

ARTICLE

LITERACY AND PROFESSORS' PRACTICES: AN ANALYSIS OF LITERATURE

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ABSTRACT: This study aims to review Brazilian research on literacy practices for undergraduate professors. We reviewed *SciELO* and Portal de Periódicos CAPES. From 2013 to 2019, 20 articles were retrieved and fulfilled inclusion criteria. Studies' main statements were interpreted using a dialogical analysis of the discourse method. Few studies directly addressed the association between literacy practices and undergraduate professional training in Brazilian higher education. Among these studies, there was a predominance of the procedural technical guidance method, which seeks to improve reading and writing practices in undergraduate courses, particularly for human sciences. The relevance of literacy while becoming a higher education professor in Brazil is discussed in light of previous international research. An interdisciplinary approach, guided by a discursive conception of language, may foster improvements for professors' practices from different areas of knowledge.

Keywords: Professors' Practices; Higher Education; Literacies.

LETRAMENTO E FORMAÇÃO DOCENTE: UMA ANÁLISE DA LITERATURA

RESUMO: Este estudo objetiva revisar as pesquisas brasileiras sobre as práticas de letramento na formação do docente universitário. As buscas foram realizadas na base *SciELO* e no Portal de Periódicos CAPES, no período de 2013 a 2019, sendo analisados, na íntegra, 20 artigos. Os enunciados foram interpretados à luz da análise dialógica do discurso. Verificaram-se poucos estudos que tratam diretamente da relação entre as práticas de letramentos e a formação do docente do ensino superior. Destaca-se, ainda, o predomínio de orientações técnico procedimentais, visando à melhoria das práticas de leitura e escrita em cursos de licenciatura, principalmente àqueles cuja linguagem é objeto de estudo. A relevância do letramento na formação do docente universitário no Brasil é discutida com base em pesquisas internacionais anteriores. Aponta-se a necessidade de avanços neste campo de discussão, por meio de um olhar interdisciplinar e orientado por uma concepção discursiva da linguagem, que perceba sua centralidade nas práticas formativas do professor universitário das diferentes áreas de atuação.

Palavras-chave: Formação Docente, Ensino Superior, Letramentos.

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ALFABETIZACIÓN Y FORMACIÓN DOCENTE: UN ANÁLISIS DE LA LITERATURA

RESÚMEN: Este estudio tiene como objetivo revisar la investigación brasileña sobre las prácticas de Alfabetización en la formación del docente universitario. Se analizaron en total 20 artículos, de 2013 a 2019, de la base Scielo y del Portal de Periódicos CAPES. Los enunciados fueron interpretados mediante el análisis dialógico del discurso. Se verificaron pocos estudios que tratan directamente la relación entre las prácticas de alfabetización y la formación del docente universitario. Se destaca el predominio de orientaciones técnicas procedimentales, encaminadas a la mejora de las prácticas de lectura y escritura en cursos de licenciatura, principalmente aquellos cuyo lenguaje es objeto de estudio. La relevancia de la alfabetización en la formación de profesores universitarios en Brasil se discute con base en investigaciones internacionales previas. Se señala la necesidad de avances en este campo de discusión, por medio de una visión interdisciplinaria y orientada por una concepción discursiva del lenguaje que perciba su centralidad en las prácticas formativas del profesor universitario de las diferentes áreas de actuación.

Palabras clave: Formación Docente, Enseñanza Superior, Alfabetización.

INTRODUCTION

The training of teachers has proved to be a very fruitful field of study, widely debated by researchers from different areas of knowledge (Psychology, Education, Linguistics, etc.), in its most varied aspects, including Teaching Work, Identity and Professionalization, Continuing Education and Teaching Concepts. The inexhaustibility of these investigations is related to the constant historical-cultural transformations that delineate how these education professionals work, raising new debates on training practices.

According to Cunha (2013), the reflection on the concept of teacher training constitutes a permanent challenge for higher education, demanding that one resort to research, training practice, and the significance of the role of this professional in society. While the research focuses on epistemological, political, and cultural issues, the practice is limited to an amalgamation of theoretical-contextual conditions. However, the author emphasizes that research continues to address classical subjects and that it is necessary to expand the scope of the focus due to the complexity of this topic. In this sense, this article intends to discuss literacy practices in teacher training to work in higher education, as presented in Brazilian literature.

