


READ, CHILD! LITERARY READING AND DIVERSITY

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ABSTRACT

The project *Leia, criança!* promoted actions and reflections that valued diversity and respect for differences through literature. Historically, the school has difficulties in dealing with diversity and in this gap social projects that prioritize literary reading can promote discussion about differences. The project discussed themes historically invisible in the school context while fighting for the promotion of full citizenship through educational practices. Their approaches positioned the school in the direct fight against gender, ethnic-racial, economic-social discrimination, recognizing that such practices represent dilemmas that need to be denaturalized and overcome in social relations, because they foster hatred, intolerance of differences and, above all, make people unequal in the school environment. The target audience was students from the 6th grade of Elementary School in the public network of the city of Guarapuava-PR.

Keywords: Literature. Literacy. Diversity. Citizenship.

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INTRODUCTION

If, because of I don't know what excess of socialism or barbarism, all our disciplines were to be expelled from teaching, except one, it is the literary discipline that should be saved, because all the sciences are present in the literary monument.
(BARTHES, 1979, p.18 -19)

Currently, many children are moving away from the habit of reading. Factors such as the use of technology combined with the lack of incentive have contributed to the lack of interest in literary reading. It has never been more essential to read than it is today. Through reading, we can transport ourselves to unknown worlds, explore new realities, understand feelings and emotions around us, and develop a critical sense.

For Cosson (2006, p. 23):

[...] We must understand that literary literacy is a social practice and, as such, the responsibility of the school. The question to be faced is not whether or not the school should schooling literature [...], but rather how to do this schooling without detracting from it, without transforming it into a simulacrum of itself that denies rather than confirms its power of humanization.

Therefore, according to Azevedo et al (2023,) literary reading increases the ability to understand society, since it governs our communication model. No matter where we are, we will be bombarded with information, messages that are transmitted through different linguistic channels, whether verbal or non-verbal. However, it will be up to the critical reader to know how to interpret the different literary texts and how to deal with the different contexts as well as the meanings for which they are intended. Therefore, through the reading they do, the reader develops relationships with the socio-historical and cultural context and will improve the teaching-learning process.

The project *Leia, criança!* aimed to encourage and promote actions and reflections that value diversity and respect for differences through literature. Historically, schools have faced challenges when dealing with diversity. In this context, social projects that encourage literary reading can foster discussions about differences. The school environment, considered the embryo of society, is composed of a diverse population, with varied ethnic groups, customs and beliefs. It is a space where all students should have the same opportunities, but with different learning approaches.

For Vygotsky (1989, p.16), "children are the result of their experiences and exchange with the other". To understand their development, it is necessary to consider the space in which they live and the way they construct meanings. Perrenoud (2000) argues that facing the challenge of proposing teaching that respects the culture of the community means



verifying each social and cultural reality with the concern of outlining a pedagogical project to serve everyone without exception. What is proposed is a discussion about identity between different cultures, building a reflection on man and his differences, both in terms of his individuality and his position in the social and collective sphere.

The *Read, Child! Project* discussed historically invisible themes in the school context while fighting for the promotion of full citizenship through educational practices. Their approaches position the school in the direct fight against gender, ethnic-racial, economic-social discrimination, recognizing that such practices represent dilemmas that need to be denaturalized and overcome in social relations, because they foster hatred, intolerance of differences and, above all, make people unequal in the school environment. For Brito (2014), in this way, subjects considered strangers may feel "unequal", because they do not correspond to models or standards traditionally accepted as "normal". And, because they are strangers, because they do not correspond to these standards, their proximity causes resistance and, therefore, they become dangerous, threatening, and therefore "marginal", that is, on the margins of the spaces (environments, contexts, relationships) reserved for the "normal": a qualifier that is constructed in the meanders of the networks of power (Rangel apud Brito, 2013, p. 17).

