

Reflections about School Finance Education activities for Youth and Adult Education

Abstract: Our aim is to identify, in the light of Critical Mathematics Education, elements in the work *O Auto da Compadecida* that promote an invitation to reflect on School Financial Education with students from the first modules of Educação de Jovens e Adultos (Youth and Adult Education — EJA). We used the ideas of backgrounds, foregrounds and scenarios for investigating Critical Mathematics Education to create four activities based on the episodes of the miniseries *O Auto da Compadecida*, with questions that allow the researcher to invite students to explore their experiences, perspectives and social problems. We believe that it is important for EJA students to be prepared to not only receive information or concepts about finance, but above all to develop the skills to interpret, analyze, reflect, have an opinion, discuss ideas and make decisions.

Keywords: Critical Mathematics Education. School Financial Education. Youth and Adult Education.

Reflexiones sobre las actividades de Educación Financiera Escolar para la Educación de Jóvenes y Adultos



Resumen: Nuestro objetivo es identificar, a la luz de la Educación Matemática Crítica, en la obra *O Auto da Compadecida*, elementos que promuevan la invitación a la reflexión de la Educación Financiera Escolar con estudiantes de los primeros módulos de Educación de Jóvenes y Adultos. Utilizamos las ideas de backgrounds, foregrounds y escenarios para la investigación, de Educación Matemática Crítica, para crear cuatro actividades a partir de los episodios de la miniserie *O Auto da Compadecida* con preguntas que permiten al investigador invitar a los estudiantes a explorar sus experiencias, perspectivas y problemas sociales. Consideramos relevante que los estudiantes de EJA estén preparados no solo para recibir información o conceptos sobre finanzas, sino, sobre todo, para desarrollar habilidades para interpretar, analizar, reflexionar, opinar, discutir ideas y tomar decisiones.

Palabras clave: Educación Matemática Crítica. Educación Financiera Escolar. Educación de Jóvenes y Adultos.

Reflexões sobre atividades de Educação Financeira Escolar para a Educação de Jovens e Adultos

Resumo: Objetivamos identificar, à luz da Educação Matemática Crítica, na obra *O Auto da Compadecida*, elementos que promovam o convite para reflexões de Educação Financeira Escolar com estudantes dos primeiros módulos da Educação de Jovens e Adultos (EJA). Usamos as ideias de *backgrounds*, *foregrounds* e cenários para investigação da Educação Matemática Crítica, para criar quatro atividades a partir dos episódios da minissérie *O Auto da Compadecida*, com questões que permitam ao pesquisador convidar os estudantes a explorarem suas experiências, perspectivas e problemas sociais. Consideramos ser relevante que os estudantes da EJA sejam preparados para não apenas receber informações ou conceitos a respeito de finanças, mas, sobretudo, desenvolver habilidades para interpretar, analisar, refletir, ter uma opinião, discutir ideias e tomar decisões.



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[...] Chicó: With what money am I going to pay for these clothes?

João Grilo: You have no money, but you have a name. Chicó, a brave man who only charges with his guard up, future husband of Dona Rosinha, great-granddaughter of Dona Rosa Don't-Know-What. And if you have a name, you have credit.

Chicó: And credit is what?

João Grilo: Credit is something that makes fools believe in someone and sell on credit to them.

Chicó: How are we going to pay for all this later?

João Grilo: Aren't we doing all this to get rich?

Chicó: Yes!

João Grilo: So, when we get rich, we'll pay the bill.

[...] (Suassuna, 1999, s/p).

1 Introduction

Making purchases on credit has become a part of people's daily lives, and its use stimulates consumption and sometimes debt. The concern of Chicó, a character in Ariano Suassuna's book, film and television series *O Auto da Compadecida*, needs to be a path taken by education, that is, to promote critical thinking and reflection. In the same way, the solution proposed by João Grilo, another character in *O Auto da Compadecida*, needs to be combated, because financial planning for consumption is also urgent, given the current demands of a Brazilian society that lives in constant vulnerability.

It is these vulnerabilities that encourage uncritical consumer attitudes, since Chicó goes into debt in search of better conditions, albeit in a questionable way, in order to guarantee a better quality of life. Consumption is strongly related to human relationships, because in wanting to dress well to present himself to Major Antônio Moraes, another character in *O Auto da Compadecida*, as a good candidate to be the fiancé of his daughter, Rosinha, Chicó searches for the tireless world of appearances, which are gaining more and more ground in the liquid society discussed and criticized by Bauman (2001), whether physical or digital.

In this text¹, we propose a discussion about School Financial Education (SFE) promoted by reflections based on the miniseries *O Auto da Compadecida*, by Ariano Suassuna (1999), and adapted for television by Guel Arraes (1999). The proposed discussions follow a sequence of four activities developed to be worked on with students from the initial modules of Educação de Jovens e Adultos (Youth and Adult Education - EJA). In this sense, we aim to identify, in the light of Critical Mathematics Education (Skovsmose, 2014; 2018), in the work *O Auto da Compadecida*, elements that promote the invitation to reflect on School Financial Education with students of Youth and Adult Education (EJA).

The culture of a consumer society, as explored by Bauman (2008), has become a challenge for human relations, particularly in our relationship with the environment. Consumption and consumerism are associated with SFE themes, which need to be debated and reflected on in the classroom, not just with the aim of saving to fulfill dreams or make purchases. We need an SFE that goes beyond these objectives and proposes a change in our habits, transforming individualism into collectivism and solidarity, degradation into preservation,

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inequalities into opportunities and social injustices into social, political, economic and cultural balance, etc.

Consumption is linked, in a macro view, to a nation's level of development. In this sense, we support the idea of Sen (2010), who advocates economic development that is based on improving people's quality of life and not on the mere accumulation of wealth by a small portion of the population. In this way, we believe that socially inclusive economic development is essential. However, we need to think about the economy not only from a macro viewpoint, but we also need to focus on micro issues that impact on people's daily lives, such as housing, sanitation, sustainability, pollution, security, health and education, for example.