Teacher training to work at different educational levels, from basic education to graduate education, is structured around reading and writing practices, that is, what the teacher reads and writes forms his/her awareness of his/her profession and the objects that teach and discuss in class. In the same way, these practices are also constitutive of their awareness about themselves, that is, about their professional identity, and about others, their students and peers, to whom such training will have objective and subjective effects. Thus, it is essential to choose the central role of verbal language for teacher training, as well as its effects on the exercise of their profession.

Therefore, it is necessary to have a conception of language that discusses its centrality in training practices and analyzes its consequences for the teaching activity. This implies understanding it in its verb-axiological dimension to think about it in its complex social, cultural, historical, and subjective relationships.

Given such complexity, the dialogical philosophy of language of the Bakhtin Circle, in opposition to the so-called structuralist abstract objectivism, which understands language as a system of arbitrary and conventional signs, proposes a discursive conception of enunciation, emphasizing its material and ideological character. It is the living language, manifested as “(...)the purest and most sensitive way of social relationship” (VOLOCHÍNOV, 2010, p.36).

In the same direction, at the end of the 20th century, a group of British researchers, called New Literacy Studies, in opposition to the autonomous model of literacy prevailing in society and in educational institutions, which is very similar to objectivism in the understanding of language as a neutral code, proposes a resignified look at this concept, based on an ideological model of literacy. Such a model conceives of reading and writing practices as being involved in power relations, meanings, and specific cultural practices (STREET, 2014, p. 17). Thus, literacy does not end with the mastery of the written code but continues through all the complex forms of organization of the social and constructed world. “When we participate in the language of an institution, whether as speakers, listeners, writers or readers, we are positioned by that language; when this assent is given, a myriad of relations of power, authority, status unfold and reassert themselves (p. 143)”.

If literacy is a continuous process, it is important to study the effect of these discursive practices in the different stages of teaching, including in universities, a space in which students are faced with specific texts from the scientific community and, for the appropriation of their meanings, mastering the formal aspects of the language (grammar, spelling, etc.) is not enough, but the recognition of “procedures and social roles through which this literacy model is disseminated and internalized” (STREET, 2014, p. 129).

About these literacies practices that occur in higher education, Lea and Street (1998, 1999) present the concept of academic literacies, which is related “(...) with the production of meaning, identity, power and authority that occur within universities (...)” (LEA, STREET, 1999, p. 3); and put in the foreground the social and institutional nature, which provides for the “(...) acquisition of adequate and effective uses of literacy as more complex, dynamic, nuanced, situated, which encompasses both

epistemological issues and social processes including: relationships of power between people, institutions and social identities” (p. 3).

Searching to understand the characteristics of texts that circulate at the university, we can resort to the architecture of Bakhtin's (2011) discursive genres. This philosopher of language tells us that each field of human activity creates and puts into use quite regular enunciative forms, even using a very standardized syntax to introduce and conclude their utterances to interact with a particular interlocutor.

In this way, he proposes the analysis of social spheres as an organizing principle of genres. They typify social relations, relatively stabilizing the statements that circulate in them, giving rise to particular genres of discourse. At the university, our language use practices (written, oral, multisemiotic) are relatively stabilized by the area in which utterances are produced and circulate in the academic sphere.

Therefore, it is not enough to master the formal structures of the language, it is also necessary to appropriate the forms of communication of the academic community. This appropriation can be problematic for many students, who fail in learning and do not achieve the desired success in their academic trajectories. An enunciative-discursive conception of language can modify the teacher's role in reading and writing practices at the university, given the reflection on its complexity.

Given the discussions provoked so far and based on a discursive conception of language and the concept of literacies, as a set of social practices, it is important to know: how research has discussed the relevance of literacy practices in the formation of teachers working in higher education?

Therefore, the objective is to identify in the scientific literature in which direction the discussions on the importance of literacy practices in the training of teachers working in higher education are proposed, through the analysis of articles carried out at the national level, in six years to establish an overview of how this theme has been characterized.

However, it is necessary to go beyond a mere mapping of studies. This article is immersed in the concern of identifying and problematizing which are the concepts of language used to allow theoretical-methodological reflections on the prevailing pedagogical policies in higher education and how they affect literacy practices and the training of teachers who works in that space.

