


Reading and writing in youth and adult education: Learning difficulties and importance in social development

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ABSTRACT

Youth and Adult Education (EJA) has been standing out, with the purpose of providing access to school for the public that, for some reason, has been excluded, thus allowing them to recover lost time in the field of formal education and in preparation to exercise their rights and duties as citizens. The purpose of this research is to weave some reflections about reading and writing in EJA. Its objectives are to evaluate the importance of reading and writing in the personal and social development of students, as well as to highlight learning difficulties. The relevance of the study is evidenced when, in the role of EJA teacher, at the Municipal School of Elementary Education of Congo-PB, the institution studied, it was possible to observe the difficulties presented in the learning of reading and writing. The methodology used the field research technique, with the use of a questionnaire. 20 of the 55 EJA students were interviewed. It was found that, although they feel difficulty, the students were able to overcome it and learn to read and write, despite their learning limitations. Such learning can help to improve the interpersonal and professional relationships of these citizens, collaborating with their social development.

Keywords: Reading and writing, Apprenticeship, EJA.

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INTRODUCTION

Youth and Adult Education (EJA) is aimed at individuals who, for some reason, had to interrupt their studies as a child, for reasons such as: work, teenage pregnancy or even those students considered problematic (rebellious); with consistent school dropouts, numerous failures, among other aspects that make these people become marginalized by society. Youth and Adult Education arises with the objective of attracting and welcoming this class, providing the recovery of lost time in the educational field and preparing them to exercise their role as citizens during a society taken by technological advances and driven by capitalism. However, it is necessary to reflect on how to work in the teaching-learning process of these individuals, as they bring with them a vast baggage of knowledge acquired throughout their lives.

Article 37 of the Law of Guidelines and Bases-LDB (Law No. 9394/96) states: "The education of young people and adults will be aimed at those who do not have access to or continuity of studies in primary and secondary education at the appropriate age".

According to Freire (1997), it can be considered that teaching is not transferring knowledge, but creating possibilities for its production or construction. Today, many educators recognize that literacy is not just about learning to put letters together to form words. To really teach literacy, it is necessary to introduce young people and adults to the universe of writing, showing them the main types of texts present in our society.

Therefore, it is important to analyze the teaching-learning relationship *versus* reading and writing of the EJA target audience. The present study visualized the dynamics of EJA related to the difficulty of learning to read and write. The object of study was the Municipal School of Elementary Education of Congo-PB, being observed the students of a Youth and Adult Education class.

THE IMPORTANCE OF READING

The subject's first contacts with reading occur before his/her inclusion in the school environment, through the interaction with various reading objects, in different social contexts. However, in many cases, it is the beginning of school life that seals the subject's entry into the universe of reading, through literacy, — which, however, by itself, does not allow the subject to actively insert himself in the different situations in which reading is present (SOARES, 2003).

According to Kleiman (2005), the school is the most important of the literacy agencies, assuming a prominent role in the reading formation of students. However, this role is historically permeated by social, political, and ideological conflicts. According to Soares (2004), access to the literate world, for the lower classes, in general, is difficult or even impossible, being restricted to literacy, because "[...] the people are allowed to learn to read, they are not allowed to become *readers*" (SOARES, 2004, p. 25).



With the Law of Guidelines and Bases (LDB) 9.394/96, the formation of the subject began to be seen in a more humanistic way. In this law, education is understood as a duty of the family and the State, with the purpose not only of training for work, but also of the full development of the human being and his preparation to exercise citizenship (CARNEIRO, 2009). In this new panorama proposed by the law in force, reading gains centrality and much has been discussed about the importance of the act of reading, about the social function of reading and about the relevance of all areas of knowledge to contemplate and enable reading practices that corroborate the critical formation of students.

Entering the universe of reading implies understanding it as a cultural practice, intrinsically linked to the social relations established in a given space-time. Understood in this way, reading is characterized as a plural, creative, inventive, producing practice, which is not exhausted, nor is it annulled, within the limits of what is read, as if the meaning desired by its author should be inscribed with all immediacy and transparency, without resistance or deviation, in the minds of its readers (BOURDIEU; CHARTIER, 2001).

Being a reader, as can be seen, requires the active participation of the subject in the process of constructing meanings for what is read. The National Curriculum Parameters, in the topic Reading Practice, defend this performance of the reader and guarantee that reading is a process in which the reader performs an active work of constructing the meaning of the text, based on its objectives, its knowledge about the subject, about the author, from everything it knows about the language: characteristics of the gender, of the bearer, of the writing system (BRASIL, 2001).

For Silva (1984), the act of reading is complex and requires the subject's performance in the execution of a series of mental actions, with emphasis on the actions of verifying, comparing and transforming. According to the author, reading begins at the moment when the subject perceives the existence of written documents immersed in the world; Every text maintains relations with the world in which it is inserted, fulfilling an intention. By coming into contact with the text and seeking its intentionality, the subject opens himself to the possibilities of signification, to the propositions of the world that the signs of the document evoke or suggest.