Therefore, the school plays an important role in providing quality education aimed at human citizen formation, which includes a diversity of knowledge, among which we highlight SFE, the subject of our study. By promoting debates and reflections on the subject, in its different themes, as suggested by Santos (2017), SFE will enable students to emancipate themselves in their role as citizens, since they will have greater discernment to reflect on the issues of their daily lives and seek improvements, whether through public policies or collective actions.

In order for the school to become an environment that forms critical, reflective and socially and politically active subjects, one alternative is the idea of Educação Matemática Crítica (Critical Mathematics Education — EMC) advocated by authors such as Skovsmose (2011). In EMC, the theorist presents different concerns that are essential elements in the composition of the classroom routine, particularly in math classes. Skovsmose's (2011) ideas are in line with our perspective on SFE, which we see as one of the pillars of education for today and the future.

2 Critical Mathematics Education and Financial Education

In order to understand the composition of the activities announced and discussed later, we need to consider the context in which they were created. In the development of the questions, to direct the reflections with the students, we can find two of the different concerns presented by Skovsmose (2011) for EMC in a more explicit and intentional way: *the scenarios for investigation and the backgrounds and foregrounds*.

We continue dialoguing with Skovsmose (2011) to establish connections between these concerns of EMC and elements of SFE present in *O Auto da Compadecida*. In general, we need to understand that Skovsmose (2011) idealizes the theory based on some commitments that are based on the social responsibility of Mathematics Education, training for citizenship and critical training that considers political and social aspects. In this sense, our idea of SFE also seeks to achieve these commitments.

To understand the *research scenarios*, we present Table 1, in which the theorist discusses the different learning environments that are explored in classrooms.

Table 1: Learning environments according to Skovsmose (2000)

	Exercises	Research scenarios
Reference to pure mathematics	(1)	(2)
Reference to semi-reality	(3)	(4)
Reference to reality	(5)	(6)

Source: Skovsmose (2000, p. 8)

With this matrix of learning environments, the theorist proposes that we observe the teaching and learning process through two paradigms: *exercises and scenarios for investigation*. Exercises are those most commonly explored in classrooms, with questions to assimilate the content studied, in which there is a comfort zone with their solutions, following an expected, planned and safe path. *Scenarios for investigation* are environments in which students are encouraged to gain a broader understanding of the content studied, so that they reflect on the situations posed and are thus in a risk zone, as the path to resolution is uncertain and planned without so much control by the teacher.

Skovsmose (2000) points out that:

Different types of references are possible. Firstly, mathematical questions and activities can refer to mathematics and only mathematics. Secondly, it is possible to refer to a semi-reality — not a reality that we actually observe, but a reality constructed, for example, by a math textbook author. Finally, students and teachers can work on tasks with references to real-life situations (p. 7-8).

It's important to stress that none of the six environments need to follow an order or gradation in order to take place in class, i.e. they can occur in different combinations or even on their own. According to the theorist, the teacher must move through all the learning environments so that students learn mathematics in a variety of situations. Specifically, the environments located in the paradigm of *scenarios for investigation* are those that we seek to create in SFE classes, mediated by the four activities developed for this research.

A scenario for investigation is one that invites students to ask questions and seek explanations. The invitation is symbolized by the teacher's "What happens if...?". The students' acceptance of the invitation is symbolized by their "Yes, what happens if...?". In this way, the students get involved in the exploration process. The teacher's "Why is this...?" represents a challenge and the students' "Yes, why is this...?" indicates that they are taking up the challenge and are looking for explanations (Skovsmose, 2000, p. 6).

The invitation is the starting point for creating *scenarios for investigation*. Thus, according to the theorist, teachers who plan to create *scenarios for investigation* in their classes need to issue invitations to their students and they, in turn, need to accept this invitation so that a *scenario for investigation* can be created. However, as pointed out by Silva, Pessoa and Carvalho (2021), these invitations can also be issued by students in classroom practice, inviting both their peers and the teacher, who, in turn, may or may not accept the invitation.

Students may not accept an invitation from the teacher or their peers if, for example, they are not interested in the subject being discussed or if they don't see the relevance at the time. The teacher, on the other hand, may refuse invitations because they feel insecure about leaving the comfort zone of their planning or because they don't see the potential in them to create *scenarios for investigation*.

According to Skovsmose (2000, p. 06), "in the scenario for investigation, the students are responsible for the process" of its creation. However, based on Silva, Pessoa and Carvalho (2021), we realize that this responsibility is not exclusive to the students, but we should treat it as a co-responsibility, since the invitations are launched and accepted by the different actors present in the classrooms.

With this brief contextualization of learning environments, we present below, in Table

2, how Skovsmose (2014) conceives of backgrounds and foregrounds, the second concern of EMC that corroborates this research.

Table 2: Aspects of backgrounds and foregrounds according to Skovsmose (2014)

Backgrounds	Foregrounds
Experiences from the past	Perspective on the future
Solidified	Flexibility
Way of interpreting the past	Seeing a horizon of possibilities or lack of them
Influenced by social, political, economic and cultural conditions	Shaped by social, political, economic and cultural conditions
Reframing the past	Includes desires, dreams, expectations, feelings, fears and frustrations for the future

Source: Own elaboration

The aspects listed in the table show us a dimension of the relationship between backgrounds and foregrounds, beyond thinking of them as past and future. Although organized in this way, the aspects should not be seen as opposites, as they complement each other, i.e. a subject's background influences their foreground, while their foreground influences the way they understand their background.

In a didactic way, looking at Table 2, more specifically the line that divides the two columns, we can think of it as a *border position*. Skovsmose (2014) uses this metaphor to explain the existence of a conflict between the subject and the forms of social life they envision.

Being in a *border position* allows the subject to perceive their social environment and the possibilities of accessing other social environments, whether they are environments that promote their living with a diversity of experiences or environments that they see as inaccessible to experience. It should be noted that the environments mentioned here are not the same as those previously explored as learning environments, as they are didactic environments, not physical ones. The environments highlighted here are social and physical.