The literary text, therefore, gives rise to the possibility of educating to include, as the diversity found in this manifestation of the language opens space for socially excluded voices. For Souza and Amarilha (2006), his space is set up for real characters, with weaknesses, defects and differences, such as the mutilated soldier, the ugly duckling, the clumsy João, the envious stepmother, among other fictional characters. Such qualities reaffirm Literature as a transdisciplinary terrain that enables the knowledge of human reality and a "symbolic experience of a problematizing, political and creative character" (Amarilha, 2006, p.67).

LITERATURE REVIEW

"Look and see: the most important and beautiful thing in the world is this: that people are not always the same, they are not finished yet, but that they are always changing. The greatest truth is what life has taught me. (Guimarães Rosa)

The project *Leia, criança !* addressed literary literacy for human and social formation and used the literature of Rildo Cosson (2014) as a theoretical reference, as well as some notes on Reading and literacy by the authors Isabel Solé (2009); Magda Soares (2012) and Ricardo Bortoni (2012).



Reading is essential in our society, because everything we do, are, and share involves writing. From birth, when we receive a name and a record, to death, which is also documented in writing. Therefore, the act of reading and writing was and continues to be used by many peoples as a way to portray human experiences, experiences and knowledge, it is the way in which groups make the cultures that differ them from other groups remain alive.

Although reading shares the task with other social nuclei, such as the family, the community, the media, the school is the main focus of organization, systematization and transmission of knowledge. The school has no reason to be itself. It is the fruit of the environment just as the environment is the consequence of it. (Paulo Freire, 2011).

According to the National Curriculum Parameters of the Portuguese Language (1998, p.45) it is the duty of the school

[...] to make a commitment to ensure that the classroom is a space where each subject has the right to speak recognized as legitimate, and that this word finds resonance in the discourse of the other. It is about establishing a space for reflection in which the effective contact of different opinions is possible, where divergence is made explicit and conflict can emerge; A space in which no one is better or worse, but people who think differently.

According to Dallastra and Teixeira (2014), the development of the school is related to the development of society and vice versa. It is this different thinking that generates knowledge, the mastery of science and technological development, because it is from this conflict that man acquires the means to understand and transform reality and the society in which he lives, becoming able to exercise his citizenship. In this sense, there is no other way than reading that is the basis for learning in school. The student needs to read the reality that surrounds him, reflect and then transform it into something better. Reading is a complex process of searching for meaning in the text.

Reading, as Marcusch i (2008) suggests, is a complex activity that leads the reader to produce inferences from the information captured in the text, the knowledge he already has and assumptions. According to him, understanding is essentially an activity of relating knowledge, experiences and actions in an interactive movement.

The definition of text will contribute to the study that is done on reading. According to Isabel Solé (2009, p.107): "The text contains more than the meaning of the expressions of the textual surface, as it must incorporate knowledge and daily experience, attitude and intentions". With this, the meaning of the words of the text is born from the relationship that is established between the reader, permeated by the intentions and experiences of each one.



Thus, reading is a process in which the reader performs an activity of constructing the meaning of the text based on what is being sought in it, on the knowledge he already has about the subject. Thus, Solé in his book *Estratégias de Leitura* (2009, p.22) conceptualizes reading as: "... a process of interaction between reader and text; in this process one tries to satisfy (obtain pertinent information for) the objectives that guide its reading".

This statement has consequences, such as: it involves the presence of an active reader who processes and examines the text. It also implies that there must always be a goal to guide reading, in other words, we always read for something, to achieve a purpose.

Under these conditions, in order to read, it is necessary to skillfully handle decoding skills and to bring to the text our objectives, ideas and previous experiences.

The Curricular Guidelines for the Portuguese Language in the State of Paraná (2008, p.56) understands "reading as a dialogical, interlocutive act, which involves social, historical, political, economic, pedagogical and ideological demands of a given moment". When reading, the individual seeks his experiences, his previous knowledge, his family, religious, cultural formation.