Reading manifests itself, then, as the experience resulting from the path followed by the subject's consciousness in its project of unveiling the text. It is this same experience (or experience of the horizons unveiled through the text) that will allow the emergence of the *reader* (SILVA, 1984).

The realization of a critical reading enables the reader to do much more than appropriate the meaning of the text; it is the driving force for the construction of the subject-reader himself, immersed in his sociocultural reality, helping him in the process of understanding, beyond the written text, the text-world (ALVES; RODRIGUES, 2013).



Learning to read and write thus becomes an opportunity for women and men to realize what it really means to *say the word*: a human behavior that involves action and reflection. To say the word, in a true sense, is the right to express oneself and the world, to create and recreate, to decide, to choose (FREIRE, 1981).

Solé (1998) considers reading as a process of interaction between the subject-reader and the text, which has some implications, among them, the requirement of an active reader, capable of processing and examining what he reads, and the need to set clear objectives, prior to the act of reading, that guide the readings performed.

THE IMPORTANCE OF WRITING

The school proposes a type of teaching, based on a unique model of knowledge. The writing experienced in it does not find its social function and is limited to the correction of errors, causing the marginalized class to find no meaning in school and to have its culture disregarded by the dominant class, by disbelieving in the intellectual capacity of those in situations of poverty (ALVES; RODRIGUES, 2013).

Kleiman (2005) presents the concept of literacy and considers false the belief that the most important aspect for learning to write is the method used. The construction of written language is influenced by several concepts that cannot be seen as mere methodological novelties, often misinterpreted. Literacy corresponds to the situation of people's involvement with the world of writing, of letters, and characterizes the passage of man through the society of letters, of language, his identity transformation and the taking of action in the culturally and historically recorded context.

The complexity of literacy involves multiple capacities to reach the use of writing in society, with an impact on modern life as well. His contributions advance historically, from the perception that it was not enough to write legibly, mastering the written code, it became necessary to attribute meaning to writing in the use of different supports and textual/discursive genres, bringing together an infinity of social situations. In this sense, individual competencies are cooperatively aggregated to achieve objectives in situated practices of writing use, unlike traditional practices that prioritize individual activities decontextualized, even competitively. It is important to highlight that speech corresponds to a language that cannot be disregarded from the process of acquiring writing, due to its complementarity with the use of writing in society, as a way of organizing reality (ALVES; RODRIGUES, 2013).



YOUTH AND ADULT EDUCATION (EJA)

The beginning of the history of EJA is associated with the arrival of the Jesuits in Brazil, in the colonial period, who, as Cunha (1999) states, had as their main objective the religious indoctrination of the population, that is, a more religious character than an educational one.

The history of Youth and Adult Education is similar to the history of youth and adult literacy in Brazil. It began in the 1980s through campaigns against illiteracy, because at that time, it represented one of the country's major social problems. Regarding the literacy process, the EJA has undergone several modifications. In the search for adult literacy that effectively leads to the mastery of written language and not only of technologies, and seeking to insert, in a more complete way, young people and adults in the world of writing, experiences take on different consistencies and build new paradigms (PEREIRA, 2005).

It is believed that, at the heart of the problematization in relation to literacy and the education of young people and adults, is the lack of experience of teachers in the daily lives of students. As far as teachers are concerned, these conditions have to do with their education, with their perception of themselves and their role in the school, with their interaction in relation to knowledge, students, and the classroom space (PEREIRA, 2005).

LEARNING DISABILITIES IN EJA

According to Tfouni (2002), literacy refers to the acquisition of writing as learning skills for reading, writing and the so-called language practices. This is carried out, in general, through the process of schooling and, therefore, formal instruction. Literacy thus belongs to the realm of the individual.

Literacy and literacy are distinct processes, although they can and should go hand in hand. Literacy and Literacy cannot be dissociated, as one complements the other. Thus, it would be necessary to teach literacy and literacy as two distinct but not inseparable actions; on the contrary, the ideal would be to teach literacy by literacy, that is, to teach reading and writing in the context of the social practices of reading and writing, so that the individual becomes, at the same time, literate and literate (SOARES, 2004).

The ideal would be to teach literacy to literacy, hence the importance of not dissociating both. A literate person is one who can only read and write; on the other hand, the literate person is able to go further, meets the social demands of reading and writing, which is why he is able to write a letter, a note, written of his own authorship (SOARES, 2004).

As Freire (1989) said, literacy cannot be reduced to the pure teaching of words, syllables or letters. Literacy is the creation or assembly of written expression from oral expression. Literacy, then, should not be considered only the acquisition of the written code, but a process that guides this



student to read, write and use this reading and writing in social practices, using their experiences and previous knowledge as guides for this process.

