects of children development. It is based on these new perspectives on childhood studies and the active expression of children, both regarding childhood cultures and the influence that they exert over the adult world, that we will present the report of two research studies with small children that essentially consider the expressiveness of themselves through their plays as they perceive them.

Research Reports: The Place of Children in Play Research

The research studies herein reported intended through studies on playing in early childhood education to rescue the active place of children as social actors through methods that praise their expressions.

The View of Children on Playing in Early Childhood Education

In this work (Gomes, 2013), the dialogue between developmental psychology and childhood sociology was the starting point for the choice of interviewing small children, considering that they are co-responsible for the process of cultural production, especially regarding such a proper resource as playing. Considering early childhood education as the space of the small child, this research attempted to identify the most highlighted contents brought by the children from two schools of early

childhood education, one public and one private, both located in the municipality of Salvador, Bahia, through their playing preferences within these microcontexts.

Seventeen children from both genders with ages between 4 and 6 years participated in the research through interviews. Due to their young age, we used the resource of drawing in order to maintain the dialogue and their interest in participating in the study, thus helping to have access to them (Elis, 2004). The interviews were conducted individually and initiated by the children receiving the instruction to draw what they liked to play the most in school. While the drawing was in progress, the researcher asked questions about the drawings as a starting point and also raised questions that could stimulate the children to speak about the plays and their elements in the context of early childhood education. All interviews were recorded in audio, the children participations were authorized by their parents and the school, and their identities were not disclosed, following the expected ethical procedures for conducting research with children.

Considering the lack of studies with children at this age that used interviews as a resource, the categories of analysis were created a posteriori, especially because the questions asked to the children during the conversation were elaborated from what each child spoke, without a previous structure that should be used with all of them. From the transcription of their talks, we conducted a superficial reading of the data where we identified the main ideas about the plays in school raised by the children. Based on this reading, we identified the subjects that originated the five categories elaborated for the presentation of the results of this research: favorite plays, favorite toys, play spaces, playmates, and play and school activity.

As stated by Marques and Bichara (2011), there is a relationship between how children play, including all its elements, and the context in which the play is developed, indicating that there are differences not only between the places where they occur but also between children. The specificities of each context have been presented as microcultures, which are smaller and proximal cultures through which we share elements that form our personal characteristics. For this reason, during data presentation, we attempted to identify whether there was any influence of educational microcontexts, both public and private, in the preferences reported by the children.

The play preferences presented by the children of the private school were so diverse that virtually each one chose one play, with only two children agreeing with the play "slide." Two of them indicated plays that consisted of make-believe: a boy that mentioned playing with a racing car, which it was actually a tricycle, and a girl that said she preferred to play Scooby-Doo, detailing the characters and their actions that are performed in this play. Contrary to the studies that presented the prevalence of make-believe in children (Cordazzo et al., 2007), here, initially, the preferences indicated more concrete plays.

However, from the eight children that attended the private school, only two did not mention any make-believe play in their interviews, indicating that this type of play is indeed prevailing in children of this age, and also makes us think how questions, and even categories, that are too strict do not work when dealing with the investigation of young children. Their thoughts are fluid and directed to the present moment of their talks (Gomes, 2013). Although there was a prevalence among boys

of make-believe with subjects more directed to their gender, most subjects can be considered neutral, such as playing McDonald's or Alvin and the Chipmunks, decreasing the relevance of this variable for the occurrence of plays.

The favorite plays of children from the public school also varied from child to child, without repetition of the initial choices between children. However, differently from the private school data, here the children mentioned more make-believe plays. By comparing the plays mentioned by both groups, soccer was present in both groups. A curious element that appeared in the talks of children from the public school was the frequent association between playing at home and playing at school, with moments in which it was not possible to understand where in fact the described plays took place. This was likely because for these children it did not make any difference, reinforcing the idea that what really matters is to play.

During their talks, the children constantly named their plays according to the name of the toys that they used, being noticeable the relevance of the toy and/or object for performing their playing activities, which indicates the central role that it has as a mediator of the play. Despite initially having indicated few toys as favorite, through the interview they added many objects that they used to develop their plays. Their talks indicated that the toy for this group of children is what formalizes the play within the school context, where directed activities usually prevail.

In the public school, the children indicated the slide as their favorite toy and showed a greater variety when mentioning what they used the most to play. For this group, there was a prevalence of choices according to gender, following traditionally expected social patterns, such as dolls and kitchen and stove with cooking pot for girls and Power Rangers, cowboy, and truck for boys, for example. On the other hand, although these choices indicate characteristics of the microcontext of the public school, denoting its direct influence over the children, the most mentioned toy is used in open spaces such as the playground and is not a determinant regarding gender.

Regarding toys and plays, we noticed the children would closely connect both, even showing a fluidity when referring to them, especially to the toys, since children from both schools rarely separated them. The plays were named after the toys, and the toys were named after characteristics of the plays and not the objects, as it is for tag and hide-and-seek. What stood out as different in both microcontexts was the availability of toys and spaces to play at the time of the research. In the private school, the children had a schedule to go to the playground and have access to the toys available. In contrast, the public school was being remodeled, and the playground was closed during most of the research time. This factor reflected over the talks of these children that indicated the teacher as the one who distributed the toys, as they ended up playing in the classroom, usually sitting in their chairs.

In school environments, spaces are usually well defined and have shared rules on how and when they should be used. The classroom space is for the development of planned activities that are usually directed to learning, while the playground is the space where the children may play with greater freedom and without obligations (Silva, 2007). The difference in the configuration of both ends up orienting the

opportunities of interaction between people and especially between the children during their plays.

Despite preferring the playground for playing, the children from the private school indicated that playing is what really matters. Regardless of the place, it seemed more important for them the availability of toys and the possibility of interaction than the space itself. Nevertheless, their talks corroborate the suggestion that the rules about the use of spaces in early childhood education are already clear, and the playground would be the "right" place to play. For children from the public school, the playground was also the favorite place for seven of the nine participating children. In this case, besides the rules about spaces to play that did not apply in practice, the playground was the place where they could relax and have free access to the toys and the classmates, being recognized even as a prize, since they did not make frequent use of it at that time.