METHOD

This article intends, in the encounter with other texts, to carry out an integrative literature review, which, according to Scorsolini-Comin (2015), aims, in addition to “(...) mapping the production on a given subject, to discuss it in an integrated and critical way, enabling the survey of gaps and evidence for professional practice in the area” (p. 164). To this end, we considered articles produced in the national scenario, between 2013 and July 2019, indexed in two databases: SciELO (Scientific Electronic Library Online) and *Portal de Periódicos da CAPES (Coordenação de Aperfeiçoamento de Pessoal de Nível Superior)* for article mapping. The option for these databases is related to the fact that they recover a large part of the national scientific production and present complete works.

The procedures and steps used in this integrative review are (1) Definition of the scientific question, specifying the object of investigation (literacy and teacher training) and the area of interest within the educational field (higher education); (2) Survey of databases to select the most suitable for the research, and the definition of keywords and search strategies; (3) Establishment of article selection criteria from the search; (4) Conducting searches in the databases, using previously defined strategies; (5) Application of criteria in the selection of articles, justifying possible exclusions; (6) Categorization of studies; (7) Preparation of a critical summary, summarizing the information provided by the articles that were included in the review; and finally, the interpretation and discussion of the studies based on the theoretical support selected for this study (9).

The search paths

The selection of keywords that would guide the searches was an arduous and careful step, carried out during the first week of June 2019. At first, we used the following terms: literacy; teacher training; University education; academic literacy; reading and writing at the university; practices and teaching-learning, sometimes combining them, sometimes using some to the detriment of others, that is,

using different combinations. We observed that a reduced number of works appeared, noting, by reading the abstract, that they did not meet the objectives proposed for this article.

After several combinations of descriptors, we decided to use them comprehensively: literacy; teacher training (using the Boolean operators and for the search terms), in the search by subject. This action led us to an initial hypothesis: that there is little national production on the topic of literacy-related to teacher training. Even with these broader terms, we found 223 articles in the Capes Periodicals Portal and 15 in the SciELO Portal.

From this survey, we noticed that the debate on teacher training in literacy practices that occur within universities, although it appears in these researches, is often diluted in the body of the study, requiring a deeper reading of the selected works.

For the inclusion of articles in the integrative review, we adopted the following criteria: (1) Articles that addressed the issue of literacy and teacher education, produced on a national stage; (2) Works related to the training of teachers in higher education or for professional practice at this stage of education and (3) Studies carried out between 2013 and July 2019. Consequently, we excluded: (1) Studies that analyze literacy practices carried out in the initial grades of basic schooling; (2) Research on teacher training in a foreign language; (3) Works whose theme differs from what is proposed in the title and/or abstract, divergent from what is proposed to investigate in this study and (4) Repeated articles since they were counted only once.

After applying the inclusion and exclusion criteria, the selected studies were compiled in an Excel spreadsheet, using the following organizational categorization items: title, authorship, linking institution, publication date, type of research, participating subjects, central question, theme, theoretical contribution, results, language concepts and teacher training (demarcated or implicit).

The axis “participating subjects” was fundamental for categorizing the types of studies and whether they are related to teacher training in undergraduate courses or teacher training to work in higher education.

We also present and discuss the main fields of knowledge that focus on these studies, their objectives, their contribution to literacy practices developed in higher education, and the theoretical foundation used for the analyses. Therefore, we identified the similarities and the gaps between the approaches to verify the gaps and point out important points for the advancement of the discussions.

Thus, we intended to compose the arena of the voices of the authors of the selected articles, of the language conceptions that permeate them, as well as to exercise the exotopic look to situate the historical context of production of these studies, following the Bakhtinian teachings about the functioning of language, being “(...) possible to apprehend the movements of transformation of meanings, which produce the scenarios of everyday experiences of a given society, in a given time” (PAN; LITENSKI, 2018, p.529).

RESULTS

Characterization of the research corpus

After employing the exclusion criteria, 36 articles remained, which were submitted to the second stage of analysis, reading the works in full. After this more careful approach, we selected 20 articles (Box 1). Most of the excluded research was related to the continuing education of teachers or was focused on literacy practices carried out in elementary school.