According to Bortoni-Ricardo (2012), mediating the development of reading is to exercise the student's comprehension, transforming him from a beginner reader into an active reader. This presupposes developing your ability to read safely, decode clearly, and quickly recognize words for fluent reading. Making provisions, formulating and answering questions about the text, extracting central ideas, identifying new content and data, relating what they read to their social and particular reality, reading what underlies the text, using clues to make inferences, summarizing, being able to dialogue with other texts are skills that constitute the reading subject in formation into a proficient reader. The mediation of reading takes place in the dynamics of interaction. The mediator supports the beginner reader by helping him to mobilize previous knowledge to develop the specific skills for that task.

In view of this, Solé (2009) points out some reading strategies and actions to perform in the act of reading. They are:

- The examination and processing of the text;
- The perception of the objective to be followed in the reading;
- The confirmation of culturally acquired prior knowledge or its refutation and the use of the information obtained from reading the text.

These strategies shape the active role played by the student-reader, who must be aware that reading the text will promote a qualitative change in his or her cognition.



From the same point of view, Bortoni (2012, p.244) also suggests some strategies for the practice of teaching reading, such as:

- Definition of objectives for each reading;
- Preparation for reading: activation and updating of previous knowledge; contextualization; motivation, stimulating curiosity; formulation of predictions about the text to be read;
- During the reading process: reading aloud; encouragement with verbal nods; silent reading; rereading excerpts or the text in its entirety;
- During the questioning (an important strategy responsible for comprehension) that leads to reading comprehension, through a conduction anchored in questions: evaluation and elaboration of new predictions for the content of what was said, as a way of extrapolating the universe of the text; establishment of a relationship with other texts (intertextuality); clarification of doubts about language and content; preparation of summary; reformulation of questions; leading to self-questioning; rereading of excerpts; identification of main idea and themes.

Therefore, recognizing that the teaching of reading requires strategies and seeking the most efficient strategies for the subjects (students), will achieve more effective results in reading classes at school, which should be reflected in competent readers.

So, if reading is a social practice, it is necessary to make some considerations about literacy. Magda Soares (2012, p.72) in her book "Literacy: a theme in three genres" points out:

... Reading is a social practice, it is what people do with reading and writing skills, in a specific context, and how these skills relate to social needs, values and practices.

For Soares (2012), the emergence of new facts and new ideas requires the use of new terminologies. The term literacy is "undoubtedly the Portuguese version of the English word literacy" (Soares, 2012, p.17). The author presents the meaning of literacy as being "the result of the action of teaching or learning to write: the state or condition that a social group or an individual acquires as a consequence of having appropriated writing" (Soares, 2012, p.18).

According to Kleiman (2002), literacy, as an individual use of writing competence, while the term literacy emerged to identify the social impact of writing. Soares (2012) proposes the term literacy taking into account its social need. In other words, literacy is



not purely and simply a set of individual skills; It is the set of social practices linked to reading and writing in which individuals engage in their social context.

Thus, literacy involves more than merely reading and writing. As Kirsch and Jungeblut apud Literacy: a theme in three genres (2012, p.66) "is the use of these skills (reading and writing) to meet social demands". Believing in the power of literacy to lead to social and individual progress, the authors define it as "the use of printed and handwritten information to function in society, to achieve one's own goals and develop one's knowledge and potentialities".

From this perspective, literacy is considered responsible for producing important results: cognitive and economic development, social mobility, professional progress, and citizenship. That is, every day, the subject can find himself surrounded by the most diverse literacy practices, and feel the need to engage in them, under penalty of not doing so, there will be damage to his social relations.

Solé (2009, p.44) defines:

... Reading is understanding and understanding is, above all, a process of constructing meanings about the text you intend to understand. It is a process that actively involves the reader, as the understanding he achieves does not derive from the recitation of the content in question. Therefore, it is essential for the reader to find meaning in the fact of making the cognitive effort that reading presupposes, he must know what he is going to read, have resources - relevant prior knowledge, confidence, availability of necessary help, feel motivated.