The opportunities of interaction promoted by each place in the schools allow the children to evaluate the behaviors of their peers according to what they consider right or wrong, according to the rules that prevail in their educational contexts. This observation helps them to guide their behaviors while playing (Chen & Eisenberg, 2012). The social interactions that become established follow the same direction, being frequently strengthened by the current culture. Therefore, the preferences for playmates in the private school indicated prevalence in playing with children of the same gender. On the other hand, the group included more boys than girls, which indicates that we cannot be certain that the relation of gender in this context is related to affinities in playing or in the objects chosen for the play, despite this characteristic being mentioned.

In the public school, the number of boys and girls was more equally distributed, and the group was significantly larger. In this case, the preference for playing with partners of the same sex prevailed, especially among boys. We again suspect of the direct cultural force of this microcontext on the questions regarding gender, as well as on the opportunities of interaction in each school. The talk of the children suggested a marking of the adults on their actions, as they repeated expressions that they likely learned with them. One example was a girl who stated that "girls play with girls, boys play with boys," later complementing with "and mom does not like it," pointing to a rule that, from her view, seems unquestionable. The teachers were also mentioned by some children as playmates, but not with the same frequency.

In addition to the categories presented so far, we were able to identify one more that concerns the perception that the children have on the moments of fun, represented by the plays, and the moments of obligation, represented by the pedagogic activities. Regarding the existence of a certain time and place for each activity, most children from the private school indicated the break time or the "playground" time as the moment to play, although some stated that they play "all the time." That is to say, the space perceived by the children for this is the same that the school designed for them, which strengthens the understanding about the internalization of rules in the educational environment.

In the public school, due to the already mentioned specificities, the children related the time to play to the moment the teacher distributed the toys. Another highlighted aspect for this group of children was the lack of a specific time for the break or, whenever possible, to go to the playground, because it happened between the end of the activities and the beginning of the snack time; this time was about one third shorter than the time available for the children of the private school. However, for both groups of children, there was the understanding of established times to play and not to play, those being distinguished only by the indicators, which in one was going to the playground and in the other the distribution of toys by the teacher.

The Construction of "Children's Places" in the School Context

This study (Menezes, 2014), involved 20 5-year-old children groups enrolled in a public school of Salvador, Bahia, anchored on the construct proposed by Rasmussen (2004) and on the redefined concept of territory proposed by Carvalho and Pedrosa (2004). Rasmussen (2004) established two independent concepts: the *places for children* (concrete places, planned by adults for the plays, aiming for conditions of safety and adequate infrastructure, such as the playground and the toy library) and the *children's places* (informal places, created by the children from the affective investment that makes them special and that may have a concrete or only symbolic, abstract, existence). In the school context, the places for children and the children's places overlap, though not mixed. Thus, the construction of *children's places*, in school, results from the occupation, appropriation, and redefinition of *places for children*, leading to the emergence of unprecedented creations that are generally ephemeral, volatile, i.e., they appear and disappear following the social interactions that are engendered in the toy groups.

The redefinition of the concept of territory proposed by Carvalho and Pedrosa (2004), based on research with small children, exceeds the understanding of territory only as a physical, geographical, and political territory through the displacement of the functional relevance, which moves from resources security to the management of interpersonal relationships. Thus, playing with their peers, children demarcate places in which they establish transitory ownership/property, create coexistence rules, communication codes, and defense strategies, and define flexible frontiers. The research revealed a close dialogue between the concepts, as far as the *children's place* can be understood as a territory with a unique and original meaning, a territory that attributed flexible frontiers that give form and concreteness, even if momentarily, to its distinctive abstraction.

The used method was the observation of focus subjects and the cursive record during the break time in the playground and in the toy library, in moments of spontaneous plays, i.e., without the interference of adults. The observation sessions were organized into two stages. In stage 1, each child was observed in 5-min sessions each, at least twice in the playground and twice in the toy library. In stage 2, eight children were observed during the total break time (30 min), one time in the

playground and other time in the toy library. The objective was to understand how children build the *children's places*. The data were examined in two complementary dimensions: one descriptive, from the systematization of the data in tables and graphs in an attempt to identify the types of play, favorite subareas, and interaction modes, and other analytic, in which the content of all cursive records was used based on the analysis of episodes to illustrate an argument proposed by Pedrosa and Carvalho (2005).

The school, maintained through a partnership between the municipal government and a religious organization, operates in a large house projected to be a residence. Despite being well-maintained and conserved, the space is not ideal to hold all the children that remain there full time, from 7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., causing difficulties of internal transit, with the need to cross classrooms to reach the toy library, for example; or the shared used of the playground, the largest area of the school, installed in a balcony, which receives not only the plays but also parent conferences, lectures, and other activities; or yet the improvised installation of the toy library in a narrow corridor that also contains a place for food storage, a bathroom, and a locker for the staff.

Considering ethical questions, the research was free of informed consent from the participants and/or their guardians, based on the article 6 of the Resolution 016/2000 of CFP – Federal Council of Psychology, December 20, 2000, provided for situations that include naturalist observations in public environments and that preserve the identity of the participants. The research is part of a wider project entitled Urban Spaces for (and of) Plays: An Exploratory Study in the City of Salvador/BA, by Prof. Dr. Ilka Dias Bichara, approved by the Ethics Committee of the Faculty of Philosophy and Human Sciences of the Federal University of Bahia (UFBA) in June 6, 2007. This study considered the spontaneous plays undertaken by the children as their genuine expression, able, therefore, to inform to the observer about the children's places, subjective constructions shared in the interactional dynamics of the playgroups.

Regarding the descriptive dimension, it was noticeable that, in the playground, boys occupied more central subareas, exhibiting more frequently motor activities, especially in the structure named, in the research, Equipment 1, a structure that included a slide, swings, and seesaws. Girls, on the other hand, preferred to occupy more peripheral subareas where they could organize, more peacefully, make-believe scenarios, the second most frequent play among them after motor activities. There was prevalence among both boys and girls to play in exclusive groups, revealing a strong gender segregation. According to the interaction mode, boys played in a more cooperative way and girls more solitarily. In the toy library, there was an almost absolute prevalence of symbolic play between boys and girls, which occurred, also predominantly, at four tables with chairs, installed by the wall at the end of the library toy, very close to the service area, the subarea containing the bathroom and the place for food storage, which contained sinks, as well as broken chairs and tables. Yet, it was the widest place of the toy library. The most frequent subjects of the make-believe play were, among boys, means of transportation, persecution/shooting mediated by toys, and other objects, as seen

in the playground, although here the fights were concentrated around the tables, without displacement of the children. Girls displayed subjects such as housekeeping, family/parties, and means of transportation. Girls presented a higher frequency of solitary interactions, while boys showed more cooperative interactions. Additionally, the children played about singing and dancing in the service area, these being considered variations of the motor activities as an adaptation to the restricted area of the toy library.