According to Soares (2004), an illiterate person can be literate to a certain extent, so that he or she becomes interested in the world of reading and writing, listening to someone read a newspaper article or even dictating something for a literate person to write.

Youth and adult teachers have the mission of taking into account the student's literacy knowledge and developing activities that allow this student to further enrich their knowledge, deepening the characteristics of these writings and thus having a satisfactory social integration (ESTEVEES, 2011).

Freire (1989) elaborated the method of Youth and Adult Literacy, based on dialogue, mainly, the dialogue between educator and student, one listening to and respecting the other, since the role of man is that of a subject and not of a simple object.

The teacher has to provide this interaction with the student and work on reality, previous knowledge, and the teachings that he has through his life trajectory. It is not only Reading and Writing, oral speech is also important, because the literate person has a different way of speaking from an illiterate or illiterate person, the one who lives with writing has his oral language changed, the way of speaking and vocabulary changes (SOARES, 2004).

Therefore, it is worth noting that one of the main functions of EJA is to repair the educational damage denied to this part of society and to provoke changes not only in the subjects involved. Therefore, it is necessary to keep in mind that this type of teaching is a little more complex than the others, because EJA students are young people and adults, workers or not, mature, possessing a conscience and a formed knowledge about the school and the world, which must be respected (ESTEVEES, 2011).

READING AND WRITING AS TOOLS IN YOUTH AND ADULT EDUCATION

From the perspective of Youth and Adult Education, the teaching content is constituted in a popular way and represents an "instrument of man's fulfillment", and the form of work meets social ideals, in accordance with the degree of development experienced in the process. The relationship of interdependence between form and content clarifies that the method needs to be defined depending on the social meaning of the content (ALVES; RODRIGUES, 2013).

EJA strives for a critical conception of teaching-learning conceived by the reflexive way of thinking and contradicts the naïve conception of education. Critical consciousness, called into question, conceives knowledge as a product of real existence: it considers the cultural moment, the concrete presentation and knowledge as part of the individual's reality, deriving from the experience of the subjects and being part of the rational capacity.



When discussing the value of illiteracy rates and educational statistics in general, it is understood that critical consciousness analyzes data to understand the relative social value, and the context of its existence, and then assigns value. The critical notion of adult literacy considers that it is necessary to awaken the critical consciousness of the learner, and the knowledge of reading is only one element of this larger construction, which is the awareness of the need to reach the literate plane. However, society becomes the educator of the educator and the historical time determines the general interests of the moment, and it is then up to the collective to convert the teacher into an active force in the economic and cultural development of society, with the establishment of a critical pedagogical theory, in which educator and student educate each other reciprocally (ALVES; RODRIGUES, 2013).

Youth and Adult Education perceives man as the subject of the process that requires methods appropriate to its concreteness. There is a need to establish a careful look at the social context of individuals, considering the influence of language on the identity of the subjects, even because language brings together values, and the systems of expression have intention and can occur verbally or non-verbally (RIBEIRO, 2006).

As an obstacle to be overcome, the written code is discovered by the group of young people and adults, and as they become aware, they become literate. In Youth and Adult Education, from the beginning of the literacy process, the discussion is provided to the group, so that the challenges are overcome and the power of reflection of conscience is also exercised. In this sense, the educational process needs social contents, involving consciousness and the world, word and power, knowledge and politics, soon theory and practice (FREIRE; NOGUEIRA, 2001).

One of the main concerns in the teaching/learning process in the EJA modality is reading and writing. Collelo (2004) states that the ability to read and write does not depend exclusively on the subject's ability to "add pieces of writing", but on understanding how the structure of language works and the way it is used in our society.

It is worth noting that literacy teachers should always be evaluating their practice in the classroom, since it is not possible to evaluate without self-evaluation. According to Freire (1991), literacy goes far beyond the mechanical decoding of words, it has a much broader meaning, since it enables a critical reading of reality, constitutes an important instrument for rescuing citizenship and reinforcing citizen engagement in social movements that fight for the improvement of quality of life and social transformation.

Thus, reading and writing can be seen as mechanisms of interaction and social inclusion, which enable the individual to understand the information that is essential for better performance in their coexistence with others and with the world around them.



METHODOLOGY

CHARACTERIZATION OF THE MUNICIPALITY OF CONGO-PB

The municipality of Congo is located in the Congo Microregion and in the Borborema Mesoregion of the State of Paraíba. Its area is 274 km², representing 0.4856% of the State, 0.0176% of the Region and 0.0032% of the entire Brazilian territory. The seat of the municipality has an altitude of approximately 480 meters, 212.0009 km from the capital. Access is made from João Pessoa by the highways BR 230/BR 412/PB 214 It is inserted in the Folha SUDENE de Sumé (CPRM, 2005).