BOX 1: ARTICLES THAT COMPOSE THE RESEARCH CORPUS

Item	Authorship	Title
1	SILVA (2013)	The writing of the genre supervised internship report in Brazilian teacher education
2	LIMA et al. (2014)	Reflecting on Literacy and Responsiveness in Teacher Education
3	KLEIMAN (2014)	Literacy in the Contemporary Scene
4	AZEVEDO; SANTOS (2018)	Authorship and empowerment: teacher training and the monographic writing of conclusion in PARFOR/UFRRJ.
5	FISCHER; COLAÇO (2017)	Written practices in biological science teaching degree program: recontextualized academic literacies
6	SILVA et al. (2016)	Construction of reflection in academic writing by pre-service teachers
7	BITTENCOURT; AVELAR (2013)	<i>Estratégias instrutivas na docência do ensino superior: o letramento e a habilidade da leitura e da escrita em cursos de Comunicação Social</i>
8	SILVA; OLIVEIRA (2018)	<i>Estágio curricular da licenciatura como um contexto de pesquisa sobre formação inicial do professor</i>
9	SARTORI (2015)	<i>Sobre a formação de professores: o que dizem os alunos em memoriais de formação</i>
10	FERRAGINI (2018)	<i>A aprendizagem significativa na formação docente inicial: relato de uma experiência no curso de Letras</i>
11	SILVA et al. (2016)	Two cases of information search on the Internet for the production of infographic: reflections on the teacher training
12	MUNIZ; VILAS BOAS (2018)	Between trajectories and histories: teachers as reader formation
13	GRANDE; NASCIMENTO (2018)	Teacher identities between disputing discursive worlds: teacher continuing education, literacy and development
14	SILVA (2015)	Genres in language practices at school: curriculum and teacher education
15	SILVA; FRANCO (2017)	Reading in Pedagogy Courses: implications of the teaching practice in the formation of the reader teacher
16	SILVA (2017)	Sustainable teacher education in the professional masters program
17	SILVA (2015)	Systemic Functional Linguistics as a theory for data analysis in Applied Linguistics: teacher-trainee's reflexive writing
18	PEREIRA; LEITÃO (2015)	Apprehension of the discourse of Others and authorship in academic-scientific genres
19	FLOREK (2016)	A didactic proposal for teaching reading and writing of a multimodal academic genre
20	SZUNDY (2014)	Education as a responsible act: teacher development in the light of the Bakhtinian Circle's language philosophy

SOURCE: Prepared by the researchers (2019).

With these selected articles (N=20), we carried out the first categorization, seeking to map from which universities the researchers of these works come from. We found that most of the research comes from public institutions (N=19), six (6) from the *Universidade Federal do Tocantins*, and the others from different institutions, including *Universidade Federal de Brasília*, *Universidade Federal do Rio de Janeiro*, and *Universidade Federal da Bahia*.

The articles that make up the corpus of this study were published in 12 different journals, all evaluated within the CAPES quality criteria (results presented in the 2013/2016 triennium), and the most common and convergence areas were: Linguistics (N=14) and Education (N=6).

Among the totality of articles, we can see (8) eight that, from the identification of problems related to structural issues of the language, propose models of practices, aiming at the development and mastery of reading and writing skills related to an academic genre specific. In this line of approach, we find studies such as those by Bittencourt; Avelar (2013), Silva et al. (2016), and Florek (2016). Among the academic genres related to the analyzes and interventions proposed by the articles, there are infographics, monographs, internship reports, and training memorials.

The following box presents a categorization of the analyzed studies about the subjects participating in the investigations and reflections.

BOX 2: CLASSIFICATION OF RECOVERED STUDIES IN TERMS OF ATTENDANCE IN THE ESTABLISHED CATEGORIES

Participants	Characteristics and frequency in samples	Examples in samples
<u>University students</u>	Undergraduate course students (N=14)	SILVA (2013, 2015, 2015). SILVA et al. (2016). SILVA; OLIVEIRA (2018). LIMA et al. (2014). AZEVEDO; SANTOS (2018). FISCHER; COLAÇO (2017). SARTORI (2015). SILVA et al. (2016). MUNIZ; VILAS BOAS (2018). SILVA; FRANCO (2017). PEREIRA; LEITÃO (2015).
	Students from other courses (N=1)	BITTENCOURT; AVELAR (2013).
<u>Graduate Students</u>	Master's students (N=2)	SILVA (2017). GRANDE; NASCIMENTO (2018).
<u>Professors</u>	University Professors (N=2)	BITTENCOURT; AVELAR (2013). FERRAGINI (2018). FLOREK (2016). SILVA; FRANCO (2017).
	Postgraduate Professors (N=1)	FLOREK (2016).
	Teachers from different stages of education (N=2)	KLEIMAN (2014). SZUNDY (2014).

SOURCE: Prepared by the researchers (2019).