In the playground, the *children's places* emerged in several situations as momentary outbreaks. They revealed to be mutant, original and unpredictable. One example is the use of make-believe plays with a subject including fights, persecutions, and the like, featuring the most diverse toys as an alternative way that, in general, was successful to escape the control of the adult that forbid rough-and-tumble plays. Another example is the adaptation of a soccer game to the playground, where about 25 children were moving while simultaneously playing in several ways, including girls playing house. The game lasted the whole break time and also included one teacher (who played the role of referee), a situation that is very rarely observed, because the role of the adult prevailed as a regulator of the playing situations, being responsible, therefore, to authorize them or not, define the rules and even finish the play by considering it inappropriate or as a form of punishing inadequate behaviors. The construction of *children's places* in the playground made it a flexible and pleasant place; expressed gender relationships and differences regarding play categories, favorite subareas, and interaction mode; and highlighted a scenario of multiple and simultaneous plays.

In the toy library, the construction of *children's places* happened by means of two strategies: occupation and use of all the possible corners of the toy library, taking advantage of the place's attributes, such as frames and furniture (shelves, tables), favoring made-up plays; and exploration of the potentialities of symbolic plays and the available toys. One example of both strategies is a make-believe play experienced in a mixed group, in which the children create a car that carries mothers and their children to go for a stroll, which was built with the walls under the sink. During the play, the driver, the only participating boy, takes the girls and their dolls to several places of a city. It is interesting to think that the imaginary play expands the limited frontiers of the toy library, both in the use of the identified strategies and in the symbolism of the car that moves through space and reaches new scenarios/worlds.

The results indicated that, despite being built differently in the playground and in the toy library, the *children's places* worked as strategies to face the rules established by the school culture, represented by the adults (educators) that acted in the school, thus being a creative and inventive way elaborated by the toy groups to defend and negotiate their interests, including among themselves, create possibilities, and assure the possibility to play even in very adverse situations, such as limitations of time and space that demanded constant adaptations of the plays to the available conditions of the play area; restrictions imposed by the school rules, such as prohibition and punishment of rough-and-tumble plays; or the prohibition to use of certain equipment.

The research emphasized the inventiveness and complexity of the peer interactions stimulated by spontaneous plays, revealing the potentialities of the observation when it is planned and implemented based on clearly defined criteria. It also cataloged and discussed educational implications arising from the observed situations that demand a revision of the interpretation given by the pedagogical practice as generally exercised. It is worth to highlight, for example, the lack of perception of the richness of meaning of *children's places*, seen as messy places, the misunderstanding or ignorance of the importance and function of rough-and-tumble plays and their consequent association with aggressive and violent expressions, and the limitations imposed to the spontaneous play due to the curricular and normative demands.

Final Considerations

The reports herein presented indicate the new possibilities for the development of research with children and demonstrate how the children's point of view can be revealing regarding the activities that they develop in the context of early childhood education. Either through interviews or from observations of space use, we could see how much children interpret and create resources for their plays to happen according to their needs, by either adapting places, inventing spaces, or creating new rules, even though they recognize the rules of childhood education. Nevertheless, they are able to demonstrate that their ways to interpret these contexts are beyond the obvious, indicating their abilities to reinterpret and reinvent this place which they need to have to themselves and indicating that they understand these spaces and the activities that they develop in them as theirs. The plays are the expression of childhood, and nothing is better than searching in this resource the tool to access the world of the children that teach us much more than preferences but especially about how they create their own culture in an inventive and contextualized manner.

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Chapter 9
Time and Space in Brazilian Urban Children's Plays: Ludic Possibilities of Digital Technologies

Bianca Becker, Fabrício Souza, and Ilka Dias Bichara

Introduction

This chapter proposes a discussion about the creative appropriations of digital technologies and the reconfiguration of time and space in the play episodes of Brazilian children residing in large urban centers. Play can be understood as a highly complex, multifaceted set of adapted behaviors from multiple definitions and can be observed in several animal species, especially in the human species (Bichara, Lordelo, Carvalho, & Otta, 2009; Pellegrini & Smith, 1998). The premise that curiosity and playfulness are distinguishing marks of our species is widespread among scholars, from the proposal of the term *homo ludens* for the human species (Huizinga, 1996) to the more recent discussions fostered by contemporary studies on the relationship between context and play (Chaudhary & Shukla, 2015; Gosso, Otta, & Morais, 2007; Gosso, Bichara, & Carvalho, 2014; Seixas, Becker, & Bichara, 2012).

Every study about the relationship between context and development, more precisely, between play and context, necessarily considers the effects of the physical environment (size, density, arrangement, whether internal or external, whether public or private, associated climatic factors, types, etc.), as well as the facets of people as active participants in these physical environments, in addition to the innumerable broader sociocultural variables, such as gender, age, socioeconomic status, cultural subgroup of belonging, family and media references, and, finally, the ways of life and other cultural variables of the groups in which the child is inserted, in a network of interrelationships and mutual influences.

As they play children incorporate a number of these contextual elements into their play, according to the interests of their peer group. However, this incorporation does not occur mechanically and passively but through a process of interpretive

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reproduction (Corsaro, 2011), which we call creative appropriation. In this way, through creative appropriation, stones, sticks, tree leaves, cultural norms, such as the notion of marriage and work, social roles, and even cultural artifacts, such as household appliances and technological devices, are redesignated and adapted, transformed on play elements.

In this perspective, an in-depth look at the time and space variables in the games involving digital technologies does not dispense the researchers from considering the following contextual factors: the aspects of the physical environment directly related to the spaces initially occupied and time available for the play episodes and the variables of the sociocultural context that condition the forms of creative appropriation of the technological devices and the very use of time and space according to the technical descriptions of these devices and with the interests of the peer group.

