

TEACHING COMBAT SPORTS IN SCHOOL PHYSICAL EDUCATION: REPORTS
OF AN ACTION-RESEARCH

*ENSINO DE LUTAS NA EDUCAÇÃO FÍSICA ESCOLAR: RELATOS DE UMA
PESQUISA-AÇÃO*

*LA ENSEÑANZA DE DEPORTES DE COMBATE EN LA EDUCACIÓN FÍSICA
ESCOLAR: INFORMES DE UNA INVESTIGACIÓN-ACCIÓN*



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How to reference this article:

VASQUES, D. G.; MARIANTE NETO, F.; FREITAS, M. V. Teaching combat sports in School Physical Education: Reports of an action-research. **Revista Ibero-Americana de Estudos em Educação**, Araraquara, v. 18, n. 00, e023112, 2023. e-ISSN: 1982-5587. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.21723/riaee.v18i00.17633>



| Submitted: 16/01/2023
| Revisions required: 27/02/2023
| Approved: 13/04/2023
| Published: 01/12/2023

Editor: Prof. Dr. José Luís Bizelli
Deputy Executive Editor: Prof. Dr. José Anderson Santos Cruz

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ABSTRACT: This study analyzes a pedagogical intervention for teaching combat sports in the Physical Education curriculum of a federal public school. The action-research took place in teaching classes in the 8th and 9th years of Elementary School. From the participant observation, field diaries were produced, built on the strangeness of the professor-researcher. Pedagogical practices aimed at the use of few materials and that ethical/attitudinal elements were used on a daily basis. The text presents: 1) a perception of the students' initial knowledge; 2) the proposal of teaching combat sports; and 3) an evaluation of the pedagogical proposal. The proposal combines with an education interested in the emotions of individuals, not only from the perspective of incorporating controls and self-controls, but also from the logic of developing autonomy and self-knowledge, and building safe spaces for catharsis and liberation of impulses.

KEYWORDS: Combat sports. School Physical Education. Intervention. Pedagogical proposal. Ethics.

RESUMO: *Esse estudo trata de analisar uma intervenção pedagógica do ensino de lutas no currículo de Educação Física de uma escola pública federal. A pesquisa-ação se deu na ministração de sete aulas de lutas para turmas do 8º e 9º anos do Ensino Fundamental. A partir da observação participante foram produzidos diários de campo, construídos nos estranhamentos do professor-pesquisador. As práticas pedagógicas visaram o uso de poucos materiais e que elementos éticos/atuais fossem empregados cotidianamente. O texto apresenta: 1) uma percepção dos saberes iniciais dos estudantes; 2) a proposta de ensino de lutas; e 3) uma avaliação da proposta pedagógica. A proposta se alia a uma educação interessada nas emoções dos indivíduos, não somente na perspectiva da incorporação de controles e autocontroles, mas na lógica também de desenvolvimento da autonomia e do conhecimento de si, e da construção de espaços seguros de catarse e de liberação dos impulsos.*

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: *Lutas. Educação Física Escolar. Intervenção. Proposta pedagógica. Ética.*

RESUMEN: *Este estudio analiza una intervención pedagógica con deportes de combate en el currículo de Educación Física de una escuela pública. La investigación-acción se desarrolló en la enseñanza para clases de 8º y 9º años. A partir de la observación participante, fueron elaborados diarios de campo, construidos a partir de la extrañeza del profesor-investigador. Las prácticas pedagógicas usaron pocos materiales y los elementos éticos/actitudinales fueran utilizados en el día a día. El texto presenta: 1) una percepción de los conocimientos iniciales de los estudiantes; 2) la propuesta de la enseñanza de deportes de combate; y 3) una evaluación de la propuesta pedagógica. La propuesta se conjuga con una educación interesada en las emociones de los individuos, no solo desde la perspectiva de incorporar controles y autocontroles, sino también desde la lógica de desarrollar la autonomía y el autoconocimiento, y construir espacios seguros de catarsis y liberación de impulsos.*

PALABRAS CLAVE: *Deportes de combate. Educación Física Escolar. Intervención. Propuesta pedagógica. Emociones.*

Introduction

Fights, martial arts or combat sports⁴, are a manifestation of the body culture of movement that for at least three decades have been recognized by academic-scientific spaces as an important content of Physical Education at school. Still in the 1990s, important works in this discipline, such as the Collective of Authors (1992) and the National Curricular Parameters (PCNs) (BRASIL, 1997), recognized the importance of teaching fights in school Physical Education. Since then, there seems to be no reasonable doubt, at least in the academic-scientific field, about the legitimacy of its curricular space.