We observed that, among the studies analyzed, only four (4) brought the issue of teacher training for higher education and its relationship with literacy practices directly into the theme. The other articles are related to teacher training that occurs in undergraduate courses, or deal with training more broadly, from basic to higher education.

Next, the articles will be categorized in two axes, according to the participants, the research objectives, and the adopted language conceptions.

The formation of the university professor and the practices of academic literacies

We start this section by highlighting that, among the four (4) articles that compose it (FLOREK, 2016, BITTENCOURT; AVELAR, 2013, FERRAGINI, 2018, SILVA; FRANCO, 2017), two (2) of the present studies beyond the field of degrees. Bittencourt and Avelar (2013) brought the theme to the area of Social Communication, while Florek (2016) presented reflections and guidelines aimed at reaching undergraduate and graduate professors from different courses.

In the article *Estratégias instrutivas na docência do ensino superior: o letramento e a habilidade da leitura e da escrita em cursos de Comunicação Social* (2013), Bittencourt and Avelar emphasized the writing difficulties of academics when entering the university, as observed in the excerpt: "(...) This historical heritage still generates gaps in cognitive skills for the apprehension of content, weakening the teaching-learning process, especially in the didactic models commonly used in school daily life" (BITTENCOURT; AVELAR, 2013, p. 31).

Based on this finding, they highlighted the importance of actions planned by teachers to advance this scenario. To better understand this possibility, they analyzed student productions, verifying that they improved a lot after directed and guided academic literacy practices. These practices consisted of what the authors called “exercises” involving oral readings, summaries, report writing, and case studies, for example. Although it is not explicitly demarcated in the text, there is a conception of language as the development of essential skills for professional practice, as the courses in the article are in the area of Social Communication.

In the body of the study, the authors presented literacy as an essential teaching method to reverse students' cognitive deficits. Thus, we can see in the excerpt: “In higher education, literacy, when planned and methodologically applied, can be an instrument of great value to reverse cognitive deficits, break crystallized barriers and establish positive attitudes of mutual respect in the classroom” (BITTENCOURT); AVELAR, 2013, p. 32). Finally, they reiterated the importance of adequate training for professors working in higher education, which considers the type of texts that circulate in this space, creativity, and the teacher-student relationship.

Florek (2016) in his article showed a systematized didactic proposal for the teaching of a multimodal genre of the scientific sphere, the graphic academic summary (GAS), which can be applied to students from different courses. Thus, he considered how cultural multiplicity and linguistic meanings can be socially materialized and the contemporary forms of communication amid new technologies.

The author built her methodology based on Critical Gender Analysis, on the Pedagogy of Multiliteracies and the conception of text as “(...) a semantic unit (from a gesture, a word to an entire speech) produced by the linguistic exchanges carried out between certain participants in specific socio-historical contexts (HALLIDAY; HASAN, 1989; MEURER; MOTTA-ROTH, 1997 apud FLOREK, 2016, p.244). This study aimed to bring analytical procedures on multimodal genres, with an emphasis on GASs, and also to present some conceptions of learning (behaviorist, cognitivist and sociocultural perspectives) that, according to the researcher, when intercrossing can help in reading and academic writing.

Ferragini (2018) shows an action-research, located in the field of applied linguistics studies and that allows reflections for university professors of the Arts course, based on a proposal for didacticization of the literary essay genre, aiming to bring the conception of language closer together and Mikhail Bakhtin's theory of discursive genres to Historical-Critical Pedagogy. It was intended, therefore, “(...) to demonstrate, in that context, theoretical-practical directions that lead to meaningful learning and, consequently, to a more reflective training” (p. 295).

Among the main results, we found the importance of the teacher to evaluate the writing practices he develops with the undergraduate students in Arts to find new ways of acting, more meaningful and contextualized in the teaching of Portuguese Language, articulating theory and practice.

Silva and Franco (2017) represent the only study in the sample that brings academic reading as the focus of discussions. The authors aimed to verify to what extent the teaching praxis, present in Pedagogy Courses, implies the formation of reading teachers. For this, they analyzed the documents guiding the Courses, such as the Pedagogical Project, Curricular Matrices and the Menus of the subjects of Literacy, Portuguese Language Teaching Methodology and Theoretical-methodological Foundations in Literacy and Portuguese Language; the answers given by students and professors to the applied semi-structured questionnaires and the observations made in the classes. The participants were the professors who taught the subjects related to the teaching of reading and the formation of the reader, and students enrolled in the 2nd, 3rd, and 4th-grade classes.