According to Skovsmose (2014), the *border position* exists for everyone and enables people to experience social, cultural and political differences and stigmatization. In this understanding, the theorist proposes that there is interpretation for foregrounds when the subject is positioned on a border, since this position allows them to see possibilities or not for their future.

It is also important to consider that the way in which the subject sees these possibilities is related to their past, in other words, to the conditions in which their backgrounds were constituted. Furthermore, from the moment the subject moves towards a foreground, they will also construct or reconstruct the meanings of their past.

I am proposing an interpretation of meaning based on the concept of foreground, which helps to reveal the complex socio-political formatting of meaning experiences in mathematics education. I want to emphasize that social, economic, cultural and religious conditions, as well as views, assumptions, presumptions and prejudices can establish something as meaningful or not for students (Skovsmose, 2018, p. 767).

Interpreting foregrounds is a process that requires attention so that the backgrounds and foregrounds of the researcher/teacher don't influence the interpretation of the students' foregrounds. Although it's not possible to have zero influence, distance and intellectual effort

are essential if the interpretations are to photograph the subject being observed.

In constructing their foregrounds, students are exposed to a series of conditions, as Skovsmose (2018) points out. These social, economic, political and cultural conditions, among others, determine whether a student's foreground deserves their attention or not, whether they see themselves occupying that space or perceive it as out of their reach.

To interpret the foregrounds, we used the interpretations of meanings explored by Skovsmose (2018) and organized in Table 3 below.

Table 3: Interpretations of the meanings of foregrounds (Skovsmose, 2018)

Interpretation	Meaning
Polarized Foregrounds	It can happen to any groups of people living in foreign countries or stigmatized groups.
Destroyed Foregrounds	They are not self-destructive. They have to do with life prospects in the context in which one is situated.
Amputated Foregrounds	It can happen through stereotyping, humiliation and stigmatization of socio-political discourses and practices.
Directed Foregrounds	It happens when a specific element dominates the process of creating meaning, and can refer to specific goals set for the future.
Multiplied Foregrounds	It is not the substitution of one for another. There is a multiplication when operating with different horizons.

Source: Own elaboration

These interpretations are only perceived after the process of reflection with the students. By anticipation, i.e. in his planning, the teacher only has control over how he will mobilize the students' reflections, paralleling the *scenarios for investigation*, and how he will invite the students.

We'll call them invitations to identify backgrounds and invitations to mobilize or explore foregrounds, since access to students' individuality and particularities only occurs according to their willingness to do so. In other words, if they accept the invitation launched by the researcher/teacher to give access to their experiences and expectations. In order to do this, certain aspects need to be considered, particularly when it comes to SFE, since the individualized relationship of subjects with money is an intimate one and is related to aspects of personal and social well-being or malaise.

In this sense, the possibility arises of developing pedagogical work using audiovisual resources that generate identification, i.e. students perceiving aspects of society, whether or not related to their daily lives, on screen, by observing the characters in *O Auto da Compadecida* and then reflecting on the attitudes and scenes they watched. This identification goes beyond the mere stereotyped representation of characters, as it positions students as spectators of fiction and real life, so that parallels can be found in reflective debates.

3 Methodology

To develop the four activities that are the subject of this section of the study, we considered the work *O Auto da Compadecida* in its miniseries version, because it is the most complete audiovisual version and because it is already divided into four episodes, which helps to organize the work in class. As a result, all the questions are based on scenes and dialogues of the characters. The episodes, their duration and the themes proposed for reflective debate in the activities are shown in Table 4 below.

Table 4: Episodes of *O Auto da Compadecida* and SFE themes

Episodes	Time	SFE Themes
1. The dog's will	38:01min	– Poverty; – Hunger; – Maintaining inequalities; – Social injustices.
2. The money-hungry cat	38:52min	– Money; – Corruption; – Exploitation; – Oppression.
3. Chicó's fight	36:53min	– Money; – Consumption; – Indebtedness; – Financial planning.
4. João Grilo meets the devil	47:14min	– Social criticism; – Future prospects.

Source: Own elaboration

The third column of Table 4 refers to the themes worked on in classes already held with EJA students, in the course of our doctoral study, which is being supervised and co-supervised by the second and third authors, respectively. The themes emerged from the analysis of each episode highlighted, taking into account our views and those of the students in the class. However, for the purposes of this text, we have focused only on the analysis of the activities as teaching tools.

Each episode presented in Table 4 therefore corresponds to a lesson activity, resulting in four activities which will be discussed in detail in the next topic on teaching tools. The analysis will be based on the following categories:

- Invitation to create a scenario for investigation: seeking reflective solutions to problems and situations;
- Invitation to identify backgrounds: to learn about experiences and how they are interpreted;
- Invitation to mobilize/explore foregrounds: create spaces for dialogue to discuss prospects for the future.

The school being investigated is a municipal one, located in a suburb of the city of Garanhuns, in the agreste region of Pernambuco, which has EJA classes, covering primary and secondary education in the evening. The class that took part in the research is multigrade and caters for students in modules II and IV of the Early Years of Youth and Adult Education.

The activities were carried out over a four-week period with six students from the class in question, three from Module II and three from Module IV. Considering that the survey was carried out in the second semester of 2022, there was already a dropout rate in the class, with 15 students enrolled, but only six with daily attendance. Of the six participants in the study, two dropped out during the collection, one due to a change of address and the other due to a high-risk pregnancy. We therefore applied the activities in two stages: 1) Watching the episode of the miniseries; 2) Discussing the questions in the activities with the students.

4 Discussion of teaching tools

In this section, we present the four activities developed to help with the research. These activities will be discussed individually so that we can highlight their potential for building knowledge of a critical and reflective SFE, based on the specific concerns of the EMC adopted.

So that we can get to know the four activities, we have listed just three examples of invitations (not limited to them), based on EMC, which are explicit in them. It is important to note that the invitation may or may not be accepted by the student and the class, and that different groups will have different acceptances. We have also described extracts from the students' reflections throughout the lessons.