Within the vast grandeur of existing textual genres, the literary text deserves special mention thanks to the enormous contribution it can bring to the formation of man. To agree with this statement, the National Curriculum Parameters of the Portuguese Language (1998, p.24) postulate:

Genres exist in an almost unlimited number, varying according to the time (epic, cartoon), cultures (haiku, cordel) and social purposes (entertaining, informing), so that, even if the school imposed on itself the task of treating everyone, this would not be possible. Therefore, it is necessary to prioritize the genres that will deserve a more in-depth approach. Without denying the importance of texts that respond to the demands of private situations of interlocution, due to the commitments to ensure the full exercise of citizenship by the student, it is necessary that school situations of Portuguese language teaching prioritize texts that characterize the public uses of language.

The texts to be selected are those that, due to their characteristics and uses, can favor critical reflection, the exercise of more elaborate and abstract forms of thought, as well as the aesthetic enjoyment of the artistic uses of language, that is, the most vital for full participation in a literate society. And from this point of view, nothing better than the literary



text, *haja vista* constitutes a peculiar form of representation and style in which the creative force of the imagination and aesthetic intention predominate. (PCN-1998, p. 24-26)

In this way, literature, as a human production, is linked to social life. The understanding of what the literary product is is subject to historical modifications, for which it needs to have dialogical relations with other texts. For Candido (1972, p.123), "[...] Literature is seen as art that transforms and humanizes man and society. The author attributes three functions to literature: the psychological, the formative and the social."

The first, psychological function, allows man to escape from reality, immersing himself in a world of fantasies. For Antonio Candido, literature is one of the richest modalities. This connection between imagination and reality, for the critic, serves "to illustrate in depth the integrative and transformative function of literary creation in relation to its points of reference of reality. At the same time, it shows the fictional creations..." (Candido, 1972, p.805).

In the second, Candido states that literature by itself is part of the formation of the subject, acting as an instrument of education, by portraying realities not revealed by the dominant ideology. In this sense:

Literature can form; far from being an appendage of moral and civic instruction; She acts with the indiscriminate impact of her own life and educates like her. Given that literature teaches to the extent that with all its range, it is artificial to want it to function as manuals of virtue and good conduct. And society can only choose what seems to it at any given moment to be adapted to its ends, for even works considered indispensable for the formation of the young man often bring what conventions would wish to ban. It is one of the means by which the young person comes into contact with realities that are intended to be hidden from him. It does not corrupt or edify, therefore; but by freely bringing within itself what we call good and what we call evil, it humanizes in a profound sense, because it makes life. (Candido, 1972, p.805-806).

Baraúna (2005, p.11) states that "humanization is a process of gradual construction, carried out through the sharing of knowledge and feelings". In this context, humanizing is having a predisposition to contribute (feeling and knowledge) to the other in an ethical, individual and independent way, recognizing the limits, yours and his, composing empathy between individuals, enabling the exchange of information, learning and respect for the other. In this way, literature enables a broadening of horizons, since it provides individuals with a critical position on the diversity experienced by the reader. And it has a nature that generates concerns. It proposes different and even daring conceptions of the world; transits through the sphere of the real – expressing and interpreting it – and of the possible, going beyond, to the plane of the imaginary.



The complexity of the literary text, which is reflected in its existential and social deepening, accepts chance, creativity and the unexpected. Literature is responsible for the emancipation of humanity from its natural, religious and social moorings. This role is directly related to the reading experience. Critical and reflective reading can free the reader from adaptations, prejudices and constraints of his practical life, forcing him to a new perception of life, of the world, of concepts.

In the exercise of literature, one can make the world comprehensible, transform it into words of colors, odors, flavors and intensely human forms, and it is this literature that needs to maintain a special place in schools. (Cosson, 2014, p.17). In this sense, the discussion and promotion of literary literacy are opportunities and, at the same time, challenges in the effective teaching and learning of literature from the perspective of humanization.