Considering play a development phenomenon concretized as cultural practice directly linked to the peculiarities of the sociohistorical moment that involves it, we consider that the classic look upon development and play – built years before the technological boom that marks this connected era – is no longer enough to contemplate the fluidity and complexity of contemporary childhood. The increasing use of digital technologies, the creative appropriation of these technologies by children, and the possibility of constructing innovative play practices invite us to rethink the relationship between development and play from less linear optics and with a particular complexity. Thus, this discussion starts from a basic question: how could this new perspective of a connected society (Castells, 2005; Jenkins, 2008; Lemos, 2004) contribute to rethinking the historically constituted conceptions as the appropriation of time and space in a play episode?

Aspects of a Connected Culture: Digital Technologies and the Reconfiguration of Conceptions of Time and Space

According to Couto (2013), in the last years of the twentieth century, several authors (such as Castells, 2005; Jenkins, 2008; Lévy, 1999, among others) discussed the condition of contemporary life with the common argument that the turn of the century inaugurated an era marked by a new ordering of space and time, placing most of the phenomena in a state of urgency and promoting important changes in our perceptive field. This has brought ramifications along with a new sensitivity to what we call digital and the ability to manage the multiple, simultaneous tasks that characterize contemporary life (Linne, 2014).

In this perspective, even actions considered purely practical could conceal deep social and cultural issues, as they would lead us to rethink and recreate several socio-structural aspects related to the ways of living together. Therefore, the set of knowledge that enables us to interact in a culturally appropriate way, such as "being present or absent" in a certain social situation, "being here or being there," "being alone or being with someone," and the rituals of interaction, that is, shared cultural codes that allow us to participate in social gatherings in a coordinated and

mutually comprehensible manner, require important revisions and redefinitions. These are some examples of how current communication technologies can convey new and important meanings to everyday life; once they are integrated into our routines, they reformulate possible meanings and condition new ways of existing (Caron & Caronia, 2007).

The innumerable possibilities of exchanges, interactions, and resignifications that were opened by the diffusion of digital technologies in people's lives, especially after the advent of the Internet and later the mobile Internet, have contributed decisively to the consolidation of new cultural manifestations. A key part of contemporary culture, the Internet, is considered by Castells (2005) as the backbone of the interactional and cultural exchanges of our era.

After the advent of the mobile Internet, we observed the emergence of the "space of flows," integrated from functional networks of interaction to the detriment of the traditional references to social encounters, the "spaces of places" (Castells, 2005). This conception is confluent with the concept of deterritorialization (Geser, 2005) that foresaw the gradual decrease of the importance of the physical space to the detriment of this space promoted by the connected networks. However, contemporary studies such as de Sousa (2016) show that the physical ambiances do not lose importance in the perspective of the spaces of flows promoted by digital technologies. On the contrary, the social appropriations of the physical spaces by people constantly connected reconfigure, enlarge, and complexify their understanding and their living in these spaces, since such appropriations occur from a continuum and not in online-offline contraposition.

As the understanding of space becomes potentially more complex in the contemporary era, time is a concept that also demands important scaling, since the technologies associated with connected networks allow the past, present, and future to be programmed to interact with each other in the same message. This resizing is emphasized by Caron and Caronia (2007) from the perspective of the "erasure of time" in favor of the emergence of the idea of "real time," that is, time without space. Time without space refers to many primarily synchronous interactional experiences, occurring in the here-now, without lag between the emission of the message and its response.

Among the changes and innovations that the unrestricted amount of information and communication technologies have witnessed, we highlight the cultural challenges of the era of mobility. Caron and Caronia (2007) cite the example of mobile phones as the contemporary tool that best represents the cultural challenges of the age of mobility in everyday interactions. These authors draw attention to the reconfiguration of socially shared concepts, such as the variables "space" and "time." Although these concepts have been the subject of discussion since the diffusion of digital technologies in everyday life, with the advent of mobility, they have gained even more complex contours.

The new perceptions of the variable "space" after the diffusion of the mobile technologies can also be verified from the perspective of the displacement as an immediate effect of the advent of the mobility and the portability of the devices. We live in a sociocultural context of constant displacements, where mobile technologies

become potential interactive locations. Space moves, and the "where" loses its notion of immobility (Caron & Caronia, 2007). In this respect, Hulme and Trunch (2005) point out that the interspace – the transition and displacement zone between the physical spaces occupied by the individuals in their routine – takes on a crucial importance in the era of the mobile technologies, given the social exchanges innumerable and relevant that develop during the displacement of the people by the most diverse physical spaces in our culture. In this way, the interspace, more than a mere transition zone, becomes a socio-material space where people act, move, localize, and establish interactions.

If in the past social gatherings were planned using fixed devices, plans can now change every minute during the movement of individuals (Caron & Caronia, 2007) since the meeting place no longer depends on a specific physical space. Therefore, technological mediation in the interspace becomes the main meeting point for social interactions.

The interspace thus materializes in a symbolic and intersubjective place where a kind of nomadic intimacy is manifested and maintained, which transforms the social world into a system of connected communities, aggregated not by the physical space they occupy but by various symbolic processes, such as building mutual trust (Hulme & Trunch, 2005). When we consider the playful appropriation of the technologies by the children during their play and the amplitude of the displacements that the ludic activities with mobile technologies cover, we see that the interspace becomes a variable of extreme relevance to think the composition of the ludic zone[1] in each play episode from the hybridization characteristics of time and space.

Regarding the variable "time," Caron and Caronia (2007) emphasize the advent of instantaneity that leads/guides us to the concept of "real time," that is, "time without space," as previously mentioned. Although the instantaneous nature of communication is not itself new, a wide range of synchronous activities can be made available with new technologies and thus combined with other sociotechnical aspects such as mobility and portability. By allowing us to operate simultaneously, in multiple times the new technologies act in a kind of temporal polychronism. These authors believe that it is from this hybrid and polychronic time that we can understand the ability of an individual to perform multiple and distinct tasks, both in succession and simultaneously (multitasking) – a common feature among young Internet users (Linne, 2014) and among children who manipulate technological devices for ludic purposes (Becker, 2013).