During the process of discussion and reflection in the classroom, it is important that the mediator (researcher/teacher) provides opportunities for dialogue between the students, taking on the role of listener and instigator of the debate. We believe that the process of stimulating the development of learning in SFE occurs in a critical-reflective way, in two dimensions. In this way, the students think about and interpret the situations provided by the mediator, present their ideas, evaluate the ideas of their colleagues, debate, change their minds or deepen them in order to consolidate their considerations on the subject debated and make their decisions. Table 5 shows the systematization of this conception of learning in SFE.

Table 5: Learning development in SFE

	Reflective Aspects	Critical Aspects
Cognitive Dimension	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Interpreting - Evaluating other ideas - Changing/deepening ideas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Thinking - Consolidating ideas
Operational Dimension	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Making decisions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Presenting ideas - Debating ideas

Source: Own elaboration

Based on Table 5, the critical and reflective aspects are arranged in two dimensions. The aspects located in the cognitive dimension refer to the part of learning that is constructed in the field of ideas, while the aspects in the operational dimension demand student attitudes, i.e. putting their ideas into practice. In this way, it is hoped that the mobilization of critical and reflective aspects will enhance learning in SFE.

In the following figures, we go on to present the four activities on episodes from *O Auto da Compadecida*, developed for SFE pedagogical work with classes in the initial modules of the EJA. Figure 1 shows the activity proposed for the first episode.

Figure 1: Activity for the first episode of *O Auto da Compadecida*

Activity 1 — Episode 1: The dog's will

Theme: Poverty, hunger, preserving inequalities and social injustices

Let's have a little chat!

1 - Dialogue between João Grilo and Father João.

Father João: A true Christian is satisfied with little.

João Grilo: Then I guess I'm a bit of a naughty Christian, because I wasn't very satisfied with the payment.

a) Do you agree with Father John's attitude?

- b) What should his attitude be?
 - c) Should João Grilo accept the payment in silence?
-

2 – Dialogue between Chicó and João Grilo.

Chicó: João, so much bread, do you think they'll miss just two?

João Grilo: You don't seem to know the pirangagem of these people. They count bread by bread, and they write it down in a notebook.

- Eurico sees some bitten loaves of bread, thinks they were rats and is enraged by the damage. Talking to João Grilo, he changes his mind, cuts off the bites and gives them to him to eat, saying that rats are clean animals. João Grilo thanks his boss for his kindness.

- a) Why did Chicó want to hide two loaves of bread from his bosses?
 - b) How would the bosses react if Chicó asked them for two loaves of bread?
 - c) Do you agree with João Grilo when he thanks his boss for his kindness in giving him leftover bread?
-

3 – While having a meal, João Grilo and Chicó compare their food with that served by their employers to their pet dog.

Chicó: Where bread is earned, meat is not eaten!

- a) What do you think of the bosses' attitude towards the food they serve their employees and their dog?
 - b) Why is it that where bread is earned, meat is not eaten? Do you agree with this statement?
-

4 – Let's remember some scenes of Cangaceiro Severino disguised as a beggar.

Scene One: Severino, dressed as a beggar, sits outside the church and asks Major Antônio Moraes for alms. The Major beats Severino and tells him to get a job. Severino replies that he can't work because he only has one eye. The Major tells him to pierce the other one.

Scene Two: Severino, dressed as a beggar, asks Father João for alms, who replies that he will pray for his soul. Severino asks if the prayer can be accompanied by a gourd of flour, to which Father João replies that the church is only concerned with spiritual nourishment.

Scene Three: Severino, dressed as a beggar, goes to the bakery and asks Eurico and Dora to help a one-eyed man. Eurico replies that it wasn't him who pierced his eye, but if Severino wants him to, he'll pierce the other one so that he can be obliged to give him alms.

- a) What did you think of the attitudes of Major Antônio Moraes, Father João and Eurico when they denied alms to Severino?
- b) Why do people beg?
- c) What can we do to change this situation of people on the streets, without shelter and food?

Source: Own elaboration

For this first activity, we identified the following central issues in the first episode of the miniseries, with the potential for a broader discussion of SFE, as we advocate: poverty, hunger, the preservation of inequalities and social injustices. Based on the scenes and dialogues, we can invite the students to reflect on these issues, both in the dimension of fiction and in the dimension of reality, be it their individual reality or with an eye towards society as a whole.

Table 6: Examples of invitations in questions from Activity 1 of the first episode

Type of invitation	Question
Invitation to set the scene for an investigation.	Question 4 - item c: What can we do to change this situation of people on the streets, without shelter and food?
Invitation to identify backgrounds.	Question 2 - item b: What would the bosses' reaction be if Chicó asked them for two loaves of bread?
Invitation to mobilize/explore foregrounds.	Question 3 - item b: Why is it said that where bread is earned, meat is not eaten? Do you agree with this statement?

Source: Own elaboration

In the examples highlighted, there are three possible invitations. In the invitation to create scenarios for investigation, we propose discussions about a social problem, which is related to economic and development issues (Sen, 2010). For the background invitation, we seek an understanding of the students' professional experiences, bearing in mind that both adults and young people already have responsibilities in this respect, sometimes at an early age. As for the invitation to foregrounds, it is hoped that there will be reflections on working conditions and/or setbacks in the professional market, for example.

In the following excerpts from the students' speeches, we identify backgrounds and decision-making in part of the lesson with this first activity.

[Researcher reads out the second question.]

Ana Luíza: Man! That boss! Where does the rat get cleaned? No, professor!

Pedro Augusto: He wants to kill João Grilo!

Maria Helena: I went through something similar when I was a kid. If it had been in my paycheck, he would have said [inaudible] a lot, right?! [Background]. But, in order not to lose a piece of bread, he preferred to eat it, regardless of whether he was going to get sick or not [Decision Making].

Pedro Augusto: It's a question of our day-to-day lives, a question of people taking care of us. The baker isn't wrong to write it down, to count the loaves [Decision Making]. It's possible that the person working could go astray, right? So always keep track of how much is missing.

Maria Helena: If he asked him, Mr. Eurico, the teacher, I think he'd give him the loaves [Decision Making].