According to Candido (1972, p.249), humanization is the process that confirms in man those traits that we consider essential, such as the exercise of reflection, the acquisition of knowledge, the good disposition towards others, the refinement of emotions, the ability to penetrate the problems of life, the sense of beauty, the perception of the complexity of the world and of beings, the cultivation of humor. "Literature develops in human beings the share of humanity to the extent that it makes them understanding of their fellow human beings."

Literary literacy as a literary construction of the senses is done by asking the text who and when it says, what it says, how it says it, what it says it for and to whom it says it. Answers that can only be obtained when the details of the text are examined, a context is configured and the work is inserted in a dialogue with other texts. Such procedures inform that the objective of this way of reading involves the unveiling of the information in the text and the learning of reading strategies to reach the formation of the reader's repertoire. (Cosson, 2014, p.41).

Cosson (2014, p.23) defines literary literacy as "social practice, and as such, the responsibility of the school". He goes on to state that it is in it (school) that literary reading has the function of helping us to read better, not only because it enables the creation of the habit of reading or because it is pleasurable, but also, and above all, because it provides us, as no other type of reading does, with the necessary instruments to know and articulate with proficiency the world made of language. Literary literacy can be conceived simply as one of the social practices of writing, the one that refers to literature.

Cosson (2014) proposes that three criteria for selecting texts should be combined, making them act simultaneously in literary literacy, because when selecting a text, the teacher should not disregard the canon, since it is in it that we find the cultural heritage of



our community; Nor can it be based only on the contemporaneity of the texts, but on their topicality. In the same way, it needs to apply the principle of diversity understood beyond the simple difference between texts, such as the search for the discrepancy between the known and the unknown, the simple and the complex, in a reading process that is done through the verticalization of texts and procedures. This is how the new and the old, the trivial and the aesthetic, the simple and the complex, and all the myriad of texts that make literary reading an activity of singular pleasure and knowledge, take place in school.

In this sense, literary literacy is a methodological strategy in directing, strengthening and expanding the literary education offered to students in order to make them proficient readers and at the same time realize that literature can contribute significantly to the integral formation of the student.

Therefore, literary reading, in a literacy proposal, has the function of helping the student, and also the teacher, to better read himself, others and the world through the text-reader connections (relations with the student-reader's life experiences), text-text (intertextuality-relations with other texts) and text-world (relations established between the text read and global events).

Literary literacy is a methodological approach that aims to direct, strengthen, and expand the literary education offered to students, with the aim of making them proficient readers. In addition, it seeks to show that literature can contribute significantly to the integral formation of students. Thus, literary reading, within a literacy proposal, has the function of helping both students and teachers to better understand themselves, others and the world. This is done through the connections between text and reader (relations with the life experiences of the student-reader), text and text (intertextuality - relations with other texts) and text and world (relations between the text read and global events).

To carry out the Project, the methodology used was the Basic Sequence of literary literacy. In a simple and objective way, Rildo Cosson (2006) proposes this sequence consisting of four steps: motivation, introduction, reading and interpretation.

- Motivation consists of the student's preparation to enter the text: "The initial success of the author's encounter with the work depends on good motivation" (Cosson, 2006, p. 54). According to the author, the motivation that has close ties with the main text is the one that is usually most successful. It should involve activities involving orality, writing and reading, since the work with literature and the Portuguese language should be integrated, because one is part of the other. However, as they are three different moments, care must be taken so that the focus on literary reading does not get lost.



- The introduction is the moment of presentation of the author and the work. Although it is a simple activity, it requires some care: the information about the author must be limited to the needs related to that text; It is the time to talk about the importance of the work and justify the reason for its choice, however, one should avoid the synthesis of the story so as not to suppress the pleasure of discovery. The work should always be physically presented to the students, drawing their attention to the paratextual elements. However, this step must be done quickly, remembering that its function is only to motivate the student so that the reader receives it in a positive way. Reading must be accompanied by the teacher in order to assist the student in their difficulties.