Also, the process of domestic ownership of mobile technology and its effect on intimate relationships represents an important aspect of contemporary society's understanding of the management of the variables "time" and "space." Caron and Caronia (2007) and Geser (2005) argue that the fact that parents can stay in touch with their children, even when physically distant, makes mobile communication devices something much larger than a simple technology for coordinated activities.

[1] Symbolic place that emerges from the appropriation of a given physical space during a game episode.

The Contemporary Child: From the Internalization of Childhood to the Creative Appropriations of Digital Technologies

Regarding contemporary childhood, Rasmussen (2004) observes that children currently live and relate primarily into three contexts: their homes, school, and recreational institutions. The author describes these contexts as "urban islands," that is, institutionalized and protected spaces that would ensure a safe and healthy routine, thus exerting profound influences on the rhythm of life and consequently on the children's play. This author emphasizes that the institutionalized and fragmented life of children results from the expansion process of urbanization and the violence growth in cities.

For Rasmussen (2004), there is a strong relationship between these institutionalized contexts and the time and space schedule that structures urbanized childhood. It is a daily life carefully planned by specialized professionals, increasingly fragmented and full of structured activities so that the lives of children are amply filled by educational and recreational activities directly linked to the promotion of development. This image of the institutionalized child, defined by Karsten and Vliet (2006) as an "indoor child," is a typical illustration of the routine of most children in contemporary culture who have their times and spaces regulated on a daily basis.

Although we know that the emergence of these institutions is prior to the problems triggered by urban violence, there is considerable concern among parents and educators and a kind of "moral panic" (Almeida, 2012; Almeida, Delicado, Alves, Carvalho, & Carvalho, 2015) regarding the dangers of the cities and the stated need to keep children protected from the urban scene in circumscribed spaces supervised by close adults. Brazilian studies corroborate this perspective regarding the consequences of urbanization in the daily life of middle-class children, based on the preference for private development spaces (Bichara, Modesto, France, Medeiros, & Cotrim, 2011; Cotrim & Bichara, 2013; Cotrim, Fiaes, Marques, & Bichara, 2009; Kawashima, Gomes, & Gomes, 2008).

As Menezes points out (2014), contemporary urban space is characterized today by the decrease of public places of coexistence and spontaneous interaction due to migration from social life to private places. This restriction of scenery has had important consequences for children and plays experienced in urban contexts (Cotrim & Bichara, 2013). This phenomenon of children immersed in a private routine, largely regulated, and far from the dangers of the city is extremely important element for any research that is dedicated to understanding the development of children in this sociocultural moment.

The dissemination of digital technologies in everyday life has given children new contexts of play, especially by offering the possibility of supposedly safe entertainment and away from urban violence. The contemporary era and mobile digital technologies open new perspectives on the very concept of play contexts, highlighting their nomadic and dispersed characteristics and the infinite possibilities and

interactional peculiarities arising from the displacement between the different appropriate environments for children (Caron & Caronia, 2007; Hulme & Trunch, 2005). The more expansive and mutable characteristics of the digital technologies provide play contexts with innovative reconfigurations that have contributed enormously to the emergence of an eminently connected and hybrid ludic culture.

Couto (2013), considering the current sociocultural scenario that welcomes the child and serves as the basis for the establishment of play activities, draws attention to some factors that contributed to the emergence of a new infantile cultural practice: contact with various multicultural manifestations; the complexity of the daily transformations in relation to the city, to the families, and to the forms of interaction with the mobile technologies; the hybridism between traditional and new modes of play and the ways of having fun; and fascination and playfulness with electronic games, digital social networks and connectivity, among others.

These factors cited by Couto (2013) transform lifestyles and signal changes in the ways of understanding childhood and the place the child occupies in this scenario, whose systems of meaning and cultural representation multiply. Based on the relationships established between children and the different times and technological spaces, what is called "infantile cyber culture" would cover the world of connected children, their habits, ideas, and behaviors as subjects that interact, produce, and share information on the network (Couto, 2013). The concept of "infantile cyber culture" has altered the traditional perception of social passivity and emphasizes the role of the child as a producer, transformer, and diffuser of information and values, an active agent who creates and discloses his inventions and is at the same time a consumer, constructor, and culture propellant.

The Variables Time and Space in Play Episodes

We know that although it is difficult to precisely delimit the beginning and the end of a play, it is important to know where it occurs and the spatial factors that may be involved in that process. According to Huizinga (1996), the play would be distinguished from ordinary life by both the place (space) it occupies and by its duration (time). Such is the relevance of these variables, called by the author as "isolation" (as for space) and "limitation" (as for time), which he places as one of the great characteristics of the games, along with "freedom" and which he called "real-life evasion." Thus, the play is considered by this author as a free and voluntary activity that promotes a temporary sphere of orientation proper to the part of real life and is experienced within certain limits of time and space.

However, before the advent of creative appropriation of digital technologies in play episodes and the generalized connectivity characteristic of contemporaneity, time and space seemed to have different roles in the child's play experience. While space seemed to be explicitly embraced, planned, and negotiated among peer group members, becoming an important part of the rules of play, time used to be less fluidly and explicitly appropriate.

In this regard, Bichara (2006) recalls that in play episodes, time was not usually considered by children for their limits and rarely a playful episode required negotiation on the time markers among the players as did the space limits. Some hypotheses were raised to justify this less relevance of the variable time as a constitutive rule of the games of the pre-digital era. Bichara (2006) initially emphasizes its abstract category and the need to manipulate codes and apparatus for its control, such as clocks and timers, and the need for someone to play the role of referee in controlling time or the compliance with temporally defined rules. On the other hand, this author proposes that, especially among young children, the passage of time was simply not relevant in the games, since the limits of the time intervals applied to them were constantly determined by external factors such as climatic conditions or by regulations established by adults.

Therefore, even if there is a creative and innovative appropriation of time during the games and that this represents an important variable in the era of digital technologies, it would not present itself in the form of a rule defining the parameters of the game nor would it be considered an important aspect of the games. In other words, appropriations of playtime would be more closely linked to the duration of the symbolic space involved in this activity. Also, this variable would tend to be more explicitly evoked by children in situations where they are faced with the adult warning that playing time has ended (Bichara, 2006).

The various cultural changes brought about by the contemporary era demonstrate that the appropriation of play times has gradually acquired particular relevance for children's play culture, mainly due to the complexity involved in the administration of time, space, and other contextual factors during a play with digital technologies. Becker (2013) found that the time prescribed by software developers for a ludic activity performed with digital technologies – a round of a game, for example – did not coincide with the duration of the ludic episode itself.