The inhabitants are called Congolese. The municipality had 4,602 inhabitants in the last census. The population density is 14.1 inhabitants per km² in the territory of the municipality. Neighboring the municipalities of Salgadinho, Coxixola and Caiçara, Congo is located 50 km north of Brejo da Madre de Deus, the largest city in the vicinity. Located at an altitude of 492 meters, Congo has the following geographical coordinates: Latitude: 7° 47' 41" South, Longitude: 36° 39' 42" West (CPRM, 2005).

The municipality was created in 1959, the total population is 4,602 inhabitants, 2,176 of which are in the urban area. Its Human Development Index (HDI) is 0.631 (Atlas of Human Development/UNDP, 2000).

There are 208 permanent private households with toilets connected to the General Sewage Network, 618 permanent private households with water supply connected to the General Water Network, and 343 permanent private households have garbage collected (CPRM, 2005).

There are 16 hospital beds in 04 health establishments that provide services to the SUS. Elementary School has 1,049 enrollments and High School 213. In the Articulations between the Institutions, there is the Cooperation Agreement with Public Entities in the areas of education, health, transport and economic development and the Intermunicipal Consortium in the area of health.

The municipality of Congo is predominantly inserted in the geoenvironmental unit of the Sertaneja Depression, which represents the typical landscape of the semi-arid Northeast, characterized by a very monotonous pediplanation surface, predominantly smooth-undulating relief, cut by narrow valleys, with dissected slopes. Residual elevations, ridges, and/or hillocks dot the horizon line. These isolated reliefs testify to the intense cycles of erosion that affected a large part of the northeastern hinterland (CPRM, 2005).

OBJECT OF STUDY

The research was carried out at the Municipal School of Elementary Education of Congo, located at Rua Senador Rui Carneiro, S/N, Centro, urban area of the municipality of Congo.



The School has a staff of about 37 (thirty-seven) teachers, distributed from the 1st to the 9th year of Elementary School I, 90% of these have higher education and 22 (twenty-two) are employees, distributed in: administrative assistant, general services assistant, watchmen, who work in different shifts, cooks and secretaries. The school meets a demand of 635 (six hundred and thirty-five) students.

The school operates in the three shifts (morning, afternoon and evening), in the evening the Youth and Adult Education classes operate.

DATA COLLECTION

Data were collected from the application of a questionnaire/anamnesis composed of 10 questions, within a specific dynamic for the application of the questionnaire, organized in a single moment.

DATA ANALYSIS PROCEDURE

Following the perspective of the Survey, in this phase the data were listed, grouped into categories, statistically treated and presented in the form of figures (graphs) with the aid of a computer application EXCEL and also with the aid of a text editor application WORD.

TYPE OF RESEARCH

The present study is of the exploratory-descriptive type with a quantitative approach, through a field research technique, specifically a survey, with the use of instruments in the form of a questionnaire (TRIVINOS, 1992).

From the Survey technique, answers to the multiple-choice questions formulated in the research instrument were used, and the answers were transformed into codes, in order to allow a better grouping of the data and, consequently, their presentation.

Quantitative analysis, as Trivinos (1992) reminds us, refers to data that have a type of objectivity and conceptual validity. Thus, quantitative analysis transforms opinions and information into numbers, by means of statistical resources and techniques to classify and analyze them.

As for the purposes, the research is characterized by being of the exploratory type, which, according to Silva and Menezes (2001), aims to identify the factors that determine or contribute to the occurrence of the phenomena. It also deepens the knowledge of reality because it explains the reason, the "why" of things.

As for the means, the research becomes descriptive. For Rudio (1999), descriptive research is interested in discovering and observing phenomena in order to describe, classify and interpret them.

The field research consisted of the observation of facts and phenomena and the collection of data for later analysis.

POPULATION AND SAMPLE

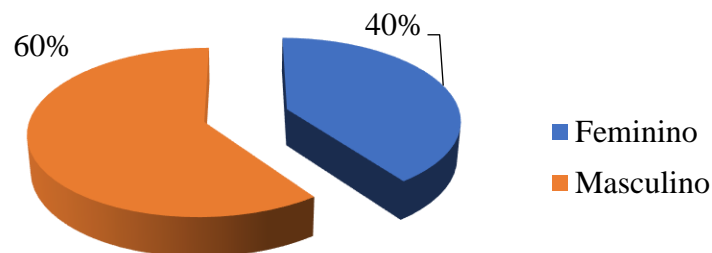
The research was carried out with the students of the EJA of the Municipal School of Elementary Education of Congo, located at Senador Rui Carneiro Street s/n, Urban Zone of the Municipality of Congo – PB.

The EJA class consists of 55 students. Of these, 20 students were interviewed. In the school there are 08 (eight) teachers who work with EJA, and 05 (five) of them were interviewed.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Figure 1 shows the results regarding the percentage of men and women who study in the EJA classes at this school.