Ana Luíza: The baker, the baker, made a point of playing, and João went to eat [Decision Making]. Why? If he was a good boss, what would he say? "Keep it for yourself, throw it in the garbage can, take it, eat it." But he didn't care about his hunger, he didn't care about those who worked for him [Decision Making]. He didn't even give bread, he didn't earn his money. He didn't care if João died, if he got sick, all he cared about was the money. That's it! If he took the bread to satisfy his hunger. Because [inaudible], and the dog was more valuable than he was.

Figure 2 below shows the proposed activity based on the second episode for pedagogical work with *O Auto da Compadecida*.

Figure 2: Activity for the second episode of *O Auto da Compadecida*

<p>Activity 2 — Episode 2: The money-hungry cat</p> <p>Themes: Money, corruption, exploitation and oppression</p> <p>Let's talk!</p>

1 - Recalling two moments related to the dog's will.

First Moment: Father João still refuses to bury the dog, until João Grilo tells him the story of the will. Father João quickly changes his mind when he hears that the dog left inheritance money to his church, and decides to bury her in Latin.

Second Moment: The Bishop doesn't like Father João's attitude when he learns about the dog's Latin burial. However, he also changes his mind when João Grilo tells him the story of the will and agrees with everything that has been done.

- a) Why do you think João Grilo created this story about the dog's will?
 - b) Both the priest and the bishop change their minds about burying the dog in Latin. What caused their quick change of heart?
 - c) What do you think made the priest and the bishop change their minds and accept the dog's burial?
-

2 – Remember the scene below.

Scene One: João Grilo provokes Dorinha's greed by offering her a cat that makes money. He manages to sell the cat to his mistress, claiming that it's a good way to make money.

Scene Two: In a conversation with Chicó, João Grilo says that he invented the story of the cat who puts money in order to get back at his bosses, who once left him sick without giving him any help, while the dog ate meat roasted in butter.

- a) Dorinha believed a story because she wanted to make money easily. Was she naive/innocent?
 - b) Why did Eurico and Dorinha leave João Grilo ill and not give him any care? Should they have looked after João Grilo?
-

3 – Take a look at the scene below.

Scene: When Eurico finds out that he has been conned, he calls João Grilo a thief. João Grilo argues that he spent three days sick in bed and didn't even get a glass of water from his bosses. The baker then says that João Grilo is ungrateful, because he never fired him even though he was cheating, to which João Grilo replies that he never fired him because he works a lot and earns little.

- a) Is working hard and earning little another story invented by João Grilo? Justify it!
 - b) Is it common to find bosses like Eurico and employees like João Grilo in society? Justify it!
-

4 – Rosinha returns to her father's farm. Looking at the dry landscape, she comments on the scarcity of water, the misery that the people live in and compares it to the comfort and abundance she has on the farm. Do you think that in scarcity, those who own the land and water have dominion over the poorest people? Explain!

.....

5 – In a dialog with Chicó, João Grilo says:

João Grilo: When I'm hungry, I'm knocked down by a little squeeze. But with a full belly, I can take any misfortune.

- a) a) What did João Grilo mean?

Source: Own elaboration

In Activity 2, we noted that the subjects covered in the miniseries episode were money, corruption, exploitation and oppression. Examples of the proposed invitations are shown in Table 7.

Table 7: Examples of invitations in Activity 2 questions

Type of invitation	Question
Invitation to set the scene for an investigation.	Question 4: Rosinha returns to her father's farm. Looking at the dry landscape, she comments on the scarcity of water, the misery that the people live in and compares it to the comfort and abundance she has on the farm. Do you think that, in scarcity, those who own land and water have dominion over the poorer population? Explain!
Invitation to identify backgrounds.	Question 1 – item c: What do you think of the reason that made the priest and the bishop change their minds and accept the burial of the dog?
Invitation to mobilize/explore foregrounds.	Question 3 – item a: Is working hard and earning little just another story invented by João Grilo? Justify!

Source: Own elaboration

The three questions that exemplify the possibilities for invitations to the second activity have in common a social aspect that influences the lives, in particular, of the EJA students who are the subjects of the study. Power relations, social classes and human relations intertwined with money, as well as the influence of money on decisions that impact on the lives of the most vulnerable.

More specifically, the invitation to create *scenarios for investigation* can lead to discussions about the specific problems of a region, as well as relating to the idea of privatizing water resources or even referring to agrarian reform. There are different possibilities for reflecting on this situation, mainly driven by the context in which the students are inserted and their day-to-day concerns or experiences.

As for the invitation to backgrounds, students can be encouraged to think about situations they have already experienced or witnessed of corruption or abuse of power, for example. In the invitation to foregrounds, they are led to think about what they hope for their professional future, as well as reaffirming their return to school in the quest to improve their quality of life.

In the following extracts, referring to part of the second lesson, we identify decision-making in their speech.

[Researcher reads out the first question.]

Pedro Afonso: Oh, it was for the priest to bury the dog! And the priest said he couldn't do it! And when he put money in the middle of it, on the spot, the priest did it! [Decision Making]. Then the bishop objected. When they said he'd left money for the diocese, the bishop accepted!" [Decision Making].

Ana Luíza: No, he's doing [inaudible]. Why did he do that? He did it for money! [Decision making].

Pedro Afonso: Thinking about money! It has nothing to do with church thinking. Money... That's corruption, [inaudible]. They were all interested in money! The priest refused because the bishop wanted to have the funeral in Latin, but when he said that the dog had a will, that she had left an amount to the priest and an amount to the bishop. Then he accepted [Decision Making].

Ana Luíza: But look! The most wrong thing, that the priest at the beginning of the story, and until the end of corruption, is the bishop [inaudible], he was supposed to correct it. And what example did the bishop give the priest? None, none! [Decision made] That doesn't exist, it doesn't exist! Why? The person... It's the priest's job to bring the child of God closer.

Figure 3 introduces the activity designed to work with the third episode.

Figure 3: Activity for the third episode of O Auto da Compadecida

Activity 3 — Episode 3: Chicó's struggle
Themes: Money, consumption, debt and planning

Let's talk!