Although they do not bring in their article the theoretical assumptions that supported the discussions about reading, the authors highlighted its importance for the intellectual emancipation of students, acting as a fundamental piece for the improvement of writing.

Among the results, it was evident that there is little workload available for these subjects that deal with reading in the Pedagogy course, as well as the presence of a bureaucratized praxis, which does not transform the reality of these students, that is, “(...) it was possible to observe that people talk about the concepts of reading and their importance, but they do not read; that the languages of different social contexts are talked about, but the language present in the different moments of dialogue in the classroom is not discussed” (SILVA; FRANCO, 2017, p. 102).

It is important to note that, among the articles investigated, in addition to this study by Silva and Franco (2017), only Muniz and Vilas Boas (2018) emphasized the importance of reading for teacher education; the others remained focused on writing. Regarding oral genres, there is no specific study in the selected articles.

Teacher training and reading and writing practices in undergraduate courses

As shown in Table 2, there is a significant number of works focused on the discussion of literacy in teacher training in undergraduate courses (N=13). These are articles that raise, at specific moments, some discussions about the formation of the university professor, that is, the one who trains the professor, especially in the passages in which, after the presentation of a problem related to academic literacy (learning deficit of a certain genre from the scientific sphere, for example), highlight the need to re-signify the training practices that take place in this space. This justifies the selection of these studies for the sample.

Most of the articles (N=9) bring to their field of analysis the teacher training that takes place during Arts, a space where language is the main object of study. They are: Silva (2013, 2015, 2015); Silva and Oliveira (2018); Lima et al. (2014); Sartori (2015); Silva et al. (2016); Muniz and Vilas Boas (2018); Pereira and Leitão (2015).

In them, based on the analysis of students' evaluative work, topics such as “teacher reflective training” and “teacher literacy” (SILVA, 2015), “the insertion of the academic as a researcher in another literacy space” (LIMA et al., 2014), “authorship and identity in academic writing” (PEREIRA; LEITÃO, 2015) and “the importance of digital information literacy in the formation of contemporary teachers” (SILVA et al., 2016).

Among the articles in this section, there are five (5) studies (SILVA, 2013, 2015, 2015; SILVA et al., 2016; SILVA; OLIVEIRA, 2018) related to the scientific production of professor and researcher Wagner Rodrigues da Silva (UFT), member, since 2017, of the management committee of the Latin American Systemic-Functional Linguistics Association (2017-2020). These researches are located in the interdisciplinary field of Applied Linguistics (A.L) - characterized by a socio-semiotic theory that enables the understanding of contextual aspects from the lexical-grammatical analysis of the linguistic materiality of the text - and in literacy studies.

Some studies in this section (SILVA, 2013; SILVA; SILVA; BORBA, 2016; SILVA; OLIVEIRA, 2018; AZEVEDO; SANTOS, 2018 and FISHER; COLAÇO, 2017), when approaching reading and writing in different courses (History, Mathematics, and Geography), showed that the centrality of discussions about reading and writing remains linked to Linguistics.

Even the articles that deal with teacher training in graduate courses (SILVA, 2017; GRANDE; NASCIMENTO, 2018) analyze the preparation of professors in Professional Master's courses (ProfiLetras) to work in Basic Education classes. While Silva (2017) criticizes academic theory, Grande and Nascimento (2018) highlight that these training practices because they are very prescriptive and imposing, end up neglecting the identity conflicts of the subjects involved in it (students and professors).

Among the analyzed studies, there are thirteen (13) articles (LIMA et al., 2014; KLEIMAN, 2014; SARTORI, 2015; MUNIZ; VILAS BOAS, 2018; GRANDE; NASCIMENTO, 2018; SILVA, 2013, 2015, 2016 and 2017; SILVA; OLIVEIRA, 2018; SARTORI, 2015; FISCHER; COLAÇO, 2017; AZEVEDO; SANTOS, 2018) that present the concept of literacy linked to the New Literacy Studies. These studies “(...) emphasize the need to consider the social environment of interaction, in literacy practices aimed at the needs of social use, therefore, in social practices (...)” (FISCHER; COLAÇO, 2017, p. 440) and “(...) circumstantiated by the power relations that constitute the socio-historical identity of the university and its cultural selections that unfold in the curriculum (...)” (AZEVEDO; SANTOS, 2018, p. 368- 369).