On the 'school floor', that is, in the empirical field, it seems, however, that there are still difficulties in the effective and regular implementation of struggles. One of the reasons given for this deals with the arguments that associate the teaching of fights with an increase in aggression and violence among students. Studies indicate that such an association is a stigma (ALMEIDA *et al.*, 2021), a distortion of the teaching of fights (UENO; SOUSA, 2014), and that pedagogical practices at school must distance fights from the idea of violence (MOURA *et al.*, 2019).

There is no doubt that the central element of teaching fights is to hit, knock down or immobilize the opponent, however, this can only be done within relatively rigid rules, which precisely provide for the control of violence. Furthermore, controlling your own aggressive impulses is a fundamental strategy for the fighter to know when to attack and defend and typical of the development of contemporary sport as a civilizing element (ELIAS, 2019). In this sense, it is also worth highlighting that fights are made up of ethical elements of respect for the opponent's body and social rules that aim to prevent the use of techniques outside the fighting space. Therefore, listing rules, ethical elements and control of emotions⁵ is a component part of teaching fights.

There seems to be, in the social imagination, a certain association between a bodily practice 'being contact' and 'being violent'. The texts by Mariante Neto, Vasques and Freitas

⁴Although they are used here as synonyms, given that the object of study is their treatment in the school space, such concepts presuppose specific meanings. Fights are disputes aimed at subduing the opponent using techniques and strategies of imbalance, contusion, immobilization or exclusion from a certain space (BRASIL, 1997); martial arts are not only intended to fight, but also have philosophical, self-knowledge and self-control aspects (MORENO; FERREIRA, 2017); Combat sports presuppose, in turn, the idea of competition and pre-established rules in order to standardize forms of dispute and control violence.

⁵We understand control of emotions in the sense of Elias (2019), for whom the course of the civilizing process, observed in the long term and permeated with tensions, tends to reduce the possibilities of emotional and impulsive manifestations of individuals. Sports and, in this case, fights fulfill a liberating function for individuals by providing spaces for the expression of certain emotions, albeit in a controlled way.

(2021) and Myskiw *et al.* (2015) are good examples to help understand these processes. The authors show, from MMA and floodplain football, the expected ways of acting within the game, that is, the etiquettes in body contacts and the acceptable and unacceptable limits for acting aggressively. From these elements, it can be understood that bodily practices are social spaces that require learning the nuances, sensitivities, limits and etiquettes of physical contacts and emotions, in order to produce sensations of pleasant excitement for practitioners.

Another argument used to support the difficulty of implementing fights at school deals with the difficulty teachers have in working with this content. Studies show certain discomfort for teachers in working with fights, especially because they did not have curricular components in their initial training (HEGELE; GONZÁLEZ; BORGES, 2018), and highlight the importance of continued training to deal with this content (BORGES *et al.*, 2021). Some studies also highlight the lack of infrastructure in schools (RUFINO; DARIDO, 2015), and propose that the format of undergraduate subjects should be changed to favor approaches structured on similarities and the principles of struggles (MATOS *et al.*, 2015), and not in approaches that privilege the teaching of one or another type of fighting.

In foreign literature, it is noteworthy that there is little research on teaching fights at school. The review study carried out by Pereira *et al.* (2022) showed that the majority of selected articles (n=6) had been published in Brazilian journals, meaning that Brazilian researchers are more concerned with the introduction of fights at school, possibly, according to them, the inclusion of fights in Brazilian educational documents, such as the PCNs (BRASIL, 1997) and the National Common Curricular Base (BNCC) (BRASIL, 2017).

This study is part of a research project that deals with a proposal for teaching fights at school. Some proposals have been presented in recent years. Rufino (2012) was concerned with four elements for teaching fights at school (why to teach, what to teach, how to teach and how to evaluate), with the main contribution appearing to be the importance given to the conceptual, procedural and attitudinal dimensions of the fight content.