1 - After tricking Corporal Setenta and Vicentão, João Grilo gets jewelry for Chicó to give to Rosinha. When she receives the gift from Chicó, she tells him that she doesn't care about jewelry, that she would rather he had a diploma.

- Why do you think Rosinha would prefer Chicó to have a diploma?
- What does it mean to have a diploma?
- What is more valuable to you, jewelry or a diploma? Explain!

.....

2 – Look at the dialog below between Chicó and João Grilo.

Chicó: With what money are we going to pay for these clothes?

João Grilo: You have no money, but you have a name. Chicó, as brave as a man of reserve, future husband of Dona Rosinha, great-granddaughter of Dona Rosa Don't-Know-What. And if you have a name, you have credit.

- Is Chicó's concern about how he will pay for the clothes valid?
- Is the solution given by João Grilo, to use credit to pay, a good idea? Justify it!
- Having credit is the same as having money. Do you agree with this?
- What does it mean not to have money, but to have a name? Is that a good thing?
- How did Chicó get a name?

.....

3 – The dialog between Chicó and João Grilo continues.

Chicó: And credit is what?

João Grilo: Credit is something that makes fools believe in a person and sell on loan to them.

- Do you agree with João Grilo's explanation?
- What do you think credit is?
- Do you use credit in your daily life? How do you use it?

.....

4 – The conversation between the friends continues.

Chicó: How are we going to pay for all this later?

João Grilo: We're doing this to get rich! So, when you get rich, you pay the bill.

- In your opinion, is this financial planning proposed by João Grilo the best solution for paying? Why?
- Do you think Chicó should be worried about how to pay for his clothes?
- How do you buy something you need when you don't have any money?

.....

5 – Remember the scene below.

Cena: Chicó presents himself to Major Antônio Moraes as Rosinha's intended groom. Already in debt from the clothes he bought, he takes out a loan from his future father-in-law.

- What do you think of Chicó's attitude? What would you do in his place?

- b) Do you usually make several debts at the same time? Why?
- c) Chicó plans to pay off his debts after the wedding. Is this the best plan he could have?
- d) How do you usually plan financially?

Source: Own elaboration

In the third episode, the subjects selected for the activity were money, consumption, debt and planning. We are strengthening the idea of an SFE that has a broader identity, bringing together the subjects proposed in the other activities and others that can contribute to a society with less social injustice and more inclusion. The aim is for the improvement of quality of life to become a common, universal and priority objective, rather than focusing exclusively on the economic growth of a few.

Table 8: Examples of invitations in Activity 3 questions

Type of invitation	Question
Invitation to set the scene for an investigation.	Question 4 – item a: In your opinion, is this financial planning proposed by Jack the Cricket the best solution for paying? Why?
Invitation to identify backgrounds.	Question 2 – item c: Having credit is the same as having money. Do you agree with this?
Invitation to mobilize/explore foregrounds.	Question 1 – item b: What does it mean to have a degree?

Source: Own elaboration

In the example of an invitation to create *scenarios for investigation*, students can be led to reflect on consumption, debt, wants and needs, financial planning, among other SFE themes (Santos, 2017). At this point, it is hoped that the reflections will not only be limited to fiction, but that students' experiences will also be recalled. As in the example for the background invitation, in which the students discuss, based on the idea of credit, the possibilities of financial products and indebtedness, recalling their experiences with these financial elements.

In the foreground invitation, the focus is on long-term life and financial planning, considering the student's interest in pursuing professionalization through education.

In the following extracts, we identify backgrounds, foregrounds and decision-making in the students' reflections in part of the third lesson.

[Researcher reads out the first question.]

Ana Luíza: Because for him, for her, the diploma, for her it was better for him to have a profession, that's it. I think she has a diploma because she studied in the capital! [Background]

Cláudia Daniele: She went because she had more money, right? [Background].

Ana Luíza: A diploma means having a profession, better knowledge, more advanced knowledge, knowing how to [inaudible] defend yourself. Because that's what a diploma is to me! It's independence to leave home, to build a home, a family. That's what a diploma is to me [Foreground Direcionado].

Maria Helena: To improve your finances, right? Because if you don't study, you can't...

Ana Luíza: Nowadays, those who don't follow, have knowledge, have nothing! Why is that? Those who have knowledge open a lot of doors, whether here or abroad. And those who don't have knowledge will live on what? Nothing! Jobs for people who don't have knowledge are what? It's cleaning, it's being [inaudible], it's keeping a recycling [Foreground Destroyed]. And what independence does that person have? They won't have the knowledge to go out and build their own house. They'll be stuck in a life of cleaning, when they don't want to clean, they'll find a husband [Decision Making]. They just give her the

responsibility: “I’m stupid, I have [inaudible], I’m going to find a husband, so I can throw all the responsibility onto him, because he’s going to bring the food into the house and my job is to make children, raise children, put the house in order”. How independent is this person? They won’t have any! [Foreground Amputee]. [Foreground Amputee] Why? They’ll always depend on someone else. It’s like a pillar, if it’s fixed to the ground, it won’t fall. And it won’t depend on anyone else to hold it up. But a weak back will sooner or later need support from another back. It’s the same with us. Life has already [inaudible]. In life, you have to be what you are. Fight, fight, fight to achieve what you want [Directed Foreground]. If a child wants to be a doctor, support them! If a child wants to be a doctor, support them! I think it’s so sad that someone destroys a child’s dream [Decision Making]. Why? Not if [inaudible]. What is the dream? The girl dreams of being a hairdresser. Why is that? Because her aunt, my sister, [inaudible], a teacher [inaudible] is supporting my sister’s dream of being like my sister. What was her dream? To be the teacher’s hairdresser! Or what is her dream? To follow the teacher at the board [Decision Making]. Not to be a bricklayer, he wants to be an engineer, more than a bricklayer. He had the biggest dream of being an engineer. Then I asked him: “Why, sir?” — Because I wanted to be a bricklayer like my father, and be an engineer to build lots of buildings [Decision Making]. I think it’s beautiful for someone to have a dream. It’s like the pillar of a house: you have to put it up so that it doesn’t fall down, so that it stands firm. That’s a dream! [Targeted Foreground]. And today’s poverty destroys a child’s dream, it destroys a family’s dream. They do, but [inaudible] not much. But most of them destroy a dream [inaudible] [Foreground Destroyed]. Why is that? Home, then it doesn’t work out, I’m going back, then it doesn’t work out. But what’s the father going to say? “Why study if you work here? And you can’t [inaudible]. Why go to work? Then he destroys his dream with this attitude. Why? [inaudible], she supported his life. Her dream, in him! [Decision made]. So he was able to live his life [inaudible], and she [inaudible] him. Why? He’s going to be the opposite of her. [inaudible]. The question about the movie, professor, is what? — To change real life? There it is, but you ask the question, but you wouldn’t give her today’s reality, would you?