This prescribed time was easily transcended and made available to the interests of the peer group during a play episode. Several rounds of a particular game, for example, could be condensed into one continuous-time play episode, depending on the children's demand, as in the case of a play between two 10-year-old boys in an online shooter game on the Internet, where each one manipulated a computer of its own. Although the technical prescription of the site predicted that each episode of play would have the duration of a round with a limited number of "lives," the boys continued the same play on the floor of the room in the form of a shooting game and body fight, using the same plot and the same names as the characters in the game, while players' lives were reloaded on the site, then returned to the computers, and the game was still on the platform. When asked about the beginning and end of the game episodes, the answer was categorical: "But the game is not over yet, it is all part of the same game" (Becker, 2013).

Thus, the time prescribed, when subjected to the interests of the peer group, tends to promote a kind of hybrid time that signals the complete duration of the game episode. It is, therefore, a time redefined and reinterpreted according to the playful interests of the peer group. This process of hybridization of time and space – as we shall see later, turning the games into potentially more complex and

multidetermined activities – is directly linked to the creative appropriations of digital technologies in the games and can be considered as one of the most relevant trademarks of contemporary ludic culture (Becker, 2017).

Unlike the time, the forms of appropriation of the spaces where the play occurs have another dimension for the children. According to Bichara (2006), the delimitation of a space of play refers to a real and concrete locus, which relates to the experiences of the child in the world through its insertion in a given potential space present in the play. Therefore, the meaning of the spatial configurations and social relations signaled by the delimitation of space is understood by the child. This implies that for the game to "be valid," it is essential that all partners involved have a full understanding of the spaces considered legitimate.

This delimitation of space is one of the primary norms of play. Although such specifications are more explicit in rule games and almost totally implicit in fantasy play, children do not infringe them (Bichara, 2006). Therefore, most ludic activities presuppose the explicit or implicit delimitation of the area where it should occur, and this defined delimitation between the players is paramount for the maintenance of the game.

Thus, "play space," composed both by its physical dimensions and by the appropriation of other elements that give it a symbolic dimension, can be understood through the interrelationship between the concepts of "magic circle" suggested by, Morais and Otta (2003), and of "territory" proposed by Carvalho and Pedrosa (2003, 2004). The "magic circle" (Huizinga, 1996) is set as a field previously delimited, in a material or imaginary way, deliberated or spontaneous, within which all the play activity takes place. The requirement of isolation for the playful ritual would then have a superior range to the merely spatial or temporal. In this way, the physical spaces appropriated by and agreed upon by the players as valid to that play would acquire a sacred element, thus becoming a symbolic place in essence, in other words, a "magic circle." This "magic circle" that involves the play would thus be a place of protection and permission, through which, and only through which the typical experiences of the playful episodes could happen in fullness and freedom.

On the other hand, Morais and Otta (2003) use the concept of "play zone" proposed by (Morais & Otta, 2003) as a way of defining the scope of this symbolic place that emerges from the appropriation of a given physical space during play activity. Thus, the "ludic zone" would be constituted in the physical space itself, with its dimensions and concrete contents, and in the temporal space, with the time dedicated to the game. It would also cover the individual with his experiences, resources, motivations, and the social pressures and conditions that surround him (Morais & Otta, 2003). Both the materials and elements of the physical environment that are available to the player, as well as the elements of the social space and everything that surrounds it, from the playmates to the aspects of the wider culture that interfere directly or indirectly with the play.

Among the many concrete variables that influence play and constitute the "play zone," we can highlight cultural aspects, such as access to television (and types of programs available) and other media, available toys, attitude and values parents and

other close adults have in relation to playing, and the presence or absence of siblings and friends to play with. Also, we can consider collective social representations that relate not only to play but to the very vision and expectation of the child in a given society. In this perspective, the "ludic zone" would constitute a symbolic place that emerges from the appropriation and resignification of all these concrete elements and their consequent transformation into playful elements.

Carvalho and Pedrosa (2003, 2004) propose an understanding of the appropriation of space for the maintenance of the group through the concept of "territory." The authors understand territory as a psychosocial phenomenon of interaction and communication, typically collective, which provides the management of interpersonal relationships in moments of play. By playing, children appropriate the physical space through their material structuring and social management of the participants, delimiting their borders, defending them from other individuals and subgroups, and creating rules of coexistence from innumerable new cultural references (Carvalho & Pedrosa, 2003, 2004; Corsaro, 2004). According to Menezes (2014), these characteristics of the "territory" are what make it transcend from its purely geographical aspects and transform it into a symbolic place.

This appropriation of the physical space through an interactional element constitutes the basis for the emergence of this symbolic place that designs the territory, seen in this perspective, as a typical group phenomenon. Thus, through strategies created collectively through concrete expressive actions – and the play can be understood as an expressive action of this nature, therefore a language (Menezes, 2014) – children can effectively manage the interactions established among the members of the group and with other people and groups. This way, we understand the territory, a symbolic place regulated by the management of interactions, as an element of extreme relevance in the construction of individual and group identities, therefore in the constitution of peer culture (Corsaro, 2011).

Seeking to understand the interrelations among these three conceptual proposals that describe the appropriation of space during play, it is understood that, although there is an evident proximity among them, they are not the same concept translated into different terms but distinct and complementary perspectives that propose to describe the symbolic place that emerges from the playful appropriation of a certain physical space. The different modes of hybrid appropriation of physical and sociotechnical times and spaces by peer groups during their playful activities with technologies and their consequent transformation into symbolic places directly or indirectly involve the incorporation of elements that are sacred (Huizinga, 1996), concrete (Morais & Otta, 2003), and interactional (Carvalho & Pedrosa, 2003, 2004), which these approaches point to. This symbolic place that emerges is recognized for its dynamic and fluid character, as its boundaries are created and modified by constant agreements and negotiations among children and the children with the environment. Therefore, if we could think of a locatable reference, we would say that the nucleus of the symbolic place – a place of play in essence – is based on the peer group itself.