Later, in a textbook, the same author (RUFINO, 2014) listed the general characteristics of fights (physical confrontation, rules, opposition, objective centered on the other's body, simultaneous actions and unpredictability), the difficulties in teaching them (prejudice, lack of materials and insufficient training) and classification based on distances (short, medium, long and mixed distance fights). From this, he proposed teaching fights through games and listed aspects that he considers essential and those that he considers important for teaching fights by student age group; Finally, the work presents ten lesson plans to guide the teacher's work.

The BNCC (BRASIL, 2017) also presents a proposal for teaching fights at school from the 3rd grade of elementary school onwards, and makes an effort to list “Brazilian fights” separately from “world fights” (p. 233). Although this proposal stands out in proposing skills and abilities per grade/stage of teaching and inserting the body culture of movement in the area of Languages, this proposition for teaching fights responds little to the problems in the field, such as the association with violence, the lack of materials and teacher discomfort for its implementation; as well as giving little emphasis to reflection on the attitudinal dimension of teaching.

Based on these elements, we emphasize that this study deals with a teaching experience and pedagogical actions of teaching intervention in the teaching of fights in a federal public school. In view of the accumulation of knowledge, it is not our aspiration to 'innovate' or claim to be oblivious to the production already developed. In any case, we believe that we have included issues in our pedagogical practices that can contribute to the development of fight teaching at school. They will be better presented throughout the text, but it is worth highlighting here that the pedagogical practice was intended to use few material resources and that ethical/attitudinal elements – with a view to controlling emotions and aggression, and respecting the rules of the game and social – were used daily as pedagogical intentions during the intervention. Based on these elements, the text on screen aims to analyze a pedagogical intervention in teaching fights in the Physical Education curriculum of a federal public school.

Methodological procedures

This text is a report of action research (BETTI, 2009; TRIPP, 2005), which aims to build knowledge to improve pedagogical practice, and is close to the Freirean notion that “there is no teaching without research and research without teaching” (FREIRE, 1996, p. 29, our translation). Thus, research is not a new element in the act of teaching, as “inquiry, search, research is part of the nature of teaching practice”. In the case in question, it was about researching the teaching of fights as a content of the school Physical Education subject.

Between May and July 2022, seven classes were taught to four classes in the final years of elementary school at a federal public school, two of which were in the eighth year and the other two in the ninth year. The classes were guided by the researcher himself, who works as a teacher at the school. The lesson planning was prepared by the authors of this text, composed

of researchers and teachers in the area, as one of the stages of the research project that this study is part of.

Data production took place through participant observation and the preparation of 14 field diaries, which were recorded orally right after the class(es) and subsequently transcribed. The diaries were created based on the initial interests of the research, which dealt with the proposition of teaching fights, and the researcher's strangeness. From this perspective, it is worth highlighting that the teacher had relatively little experience with fights and teaching fights. At the same time, he had been a teacher at the school for over four years, was known by the students and had experience teaching physical education at school. In this way, the processes of estrangement occurred, in part, in relation to what was familiar to him, in this case, school and school Physical Education; but also, in the face of what was a little more alien to him, in this case, the fights. The diaries were produced, in this way, based on the sensitivities perceived in the intimacy of the 'school floor' and in the proximity to the fighting activities carried out there. The protocols for this research were approved by the Ethics Committee for research with human beings.

The data was organized in order to: 1) present a perception of the students' initial knowledge about fights; 2) describe the proposal for teaching fights in relation to spaces and materials; content, concepts and strategies; to bodily activities and knowledge; and the attitudinal dimension; and 3) present an evaluation of the pedagogical proposal. The following text is organized in this way, and intends to report the propositions, tensions, reflections and teaching management during this period.

Initial knowledge

On the first day of class, a questionnaire was administered to the four classes involved in the project. The students knew that the content to be worked on would be 'fights', as the planning was part of everyday conversations in class and 'in the corridors' of the school, however, they had many doubts about what this bodily practice was, about how it would be worked on, and, above all, what meanings would be given to this practice in the discipline's curriculum. Thus, without explaining almost anything, a printed sheet was handed out with five questions, which were answered individually and anonymously.