Maria Helena: Rosinha’s pillar is her father.

Ana Luíza: That’s right, Dad! But Chicó didn’t have any pillars. Rosinha’s family came from other generations with money, [inaudible], she was already able to study in the capital [Background]. But Chicó, Chicó, we don’t even know where he came from, right? We don’t know his family and he doesn’t have that pillar.

Júlia Beatriz: It’s the world that teaches you how to live! [Background].

Carlos Joaquim: Yes! I helped a lot, my son! [Decision Making]. He’s now studying to be a vet [Directed Foreground].

Júlia Beatriz: You’re his strong pillar!!

Carlos Joaquim: I also helped him, and I was there to help him do his studies [Background]. Then he started at a school, a government school, near that college. And I went! I put him in a school that pays per month [Decision Making]. Then he started better at school. When he said: “I want to go to a non-government school”. Then I said: “Okay, I’ll pay”! So I started paying for school, a bit tight, but I paid [Background]. Then he went on and had more desire to study. Today he’s studying to be a vet. He’s twenty-two, twenty-one... I don’t know, I don’t even have any contact with him. He’s graduating as a vet and he’s doing very well! Every month I help him [Decision Making].

Figure 4 shows the activity designed to work with the fourth episode of *O Auto da Compadecida*.

Figure 4: Activity for the fourth episode of *O Auto da Compadecida*

<p>Activity 4 — Episode 4: João Grilo meets the Devil</p> <p>Themes: Social criticism and future prospects</p>
<p>Let's reflect!</p> <p>1 – Remember the scene below.</p>
<p>Scene: After death, the characters meet again for the trial. Severino discovers that he has been tricked by João Grilo and threatens him. João Grilo replies that he will no longer listen to insults quietly, because now everyone is equal, saying that there is no longer poor or rich, brave or cowardly.</p>

- a) Do you agree with João Grilo?
 - b) What made the characters different when they were alive no longer has value when they die?
-

2 – Watch the dialog that took place as soon as Jesus appeared to the characters.

João Grilo: I don't want to be disrespectful to such an important person, but if I'm not mistaken that guy (Devil) just called you Emmanuel.

Jesus: That's right, that's one of my names [...].

João Grilo: But wait! Are you Jesus?

Jesus: I am, why?

João Grilo: No disrespect, but I thought you were a lot less burned.

Bishop: Shut up!

- a) What do you think is being discussed in this dialog?
 - b) Why were the characters amazed by Jesus?
 - c) Why do you think Jesus was represented as a black man?
 - d) Do black people have the same opportunities as white people in society?
 - e) Do you think there are any difficulties in the lives of black people? Explain!
-

3 – When João Grilo asks Compadecida for help, the Devil says:

Devil: Here comes Compadecida. Women get involved in everything.

- a) What do you think of the Devil's speech?
 - b) Do you think women are respected in society?
 - c) Do women have the same opportunities and receive the same salary as men? Explain!
-

4 – Jesus forgives and saves Severino on the grounds that he is not to blame for what he did during his life in the cangaço, because he went mad after the police raided his house and killed his family when he was still a child. He was therefore not responsible for his actions.

- a) Do you think a person's past can affect their future life? How?
 - b) Do you think your past has influenced the life you lead today?
 - c) What encouraged you to be in the EJA today?
 - d) Will colleagues who have left the EJA have their future compromised? How?
-

5 – Follow the dialog below.

João Grilo: It was a lie with me!

Compadecida: You lied to survive, João!

João Grilo: But I liked it too. I ended up getting a taste for deceiving those people.

Compadecida: No! Because they exploited you. Cleverness is the courage of the poor. Cleverness was the only weapon you had against the bad bosses.

- a) According to Compadecida, lying was the way João Grilo defended himself against the people who exploited him. Who exploited him?
- b) Do you agree that this was João Grilo's only way of defending himself? In what other ways could he defend himself from exploitation?

c) Why did João Grilo become poor and exploited as an adult? Could he change this condition?

.....

6 – Let's remember a line from *Compadecida*.

Compadecida: John was poor, like us, my son. And he had to endure the greatest hardships in a dry and poor land like ours. He struggled through life ever since he was a boy. He went through childhood without feeling it, he got used to little bread and a lot of sweat. In the drought, he ate macambira, drank xique-xique juice and went hungry. And when he couldn't, he prayed. When prayer didn't work, he joined a group of retreatants to try to survive on the coast, humiliated, defeated and full of longing. And as soon as he heard the news of rain, he'd set off on the road back, getting excited again, as if hope were a plant that grows with the rain. And when he saw his land again, he thanked God for being a poor, brave, faith-filled sertanejo.

- a) What did *Compadecida* mean by “He struggled for life since he was a boy”?
 - b) What do you think of children who have to work? What will their adult life be like?
 - c) Can a person get used to little and hunger? How can this condition be changed?
 - d) Do you know anyone who left their home, family, friends, city and went elsewhere as a retiree? Why did they do this?
 - e) What could be done so that people don't have to travel further in search of better conditions?
-

7 – Here's what Chicó says at his friend's funeral.

Chicó: When I think that poor João Grilo didn't even get a cemetery burial like the others. Poor guy, he's more abandoned than the baker's dog.