To think of the peer group as the locus of the symbolic place implies the widening of the vision on the importance of the shared networks of meaning established from the interactions between the children while they play. Moreover,

when we consider the peer group as the locus that condenses the key elements of the transformation of times and spaces into symbolic places, we better understand all the complexity that involves the appropriation of space and time in the games with digital technologies that currently encompass in a single ludic episode a hybrid of the variables present in the multiple times and physical spaces and in the multiple times and sociotechnical spaces. Correspondingly, the peer group, understood as the essential nucleus of the symbolic place that emerges during a playful episode, reveals to us the importance of the child's role as a social agent capable of participating and transforming his own culture, since this symbolic place consolidated in the group is in essence, as Menezes (2014) affirms, a place of negotiation, strategy building, coping, expression, and voice. The peer group as the nucleus of the symbolic place is, therefore, a political place.

Space-Time Continuum*: Hybrid Appropriations of Time and Space in Tech Games*

One of the most striking elements of the ludic culture of a markedly connected era is the change of time and space conceptions into the contemporary play episode. This occurs through the hybrid appropriation of the physical and sociotechnical spaces and times provided by the digital ambiances and their integration around a continuous unit, subjected to the interests of the peer group. This space-time continuum, involving online/offline hybrid play activities, reveals original aspects of children's play arrangements; nowadays it has also been verified by researchers dedicated to investigating the uses and appropriations of technologies by children's cultural groups such as Marsh (2010).

The advent of mobility and the portability of technological devices incorporated into playful episodes is a fundamental part of understanding the expansion and deepening of this space-time continuum. The following narrative, based on a research carried out with children aged 5–12 years on the creative appropriations of digital technologies in playful episodes (Becker, 2017), illustrates the constitution of an online/offline fantasy play episode that is manifested in an innovative hybrid space-time unit.

During the observation session, Herobrain[2] (girl, 9 years old) asks: Can I play with my school friends as well? At the affirmative sign of the researcher, she opens the WhatsApp chat application on her cell phone and begins typing. Herobrain explains then that she is playing pretend with three more school friends (8 and 9 years old). This fantasy play had begun in the schoolyard during recess. According to the plot, they were girls who lived in medieval times and were not well regarded by that society because they had touched a magic scepter and thus acquired some special abilities. However, as the recess ended, they created a

[2] Nickname chosen by the child.

WhatsApp group called "medieval play" as a way to enable the continuity of that episode uninterruptedly, even after school hours, since they could not be together out of school. For the continuity of the pretend play by WhatsApp, the girls created some codes: the dialogues were typed in a standard font, and the actions (e.g., hugging the friend) were written between asterisks (e.g., * hug *). At the time of the episode, this application had not yet made audio messaging available. According to Herobrain, the episode never ended, because it could continue on both the cell phone and the schoolyard. At the time of the observation, that game already lasted approximately 3 months.

The "medieval play" presented by Herobrain reveals the constitution of a hybrid online/offline ludic unit from the creative appropriation of multiple physical and sociotechnical spaces and the resignification and reconfiguration of the notion of time and play space through a space-time *continuum*. This aspect can be understood through the notions of relocation and multi-localization introduced by Caron and Caronia (2007). This implies that mobile technologies have become locations of highly dynamic play interactions, characterized by the constant dislocations of their users. Moreover, during a play episode, since the space of play with technologies no longer depends on the appropriation of only one physical space but tends to move constantly along several locations, the "where" loses its notion of immobility, thus creating what Hulme and Trunch (2005) defined as interspace.

This interspace would involve the entire zone of transition and displacement through the numerous spaces occupied by the players, thus defining a play area that is now manifested in a hybrid and continuous space unit. This is because, in more than a mere transition zone, the interspace can be considered a socio-material space through which children would play and establish diverse exchanges. The ludic zone, constituted by the diverse physical locations occupied by the children during a play episode, added to the interspace provided by the mobile digital technologies during their constant displacements, becomes, therefore, a symbolic intersubjective place. This symbolic place involves the constitution and maintenance of the peer culture (Corsaro, 2011) around the group of children, whose members are aggregated not by the physical space they occupy but by symbolic processes, such as mutual trust, that ensure the continuity of games and peer relationships.

The creative appropriations of space, provided by the advent of relocation, multi-localization, and interspace, open the way to a new look at the possibilities of reconfiguration of the variable "time." In addition to the phenomena related to the "real time" provided by the instantaneity of digital communications, the playful appropriations of the technologies by the children inaugurate other glances about the times of play. The "medieval play" was a 3-month pretend play, whose continuous plot was shared among children with compulsory stops for school activities. In this way, the playful use of the instant message application as a guarantee of continuity of the playful episode during the routine of those children opens the way for reflection on one of the most evident complaints of Brazilian children living in large urban centers: the super-occupation of their daily routines and the increasing absence of playing times.

> ‘Deep down, I do not have much time to play. It is school, course, homework at night ... I am taking a course three times a week, and I do not have any more time. I had a lot of time to play; now I hardly have the time’ (Lilize, age 11). ‘There are so many homeworks, so many tests, so much research, so many obligations that, when you see it, the whole day has passed and you did not enjoy yourself in any moment. That is why you always see us on the cell phone. Because with the phone we can have fun in a few minutes. Listen to a song, watch a video clip, talk to a friend ... Everything quickly, between one task and another. It seems like a lot, but deep down, it is pretty choppy, but it is either that, or nothing.’ (Rihanna, age 12)[3]

The creative forms of appropriation of technologies as strategies to maintain the play time or the continuity of a same ludic episode through the typically fragmented and overcrowded routine seem to inhabit the discourses of the majority of the children participating in this study (Becker, 2017). As we have seen in the reports, this time dedicated to ludic activities with technologies along the day is choppy and overpowered by the time dedicated to educational activities considered by adults as more important for their development.

Hence the emphasis is given to mobile technological devices as primordial tools for the maintenance of playfulness and playmates throughout a busy routine, making playful activities silently pass through the various compulsory activities to which they are continually subjected to. Because they are portable, these devices can accompany children throughout their routines. Likewise, the continued connectivity (Turkle, 2008) of digital technologies would ensure the availability of access to playmates, whose equally busy routines also condition them to use this type of resource as a way to guarantee the continuance of the game minimally in their lives throughout a school week.