Figure 1 – Percentage of users with respect to gender.

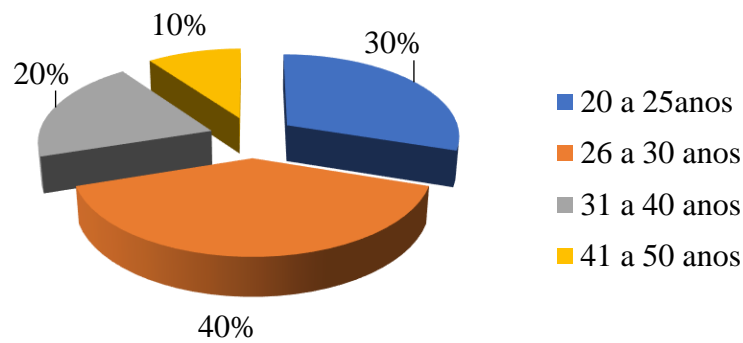


Source: Survey data, 2017.

Figure 1 shows that 60% of the EJA audience are men and 40% are women. The current Brazilian Federal Constitution clearly states that all people are given the right to education, equal conditions for access to and permanence in school, and equality between the sexes. However, what may justify the great demand of males for the EJA teaching modality is the fact that most men enter the labor market at an early age, being unable to attend regular school.

Figure 2 illustrates the results regarding the percentage of students in relation to their age group.

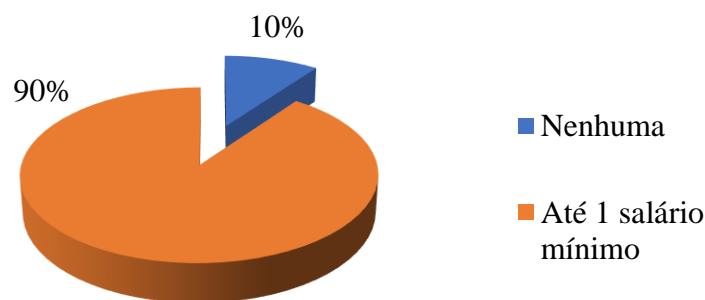
Figure 2 – Percentage of students in relation to age group.



Source: Survey data, 2017.

The data in Figure 3 illustrate the information regarding the students' family income.

Figure 3 – Percentage of respondents in relation to family income.

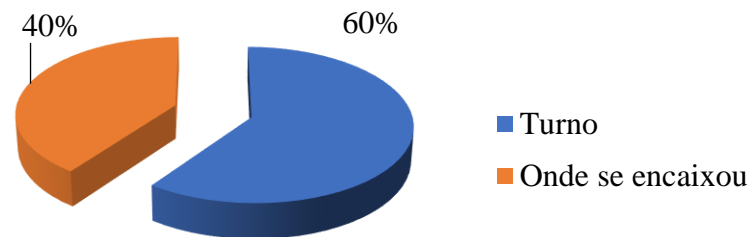


Source: Survey data, 2017.

Figure 3 shows that 90% of the students receive up to one minimum wage and only 10% have no income and survive depending on other people. This reality may be the result of the reduction in the supply of jobs and the productive and administrative rationalization undertaken by companies.

Figure 4 shows the reasons for choosing the EJA modality.

Figure 4 – Why the choice of EJA?

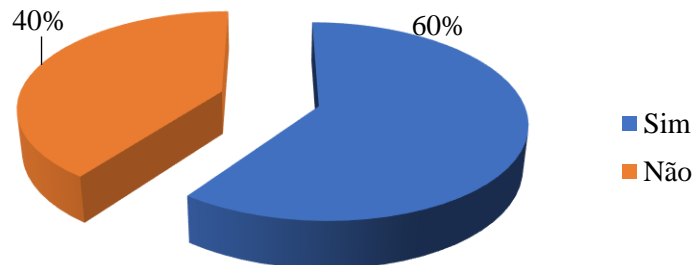


Source: Survey data, 2017.

Figure 4 shows that 60% of the students chose EJA because of the course shift, while 40% chose it because it was the most appropriate teaching modality for their living conditions.

Figure 5 illustrates the percentage of responses to the question "Have you achieved your reading and writing goals?"

Figure 5 – Answers to the question "Have you been able to achieve your reading and writing goals?"