- a) Why do you think João Grilo wasn't buried in the cemetery like the others?
 - b) Why did Chicó compare João Grilo's burial to the burial of the baker's dog?
 - c) In question 1, we saw João Grilo say that death made everyone equal. Do you agree that after death, on earth, the characters became equal? Explain!
 - d) How can we change the differences to seek equality for everyone in life?
-

8 – After the wedding, the friends talk.

Chicó: Everyone without money again!

Rosinha: Not again! It's the first time for me.

Chicó: That's right, my flower. You did it backwards.

João Grilo: I was wondering if it wasn't better this way. And then you get used to misfortune.

- a) Should we get used to the living conditions we have?
- b) What can we do to have a better standard of living in the future?

Source: Own elaboration

The fourth activity promotes discussions based on the issues highlighted, such as social criticism and prospects for the future, based on the last episode of the miniseries. In this sense, the SFE proposed with this activity enables students to develop critical thinking and debate, exploring their experiences and expressing their opinions.

Table 9: Examples of invitations in Activity 4 questions

Type of invitation	Question
Invitation to set the scene for an investigation.	Question 2 – item d: Do black people have equal opportunities to white people in society?

Invitation to identify backgrounds.	Question 4 – item b: Do you think your past has influenced the life you lead today?
Invitation to mobilize/explore foregrounds.	Question 8 – item a: Should we get used to the living conditions we have?

Source: Own elaboration

The sample invitation to create *scenarios for investigation* proposes that reflections be raised on exclusion and violence against groups of people in society. It is hoped that some of the students will recognize personal experiences related to discrimination and that it will be possible to get them to reflect on ways of mitigating these social problems.

In the call for backgrounds, students are explicitly asked about their past and the influence it has on their lives. This question relates to the characters' speeches and experiences, which justify current attitudes on the basis of the past. On the other hand, the invitation to foregrounds reflects more than a projection or planning for the future, but rather the current condition of the students, since the public served by the EJA, in part, returns to school to seek improvements in the quality of life, in different areas.

In the following extracts, we identify backgrounds, foregrounds and decision-making in the students' reflections in part of the last lesson.

[Researcher reads out the third question.]

Júlia Beatriz: I don't think he had to get involved [laughs].

Maria Helena: It depends on the situation! There are things that women get involved in when it comes to resolving something. It's, like, there's an issue that Pedro Afonso is debating, and as his wife, I get there: "Pedro Afonso, it's like this, it's not like this"! Everyone has their own things, right? Some things we have to get involved in [Decision Making]. There are things where the wife has to know how to get involved, so if she sees that her husband is doing something that isn't going well, you can get in there with him and give him advice. Say: "As your wife, I'd like to..." I've often done that with him. And then he understood! He doesn't like me giving him advice, but there are things I do, because often, if I don't give him advice on things, then he'll say: "I wish you'd tell me"! Me: "You see, you see, a woman can't miss everything"! [Background].

Cláudia Daniele: I think it's also prejudice, that only men solve things and women don't [Background].

Maria Helena: Yes, there's that too, prejudice!

Júlia Beatriz: In parts, yes! Right, professor? What's right is right!

Cláudia Daniele: I think that now, women are being [inaudible], but not before, women had to conquer space each time. But there's still prejudice. Like professions such as doctors, drivers, policemen, which used to be... [Background]

Maria Helena: In politics, it was only men, there were no women! [Background]

Cláudia Daniele: Now, there are many women competing. Women are running to be state governors. Who knows, one day it might be me, Júlia Beatriz! [Foreground Multiplied].

Júlia Beatriz: No, I don't want to!

Maria Helena: There are some who get paid more, right?!

Júlia Beatriz: They're the minority who get paid more. We don't have the same opportunities as men [Background].

Cláudia Daniele: No, they don't!

Maria Helena: The man, if he were a man, in my place, in the office, right? They wouldn't have done that, they would have treated me differently! [Background].

Júlia Beatriz: If he's finished school, he gets in!

Cláudia Daniele: I was going to choose the man, because women have children, because women get sick more, they have PMS [Background].

Maria Helena: My neighbor has a degree, right? She opened a firm in [inaudible]. Then she left because of the girl, she got sick [inaudible]. Then they pulled her over, but she said [inaudible] [Background].

Júlia Beatriz: At the FC, you can only get in if you have a tubal ligation [Background]. It's very [inaudible].

We hope that the examples explored in the four activities are not seen in a limited way, but rather as one possibility among many others that may arise in different classrooms and classes. However, we need to revisit the central ideas of EMC (Skovsmose, 2011, 2014, 2018), so that we understand that the activities, as invitations to reflect on SFE, can enable students to learn in order to form citizens who are critical, reflective, responsible and supportive of social issues.

5 Final considerations

Thus, we believe that the inclusion of SFE in classrooms, particularly in the EJA, needs to dialog with the social demands and needs of the different contexts in which students are inserted. In this way, their backgrounds can become objects of reflection. In addition, it is necessary to provoke discussions related to contexts that students do not have access to or find difficult to reach, as this puts them in a frontier position and their foregrounds can be stimulated.

The possibilities exemplified in the previous section, based on the questions in the activities, also present themselves as opportunities for *scenarios for investigation* to be built in the classroom.

The idea of SFE that we advocate needs to encompass not only the individual, with their personal issues related to their finances, but also aspects related to their community, since they live in a community and have their civic responsibilities. In this way, students need to be prepared not only to receive information or ideas related to finances, but also to be able to interpret them, evaluate them, reflect on them, position themselves, and be prepared for the conflict of ideas and thus make their decisions, both individually and collectively/socially.

In this sense, it is necessary for aspects of the student's individuality related to finance to be investigated from their backgrounds and foregrounds. Likewise, they also need to be prepared to think and take action that influences their community and society. This can be achieved by creating scenarios for investigation. However, it is important to emphasize that the development of students' SFE learning, whether individually or collectively/socially, should not be limited to the examples and discussions proposed in this text.

Finally, we would like to point out that the SFE themes discussed through the activities proposed and debated in this article do not exhaust the possibilities for analyzing the episodes of *O Auto da Compadecida*. Therefore, it is possible that other themes could be observed by other researchers, enriching the pedagogical potential of the work for working with SFE.

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