The 102 students who responded to the initial questionnaire (54 boys, 38 girls, 10 did not fill out the gender question) were aged 12 to 16 years, with the majority claiming to be 13 or 14 years old (n=75). The first question was: "What types of fighting (martial arts, combat

sports) do you know? Name them.” The most popular sports among students were boxing (n=50), karate (n=48), capoeira (n=48), *jiu jitsu* (n=42), judo (n=39) and *muay thai* (n=32), however, 15 other types of fights were also mentioned. Seven students could not name any fight.

The second question asked whether the student had already practiced a type of fighting, which one, where and for how long. Most of the students stated that they had not practiced (n=39), with capoeira (n=22) and, among boys, judo (n=8), being the most practiced. The school has a certain tradition in teaching capoeira as a Physical Education content since the early grades, so it is likely that many considered this experience to answer the question. Furthermore, we highlight that 15 students stated that they had been fighting for more than a year and another five students for more than five years. It was common for these students with fighting experience to help, or participate enthusiastically in classes; one practiced fencing, another karate, others *jiu jitsu*, capoeira or *muay thai*.

The third question was about the customs of watching fights on television or on the internet. While the boys stated that they watched/had watched boxing (n=14), karate (n=13), judo (n=12) and 'UFC' (n=11), and only five stated that they did not watch/had watched; the girls watched boxing (n=12) or did not watch/watched (n=11). This gender difference was not noticeable in access to the practice, but rather in the scope of consumption of fights on television. This seems to be a space that the girls in that group had no access, interest or incentive to participate in. It is plausible to assume that these differences in access result in different perceptions about the struggles and in a greater distance of girls from these spaces of corporal practice.

The fourth question aimed to understand students' opinions about the fights. The answers were different depending on gender. The boys spoke about 'positive aspects' of fighting (n=28), 'personal defense' (n=16) and 'violence' (n=7), and few mentioned negative aspects (n=5). The girls, in turn, highlighted 'positive aspects' (n=14), but also the 'negative' ones (n=8). Finally, students were asked their opinion about taking fighting classes in Physical Education, to which the majority responded 'positively' (n=73), although some (n=12) saw it 'negatively'.

After completing this questionnaire, we talked, in addition to the topics of the questionnaire, about the content, formats, meanings and etiquettes to be implemented from that moment on.

A teaching proposal

The content would be taught not by fighting modality, but, inspired by Rufino's (2014) proposal, the classes would take place based on a logic of distance between the fighters, so we would have classes on medium distance, short distance, long distance and mixed distance. In this way, students would not learn boxing, karate, jiu jitsu, sumo, fencing or MMA, but the principles and strategies to hit, unbalance or exclude the opponent from a certain space. Falls and immobilizations were not part of the classes, because we understand, in that context, that they require more learning time to be done safely.

An important teaching discursive element was the control of emotions and aggressive impulses as an inherent element of learning about fighting and as part of learning this content at school. In every class, students were told that 'a fight is not a fight' and that the fighter 'has to control his aggressive impulses and know the right moment to attack and defend himself'. In this sense, we align ourselves with the understanding of Moura *et al.* (2019), for whom the pedagogical practices of fights at school must distance these bodily practices from the idea of violence. An excerpt from the field diary recalls the teaching discourse that “fights can help balance emotions, knowing when to strike” (Field diary, May 17, 2022). Another excerpt, below, presents this discourse and the teaching intentionality around emotions in teaching fights.

The issue of emotions draws a lot of attention. My speech was to the effect that the fight demands great emotional control from the fighter, and I gave this speech, to the classes, that hatred, anger, impulsiveness cannot be used much in fights, because the fighter has to know the right time to attack and defend himself. So, control over your emotions and impulses has to be great. [...] In my words in class, it's a kind of game within certain rules where fighters have to know the right moment to act to win. This logic deconstructs the idea that fighters are impulsive. In my speech, I mentioned that, contrary to this, the fighter must have an emotional balance that allows him to know the exact moment to act and to retreat. In this sense, I said that, apart from a few exceptions, those who train to fight rarely fight because they know how to control their emotions (Field diary, May 19, 2022, our translation).