About the creative appropriation of time and space in game episodes, it is important to consider an admirable alteration of scenery, driven by technical improvements of technological devices, which may represent a differentiating aspect of contemporary play culture. Considering the variable “physical space” involved in this intricate equation, it is noted that, due to the technical limitations of electronic devices that previously depended on wires, the spaces that composed the technology play necessarily involved, until recently, the sociotechnical spaces provided by digital environments and small portions of the indoor spaces that directly surrounded that technological device – usually the computer. Therefore, playing with technology necessarily implied moving to and fixing itself in a certain spot in the space (usually domestic) during the game.

The profusion of mobile technological devices such as mobile phones and tablets and the very advent of portability and mobility are hallmarks of a contemporary interactional culture that no longer depends on equipment attached to specific locations radically modifies the relationship of the human being with technological devices, with the interactional possibilities, and the space itself (Caron & Caronia, 2007; Sousa, 2016). Such is the importance of mobile technologies in the lives of Brazilian children and adolescents that according to ICT Kids Online (CGI.br,

[3] All the nicknames were chosen by the children.

2014), 82% of individuals between the ages of 9 and 17 years use mobile phones as the main equipment to access the Internet in several places they attend to, while 56% use the desktop computer. Considering the preferences of equipment inside the residences, this difference increases even more: 77% prefer to use the cell phone, while 34% use the personal computer. This growing preference for mobile technologies suggests signs of changes in the interaction and entertainment practices of Brazilian children and teenagers, especially with the possibility of accessing the Internet in situations of displacement.

Therefore, the multiple variables of the physical context associated with the characteristics of the diverse digital environments that involve and act directly on the play episodes in the contemporary era are reflected in the complex processes of appropriation of these spaces by the children, transforming them into symbolic places and, therefore, in places of play. As we have mentioned earlier, the refinement of communicational devices, freeing them from the need to remain fixed to particular locations, is a clue that important changes in children's play practices would occur. Thus, we propose that the constant changes of scenery driven by mobile technologies and the emergence of interspace (Hulme & Trunch, 2005) as play locus represent important differentiating aspects of the playful practices of children with digital technologies.

If the contextual resources (material and social), of which the child makes use to play with technology, and the delimitation of play spaces were until recently restricted to certain locations where these technologies were, nowadays, the advent of mobile technology has provided the possibility of occupying different spaces in the same ludic episode; also a considerably greater number of resources can be appropriated and transformed into a play element. Thus, the complexity of the play activity increases admirably, especially if we consider that in addition to the different physical spaces, the play still encompasses the numerous sociotechnical spaces provided by the different digital environments accessed by children and their peer groups. These new spatiotemporal appropriations, through the incorporation of aspects of the multiple spaces – physical and sociotechnical – in the games can be considered important marks of ludic culture eminently connected, whose technological influence is more and more evident and with the difference that now the child can carry the technological device with him and transform it into an element of a highly dynamic play.

Final Considerations

This chapter discussed how the advent of portability and mobility radically changed children's relationships over time, not only with themselves but also with space and technology, multiplying their playful and interactional possibilities. All these sociocultural changes, associated with familiarity and the wide availability of entertainment from mobile communication devices, have uncovered new ways for us to think of the children's cultural subgroup as co-inhabitants of the web (Internet), along with the older generations.

When it comes to the play activities performed by children, the era of mobile technologies inaugurates innumerable possibilities of space-time appropriations, as now they allow the incorporation of even broader aspects of the multiple spaces – physical and sociotechnical – involved in the games. If before, to play with technology the child had to move to it, now, due to portability, technology can accompany the child in their playful activities carried out on the move. This fact significantly alters the way children look at the appropriations of spaces in their groups, which are potentially richer, more complex, and larger.

Although all the playful manifestations the children use digital technologies prove to be absolutely hybrid online/offline experiences around continuous play units, the discourses of adults about children's experiences persist in the old dichotomy that divides the dimensions online and offline as if they were entities belonging to highly contradictory and irreconcilable universes. Such perspectives are constructed with great influence of the media discourse and are maintained from a negative view on free play with technologies, which separates and contrasts the online and offline experiences, with a special primacy for the defense of the latter, as synonyms of real or truer experiences.

However, the play experiences observed or reported by children are not built around a fragmented view of online and offline dimensions of the playful reality of children's groups. On the contrary, the most evident mark of children's play experience has been the continuum and the processes of online/offline hybridization of the elements that compose their games and the constitution of the play area. Because technologies are increasingly disseminated in people's daily lives and experiences, we understand that the very maintenance of concepts related to online and offline scission (virtual, digital, etc.) will tend to lose momentum and gradually disappear when it comes to translation of the ludic experience of the contemporary child.

The fluid and dynamic experience of Brazilian children with digital technologies provides us with indications of the dissipation of most dualistic concepts for the interpretation of eminently hybrid and continuous phenomena that mark contemporary cultures, such as the concepts of time and space. This fact suggests that in the next few years the very understanding of the ludic experience and probably by extension of any other experience with technologies from conceptual parameters involving relationships built from dualities such as online-offline, real-virtual, and space-digital space will tend to gradually disappear, for we live in a world primarily connected, where it will be increasingly difficult to establish the boundaries between online and offline.

However, it is important to emphasize that the relevance of the physical environments and the sociotechnical characteristics of the digital ambiances involved in the ludic activities will not tend to disappear or lose importance to the detriment of the hybrid experiences. This new view does not represent annihilation of these variables but a potentially more complex form of incorporating them into the experience, a form that increasingly calls into question the essentially dualistic and contradictory premises.

These cultural manifestations enriched by potentially richer, complex, and amplified playful appropriations require looks and interpretations less rooted in earlier models. Because it is a hybrid, poly and metamorphic field, the digital age does

not allow itself to be caught in fixed categories and classifications, which give it a volatile and difficult character for an adult generation that has learned to think the world in a primordial way linear. Thus, along with changes in playful practices, our possibilities for understanding contemporary play culture in the core of peer groups also change.

Hence, technology has been increasingly considered by children as an important means by which they can go through innumerable relationships, helping peer groups to ensure the permanence and continuance of the games in their lives, despite their highly fragmented and functional routines, ensuring access to friends, playmates, and the so valued "playing together." These new game arrangements suggest that children are more protagonists of their peer cultures than we adults assumed by redefining, through their play, the place occupied by digital technologies in their lives.

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