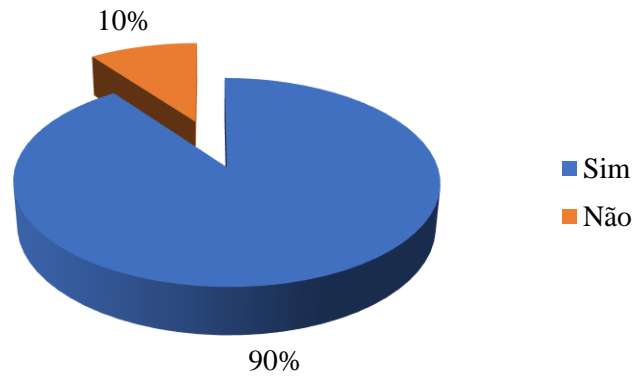


Source: Survey data, 2017.

According to Figure 5, it was found that 60% of the students were able to achieve their reading and writing goals or are succeeding; only 40% are not. Based on the Brazilian socio-political context and, especially, the educational demands aimed at young people and adults, reading and writing are considered as basic and interdisciplinary skills for the full realization of the social function of the school.

Figure 6 shows the results of the question asked to the students: "Did you have difficulty learning to read?".

Figure 6 – Question: "Did you have difficulty learning to read?"

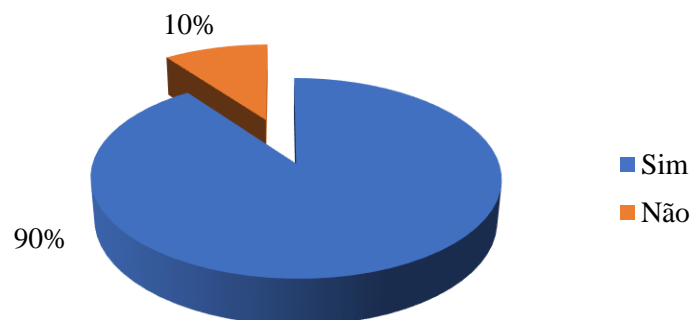


Source: Survey data, 2017.

As shown in Figure 6, it was observed that 90% of the students felt difficulty in learning to read, only 10% did not. Language is the main system of culturally constructed signs. Reading and writing take on the character of social and cultural practice and become experiences constituted in the interaction between subjects who actively participate in the attribution and construction of meanings to everything that is around them. Silva (1984), when addressing this issue, explains that understanding the message, understanding oneself in the message, understanding oneself through the message are the three fundamental purposes of reading, which far go beyond any utilitarian or merely "bookish" aspects of reader-text communication. Reading is, ultimately, not only a bridge to awareness, but also a way of existing in which the individual understands and interprets the expression recorded by writing and begins to understand himself in the world.

Figure 7 illustrates the results of the students' questioning: "Did you have difficulty learning to write?"

Figure 7 – Question: "Did you have difficulty learning to write?"



Source: Survey data, 2017.

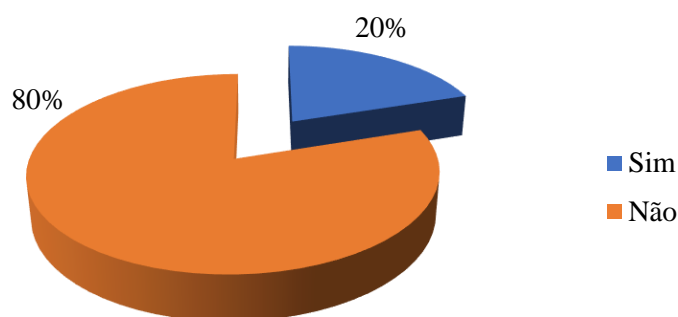
As shown in Figure 7, it was observed that 90% of the students felt difficulty in learning and only 10% did not. Reading and producing texts, nowadays, are processes that need to be faced by the

school no longer from their mechanical and repetitive nature. It is necessary to broaden the conceptions linked to them, taking into account, on the one hand, the complexity inherent to these processes and, on the other hand, the scenario that contemporaneity presents (BUOGO *et al.*, 2013).

In this context, reading and writing need to be seen as processes that go beyond the mere activity of deciphering and decoding signs. They represent, in reality, the possibility of people accessing the world, expressing it and interacting in it with knowledge and with other human beings. At the heart of this possibility is the meaning of human communication, since reading and writing enable interrelations, exchanges, growth, and collective learning (SOARES, 1994).

Figure 8 represents the students' knowledge of reading before studying in EJA.

Figure 8 – Answers to the question "Did you already know how to read before studying at EJA?".

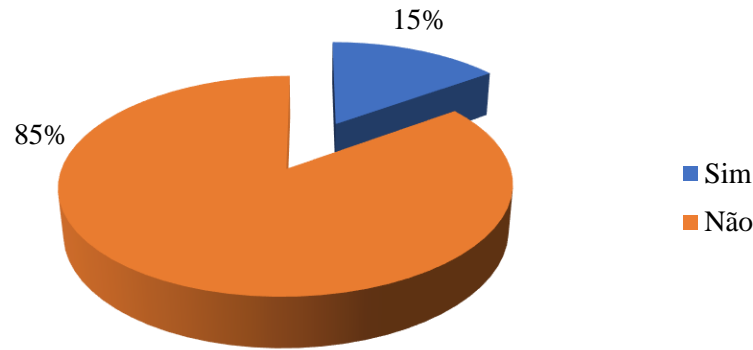


Source: Survey data, 2017.