In the breaks, other literacies will be worked on to enable dialogue between the texts. The break is very important in the literary literacy process, since: through it, the teacher will solve problems related to the vocabulary and compositional structure of the text, among other difficulties related to the decipherment [...] By following the students' reading through the breaks, the teacher will be able to help them solve or, at least, equate issues ranging from the interaction with the text, such as the mismatch of expectations that can lead to the abandonment of the book, to the reading pace, a possible consequence of both the readability conditions of the text and the student's availability to carry out the activity. (Cosson, 2006, p. 64).

- Interpretation is the moment to, based on inferences, "arrive at the construction of the meaning of the text, within a dialogue that involves author, reader and community" (COSSON, 2007, p. 64). In the process of literary literacy, interpretation must be thought of in two moments: one interior and the other exterior. The interior is the moment of the student's encounter with the text, word for word until the end, apprehending the work globally. The external is the socialization of what has been learned with colleagues. It is the moment of registration that varies according to the class, the texts chosen and the teacher's objectives. "The important thing is that the student has the opportunity to reflect on the work read and externalize this reflection in an explicit way, allowing the establishment of dialogue among the readers of the school community" (Cosson, 2006, p.68). By using this method, the teacher will be providing students with contact with other literacies, in addition to the literary, thus contributing to the formation of the competent reader, aware of his responsibility as a citizen and the school, in turn, will be fulfilling its function as the main agent in the formation of the student-reader.



The project's workshops were held at the Visconde de Guarapuava State School – Elementary, High School and Normal School in Guarapuava, PR, with students from the sixth grades of elementary school. The activities followed the didactic sequence proposed by Cosson. The literary works worked on included titles such as *The Little Black Prince* by Rodrigo França, *Blackberries* by Emerica, *Sulwe* by Lupita Nyong'oe and *It's OK to be different* by Todd Parr.

After reading the works, the students, accompanied by the project's teachers, participated in in-depth discussions on the main themes of each book. Topics discussed included prejudice, religious intolerance, fatphobia and gender equality. These discussions were conducted in a way that encouraged critical reflection and open dialogue among students.

To consolidate learning, each student was encouraged to record the topic discussed in the form of a verbal text or imagery. Some students chose to write essays or poems, while others created drawings, collages, or even small theatrical performances. These activities allowed students to express their understandings and feelings in a creative and personal way.

In addition, complementary activities were carried out, such as group debates, where students were able to share their opinions and listen to different perspectives. There was also the creation of thematic murals, where the students' works were exposed, promoting an environment of appreciation and recognition of individual productions.

About 400 students participated in the project, who had the opportunity to develop critical reading, written and artistic expression skills, in addition to expanding their understanding of relevant social issues. The active involvement of teachers was crucial in guiding and supporting students throughout the process, ensuring a collaborative and enriching learning environment.

FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

Literary reading is the key instrument to achieve the skills necessary for a quality, productive and fulfilling life. It allows the understanding of the meaning of the texts, taking into account the relations of the text in question with others on the same subject or by other national or international authors, from the same period or different times in which they were written, relating them to the present, enabling a reflective reading, but also providing the opportunity for free thought, which the reader can dream, to be moved.

Literary literacy plays a crucial role in the formation of critical and reflective readers, going beyond the simple decoding of words. The *Leia, criança* project involved the



immersion of students in literary texts that stimulated imagination, creativity and cognitive skills, providing a deeper understanding of the world and themselves, and, above all, led them to question and reflect on what they read, promoting critical thinking that is essential for active citizenship.

During the project, the students had the opportunity to identify with the characters, allowing them to develop the ability to understand and respect different points of view and reflect on their own lives and understand the lives of others. By relating literary themes to contemporary issues, students were able to develop a deeper and more critical understanding of the world around them.

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