The discourse on emotions gained strength in that context given the emotional readjustments that were necessary during this period of returning to school in person, after almost two years of remote teaching due to the health restrictions applied due to the coronavirus pandemic that affected the world. Descriptions in class diaries of crying, sadness, anger were not uncommon, as well as reports of depression and anxiety among students in these classes. Therefore, talking about emotions and proposing elements of emotional control that are, at the

same time, spaces for releasing emotions and pleasant excitement (ELIAS, 2019), seemed like an important pedagogical intention.

Although we reiterate the separation between fight and fight, at school, such a split does not occur without a pedagogical intervention that instills in students an ethical dimension and consistent rules that prevent or prevent violent actions. Two ethical principles were listed, presented and used daily in classes. The first deals with limiting the use of blows to the controlled space of classes, and the second deals with respect for the colleague's body. They are described in the field diary excerpt below.

All fights are taught based on these two principles: the first principle is that those techniques and strategies that are learned in fight classes, in fight training, can only be employed, used, within the context of fights. This applies to our Physical Education class, where the techniques and strategies learned in class can only be used in class, in a context of equal opportunities, with control over blows and with respect for the body of colleagues, the body that is available for each one there for the other to learn. So, respect for your colleague's body is a very important principle. I focused on the two principles today in class, I emphasized them at various times (Field diary, May 19, 2022, our translation).

In the world of fights, these principles are generally treated as constitutive elements of fights and fighters. We imagine that fighting teaching spaces that do not advocate respect for a colleague's body and restrictions on the use of strikes, techniques and strategies outside the controlled space are rare – except, of course, in specific cases of self-defense. In the school curriculum, the intention of learning such principles is presented as an attitudinal dimension of the content, which is sometimes too implicit within the objectivity characteristic of teaching Physical Education content.

Thus, we shed light on these ethical elements as a fundamental dimension in teaching fights at school, not only as strategies that aim to avoid physical violence in classes, but also as elements that help in teaching self-control of impulses, especially those linked to aggression. Treating fights as spaces for building an ethics of respect for others and self-control of violent impulses is in line with contemporary and critical perspectives on education and helps to deconstruct stereotypes of violence in fights.

Still in relation to intentions, it is worth highlighting that we aim to work with little material, given the important historical concern of Physical Education to propose teaching strategies that are applicable in schools with few resources, and attentive to the concerns of Rufino and Darido (2015) about the difficulty of implementing fight teaching due to little infrastructure. Proposals for teaching fights at school that require kimonos, gloves or punching

bags, for example, seem undemocratic. In this pedagogical course, we used two materials: tatami mats, in some classes, so that students could fall to the floor more safely and could remain without shoes, but protected from the cold floor (the temperatures, on some class days, were close to 5°C); and also 'pool noodles', specifically for long-distance fighting classes. Thus, the vast majority of activities took place without materials.

Below, we present a table with the description of the classes. It is not our interest here, when presenting our proposal for teaching fights, to stifle the teacher's creativity or disregard the reality of a given social context. We understand, on the contrary, that presenting objective and accessible formats for teaching fights at school can help in the effective implementation of this content at school, based on inspiration, provocation and transformation of the format detailed here.

Table 1 – Class contents and scripts.

Classroom	Objectives/contents	Class outline
1	Recognize and organize/locate content within bodily practices Conduct initial conceptual discussions Experience first matches on the mat with medium distance fights	Application of the questionnaire Discussion about the answers to the questionnaires (modalities, violence, rules, prejudice) Presentation of content: fight concept (contact, rules, opposition, simultaneity, unpredictability), logic of distances, values (use of technique in space, respect for the body) Practice on the mat in medium distance fighting games (leaning on your colleague's shoulder or knee)
two	Medium distance fights (base, guard, <i>jab</i> and direct)	Middle distance games Punches: 1. Base (leg in front and one behind, shoulder width apart, knees semi-flexed, do not change base); 2. Guard (chin in, front hand closed in front of the chin; hand behind the chin, triangle, elbow closed to the ribs); 3. <i>Jab</i> (front hand, rotating hand, index and middle fingers, hip rotation force); 4. Straight (back hand, rotates hand and hip) Sequences alone. Then he hits his colleague's hands (always hits the other hand) Elbows (same logic as punch)
3	Medium distance (elbows and knees)	<i>Jab</i> and direct (plays of touching the top of the head with the fingers) Elbows (differences between distances) <i>Jab</i> , straight, elbow <i>jab</i> Knee strike (tip of the knee, movement of the hips – throwing the hip forward, colleague parries with both hands, aiming for the stomach) – mats, clinch play (closed elbow, position of dominance, escape, raising the head and going backwards) <i>Jab</i> , straight, knee, elbow
4	Short distance (imbalance and conquest of territory)	Rules for not tipping over Conceptual dimension: sumo unbalances to take opponent out of space, judo unbalances to fall Standing, squatting - unbalancing (feet parallel, lift your foot off the ground, let go)