As shown in Figure 8, 80% did not know how to read before studying at EJA, and only 20% did. EJA students bring with them a worldview influenced by their cultural traits of origin and by their social, family and professional experience. By choosing the path to school, the question begins to accompany the student's vision, leaving him prepared to look. Open to learning, they come to the classroom with a gaze that is, on the one hand, a receptive, sensitive gaze, and, on the other, it is an active gaze: a curious, exploring gaze, a gaze that investigates, a gaze that thinks.

Figure 9 illustrates the students' knowledge of writing before studying in EJA.

Figure 9 – Answers to the question "Did you already know how to write before studying at EJA?".



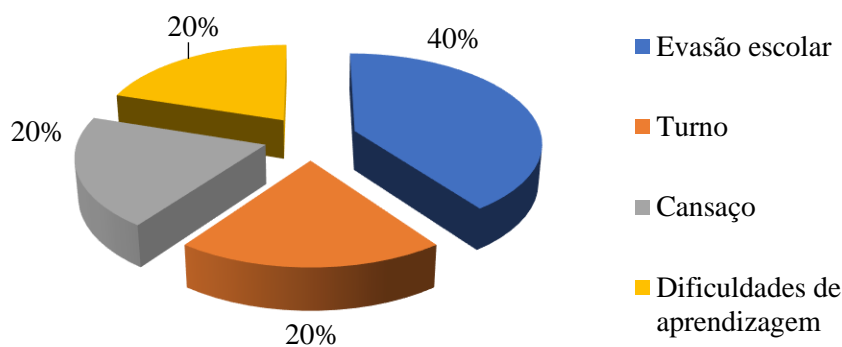
Source: Survey data, 2017.

According to Figure 9, 85% of the students did not know how to write before studying in EJA, only 15% already had this knowledge. The knowledge of a person, who seeks school late, is innumerable and acquired throughout his life history.

Sensible knowledge is a knowledge sustained by the five senses, a knowledge that everyone possesses, but which is little valued in modern life. It is that knowledge that is little stimulated in a classroom and that many teachers attribute their exploration only to art classes (MINISTRY OF EDUCATION, 2017).

Figure 10 shows the results regarding the difficulties encountered by teachers in the EJA classroom.

Figure 10 – Difficulties in the classroom.



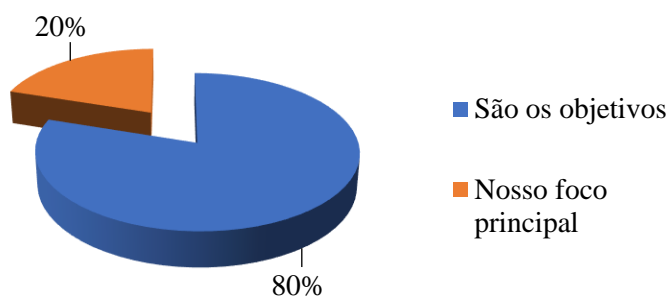
Source: Survey data, 2017.

According to Figure 10, it was observed that 40% of the difficulties in the classroom originate from school dropout, 20% from the question of the shift, 20% due to fatigue and 20% due to learning difficulties. The teaching of EJA is precisely aimed at the search for awareness of this subject, enabling him to act and react to concrete situations of his reality. Youth and Adult Education needs

flexibility in its curricular organization. To this end, it is necessary to make evaluations of the reality of which this student is a part, in order to have the regional culture as a basis, thus providing the appropriation of the universal culture. Difficulties exist and will exist, it is up to those involved to overcome them (HAIDT, 1999).

Figure 11 illustrates the result regarding the role of reading and writing in EJA teaching.

Figure 11 – Role of reading and writing in EJA teaching, in the opinion of teachers.

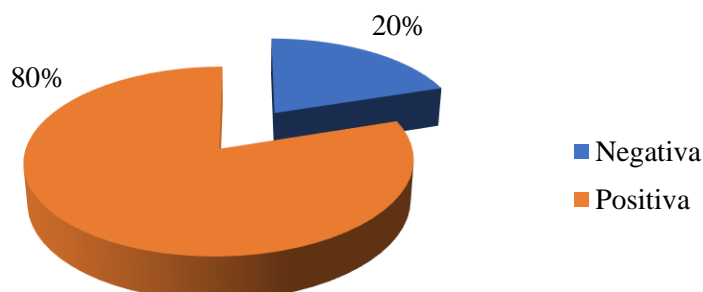


Source: Survey data, 2017.