		Remove from a space - Sumo
5	Short distance (imbalance and conquest of territory)	Repeat previous class Standing, squatting and sitting on the floor Use of two hands, grab the forearm Fight ritual
6	Long distance	Fights with implement Fencing (history and rules) Tug of war (individual, group, collective) Newspaper or 'noodles' (touch different parts of the body)
7	Evaluate the knowledge learned Assess students' perception of fights	Assessment/questionnaire 2

Source: Prepared by the authors

The table presents some elements of the content and scripts that were developed in classes. It is worth noting that a mixed distance fighting class was scheduled to be taught before the final assessment, but the teacher was suspected of having Covid-19 and was away from work for two days. The teachers who replaced him worked on other content. Therefore, it was not possible to implement it, considering that 'class 7' was the last one before the July break, and it did not seem to make sense to continue the content with just one class upon returning from vacation. Furthermore, it is worth noting that the students had two Physical Education classes a week, but each class was taught by a teacher. Therefore, fighting classes took place once a week and lasted 40 minutes.

Fighting games were the main activities of all classes. Occasionally there were some repetition activities and others involving combined blows, so that students could recognize certain blows, positions and strategies that are most important in fights on the body. The aim of the games, in medium distance fights, was to touch a certain part of the opponent's body with the hand or fingertips (head, shoulder, knee or foot) and, at the same time, the player could not allow for the opponent to touch him. In close-range fights, the games consisted of taking down the teammate, holding hands, forearms or arms – even while standing, squatting or kneeling. Other games aimed to exclude the opponent from a certain space: the mat or spaces on the sports court – such as the central circle, for example. In long-distance games, the games revolved around touching the opponent with the 'noodles'.

Repetition activities were avoided; however, it was considered important that students knew what they are, how and why the base, the guard, the jab, the straight, the elbow and the knee are used in fights. Based on these lessons learned, such elements were included in game activities and situations of 'combined blows' were created, when one fighter strikes and another receives previously combined blows. From the perspective of the classes, combined blows were a form of collaborative game, in which there is no winner, but there is achievement and

satisfaction in being able to carry out the sequence proposed by the teacher. There, several sequences were made, which involved the previously learned moves.

In this way, bodily knowledge was considered in relation to ethical elements and with some knowledge historically accumulated in the world of fights. The last class was dedicated to observing how students perceived struggles after teaching this content.

Assessment

The assessment included the application of a questionnaire on the last day of class, consisting of six questions that aimed to verify the conceptual understanding of distances (short, medium and long) and the elements worked on, as well as the perception of violence. Furthermore, two questions were repeated in relation to the first questionnaire: one about the opinion regarding fights and another about having this content in Physical Education classes.

101 students responded (57 boys, 39 girls and 5 with unidentified gender). When asking for examples of close-quarter fighting modalities, the majority indicated appropriate answers – for example, judo (n=43), sumo (n=36) and jiu jitsu (n=25) –, although approximately 20% of the answers ⁶(n=52) indicate modalities that are not short distance or have not been completed. This percentage occurred similarly in medium-distance fights – boxing (n=42), karate (n=25) and capoeira (n=16) were mainly mentioned – and in long-distance fights – in which fencing (n=68) was notably the most cited. When asking students to describe elements worked on in class – *jab*, direct, guard, base, imbalance and counterattack – it was found that around 60% of students were able to describe them.

The recurrent absences of some students in these classes, the novelty of fights in the school curriculum and the little experience of some students in fights, as well as the difficulties in transposing bodily knowledge into a conceptual assessment strategy, may be elements that justify that only a portion of the students knew how to respond correctly to the conceptual assessment. It is worth highlighting, from this perspective, that this evaluation was carried out anonymously and was not intended to evaluate students individually, but to understand possibilities and limitations of the intervention. From these elements, we understand that evaluation processes could be qualified by observing bodily knowledge based on its characteristics.

⁶The student could indicate more than one modality; therefore, the percentage is representative of a sum of modalities and not of individuals.

When questioning the relationship with violence after the intervention, it was found that the majority of students presented in their responses an adequate understanding of the distance between struggles and violence, highlighting terms such as: “health”, “culture”, “defense”, “expression”, “control”, “leisure” and “sport”. We also question the importance of greetings between fighters, in the understanding that such rituals materialize in the fight the distance from aggressive impulses, 'fighting' and violence. In this case, students expressed terms such as “respect”, “friendship”, “gratitude”, wishing for “luck” or “congratulations”, and “culture”.

When asking the students' “opinion” about fights, only seven students expressed themselves in a 'negative' way, while 89 presented meanings related to 'positive' characteristics, such as “sport”, “defense”, “health” and “culture”, and there were no different perceptions between boys and girls. Similar responses occurred in the following question, related to the teaching of fights in school Physical Education. The approaches of teaching fights with these concepts dear to Physical Education seem to be an interesting object of observation and intervention. After all, it is pedagogically relevant to understand what notions of sport, health and culture they are dealing with.

Final remarks

The pedagogical proposal for teaching fights achieved certain objectives by bringing this content closer to those groups of students and by enabling the learning of corporal, conceptual and attitudinal knowledge from the universe of fights, resignified in order to enable teaching, implementation with few materials, the successful practice of all students and the interests of an education that aims at democracy, humanism and the fight against violence.

This report of action research fulfills the function of showing the paths taken, the possibilities and difficulties, the strategies and changes in direction. In any case, it presents elements and, thus, opens up space for the construction and writing of a purposeful study of teaching fights at school, which is, in fact, the main interest of the research project.

The main novelty here – apart from the little material and the work with distances – is perhaps – in comparison with the proposals of Rufino (2012; 2014) and the BNCC (BRASIL, 2017) – the emphasis given to ethical/attitudinal elements, which were used daily as pedagogical intentions during the intervention. The pedagogical treatment of struggles, therefore, was based on an education interested in the emotions of individuals, not only from the perspective of incorporating controls and self-control, but also from the logic of developing

autonomy and self-knowledge, and the construction of safe spaces of catharsis and release of impulses, in the sense of Elias (2019).

Finally, it is worth highlighting a reflection from a teacher who had little previous contact with the fights. Teaching requires research, therefore, the grouping of struggles over distances does not exempt the teaching work from studying, preparing and planning; nor does it diminish the object, given the centrality of what is common between them. Teaching fights was a way of learning about them, both in teaching practice with students and with the research group. Despite the concrete conditions of teaching work that hinder time and willingness to carry out tasks beyond the tiring routine of a few dozen hours of classes per week for hundreds of students, it is worth, finally, mentioning the importance in teaching practice of the challenge of exercising curiosity to teach what is most alien to us. It is in these unknown places that the richest educational practices materialize.

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CRedit Author Statement

Acknowledgments: Not applicable.

Financing: Not applicable.

Conflicts of interest: There are no conflicts of interest.

Ethical approval: The research was approved by the Research Ethics Committee of the Federal University of Rio Grande do Sul, under opinion number 4,354,756.

Availability of data and material: Not applicable.

Author contributions: **Daniel Giordani Vasques** contributed to the writing – original draft, review and editing, conceptualization, investigation, methodology and data analysis.

Flávio Py Mariante Neto contributed to the writing – review and editing, conceptualization, investigation and methodology. **Maitê Venuto de Freitas** contributed to the conceptualization, investigation and methodology.

Processing and editing: Editora Ibero-Americana de Educação.
Proofreading, formatting, standardization, and translation.