According to Figure 11, it can be observed that 80% of teachers evaluate the role of reading and writing as the main focus; 20% said they are EJA's goals. The process of student development contributes to the success between learner and educator with full respect, considering each individual as an unexplored source of knowledge. With this, the potential of each one is evaluated, the differences respected, all the student's baggage valued, their reality observed and, through solid knowledge, the action to be able to transform it for their own benefit (HAIDT, 1999).

Figure 12 shows the evaluation of the students by the teachers in relation to reading in EJA.

Figure 12 – Evaluation of students by teachers in relation to reading in EJA.

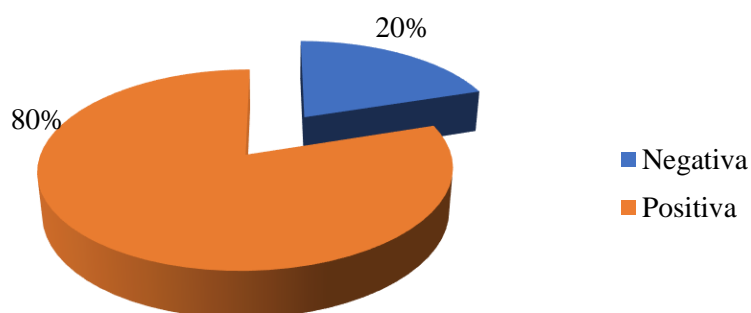


Source: Survey data, 2017.

According to Figure 12, 80% of the teachers evaluate the relationship to reading in EJA positively and only 20% analyzed it negatively. Teaching requires dedication and love. The teacher is knowledgeable and capable of making the students transform their realities, encouraging them to awaken, to the desire for change, to want to go further.

Figure 13 shows the results of the teachers' evaluation of the students' performance in writing.

Figure 13 – Evaluation of teachers in relation to students' performance in writing.

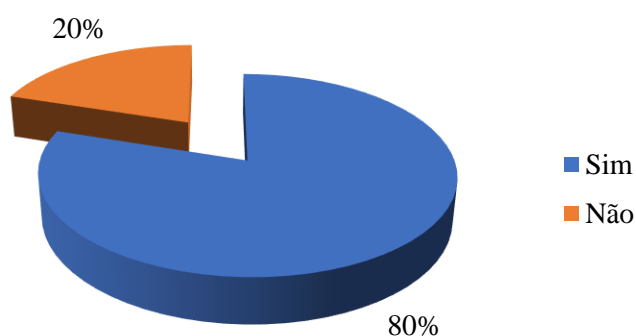


Source: Survey data, 2017.

According to Figure 13, it was observed that 80% of the teachers evaluate the students' performance in writing positively and only 20% evaluate it negatively. For Haidt (1999), learning is the assimilation of new data to previous mental schemas, and the consequent reorganization or restructuring of previous assimilated data to fit the new data. Therefore, for young people and adults to feel part of the classroom context, it is important for the educator to respect the reality of the learner.

Figure 14 illustrates the teachers' opinions regarding the question "Are you achieving your goals in EJA teaching?".

Figure 14 – Question: "Are you achieving your goals in teaching EJA?".



Source: Survey data, 2017.



Figure 14 shows that 80% of the teachers are achieving their goals, but only 20% are not. Youth and Adult Education is not only about the content to be taught, but also about learning techniques and means to obtain knowledge, that is, learning how to learn. This is of fundamental importance when adults are expected to develop certain skills so that, through these, they can build and develop their competencies.

The relationships observed in the vast majority of the EJA classroom, between teachers and students, is a horizontal relationship, of equals. In it, everyone learns, has a voice and the right to participate constantly, giving opinions, often making criticisms, in a constructive way to favor the development of the group, respecting the difficulties encountered with learning.

In the case studied, the students claimed to have difficulties in learning to read and write and, despite this, they managed to overcome themselves and acquire the learning of reading and writing. Teachers also face difficulties in the classroom, attributed to fatigue, the shift in which classes are held, and difficulties in understanding students.

Despite this scenario, the primary objectives of EJA (to develop students' reading and writing skills) are being achieved.

CONCLUSIONS

According to the results presented, it can be concluded that:

- It was observed that in the universe surveyed there is a predominance of males, with the predominant age group being between 26 and 30 years old, which leads to the deduction that they are individuals in full work activity.
- Most survive on just one minimum wage, an income that comes from the Federal Government's Bolsa Família program, as well as from precarious jobs without labor rights in the informal sector.
- It was also observed that the students feel stimulated by the EJA professionals, taking into account that the teachers value the experiences of each one.
- Most of them have already managed to achieve their goals in EJA, which are to read and write, despite experiencing difficulties.
- Regarding the results related to teachers, it can be observed that the most common types of learning difficulties in the classroom are: school dropout, the shift in which classes are held, fatigue and learning difficulties.



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