There are also, for this study, two works that reflect on the training of teachers who work in different segments of education (Primary and Higher) and the literacy practices that occur in these spaces: Szundy (2014) and Kleiman (2014).

From an enunciative-discursive perspective of language, in Literacy in contemporaneity (KLEIMAN, 2014), based on examples of teaching and learning situations, there are reflections on the relationships established between the school and other institutions (multiliteracies of print and digital cultures, for example), “(...) keeping as a background for the discussion the objectives and functions of school literacy and the training of the teacher who wants to actively act as a literacy agent in the contemporary world” (KLEIMAN, 2014, p. 72). In this way, it brings to light the need to rethink reading and writing beyond the walls of educational institutions but establishing relationships with life.

Szundy (2014) used readings on the Bakhtin Circle and knowledge from the field of Applied Linguistics to discuss the characteristics of responsible education and training. According to the author, educating as a responsible act “(...) implies reflecting on an education that is responsive to contemporary social demands” (SZUNDI, 2014, p. 30).

As in the works of Szundy (2014) and Kleiman (2014), there are five (5) more articles that base their discussions on language in a conception anchored in the theoretical assumptions of the Bakhtin Circle: Lima et al. (2014), Azevedo and Santos (2018), Fischer and Colaço (2017), Sartori (2015), Grande and Nascimento (2018).

DISCUSSION

The training space circumscribed in the procedural technical field

The articles analyzed showed that the research interests discuss teacher training that takes place primarily within the teaching courses, that is, that prepare them to work with language in Basic Education classes. Among these degrees, the Arts course is the most investigated, reflecting on another important fact: literacy is closely related to courses whose language is the object of study.

In this direction, Muniz and Vilas Boas (2018) emphasize that there is a whole social valuation about the professional of Arts as being the main agent responsible “(...) for implementing a pedagogical practice that aims at the progressive development of linguistic-discursive competence, a fundamental principle for the multiple social actions of its students” (p. 2015). However, language permeates all training processes at the university, making it necessary to expand its investigative horizon, mainly because through language, subjects understand how knowledge is produced and the intertwined power relations. And, “(...) the way language is approached in pedagogical practices can favor the expansion of awareness in the professional universe, or reduce it to a technical and reproductive dimension of the knowledge of an area” (ALMEIDA; PAN, 2017, p. 90).

Another important fact to be highlighted is that the look at the topic of academic literacy is very specific to some subjects, in this case, Linguistics, especially Applied Linguistics. Although Silva (2013, 2015) points out that this field of knowledge is limited to an interdisciplinary approach, oriented from the perspective of new literacy studies (STREET, 2014), it is necessary to bring other voices to the discussion of this topic, in an interdisciplinary perspective, understanding that “The one-sidedness and limitations of the point of view (of the position of the observer) can always be corrected, completed and transformed (enumerated) with the help of the same observations carried out from other points of view” (BAKHTIN, 2011, p. 330), making the debate on the subject of teacher education and its relationship with academic literacy more fertile.

All teachers, from the different courses and subjects, work with reading and writing practices, while they were also trained by them. This is because the language “(...) is validated by a double clash - one on the factual plane (reflecting the world) and another on the axiological plane (on the plane of refractions)” (FARACO, 2017, p. 48). This axiological relationship at the university is marked by its history and the established sociocultural context, especially in how the teacher acts and understands the role and the way he relates to reading and writing practices.

To better situate this discussion, it is necessary to highlight that, just as the history of Higher Education is recent in Brazil (ZAVADSKI E FACCI, 2012), the consolidation of training processes for professionals working in universities continues to take its first steps. This formation is defined in art. 66, of the LDB, in the following terms: “Art. 66 - The preparation for the exercise of higher teaching will take place at the postgraduate level, primarily in master's and doctoral programs”. In this sense: “The

LDB does not conceive university teaching as a training process, but as a preparation for the exercise of higher education, which should be carried out primarily (not exclusively) in graduate courses” (PIMENTA et al., 2005, p. 273).

Postgraduate courses, especially in the academic master's and doctorate are more concerned with the formation of the researcher, leaving a workload restricted to the subjects aimed at the formation of the teacher who will work within the universities, which are often not even mandatory. Therefore, this teacher is constituted almost intuitively, based on their formative experiences and the action of their peers, which end up determining the characteristics that define them as a “university professor”.

If there is little space in postgraduate courses for training actions focused on methodologies, didactics, teaching strategies, etc. much fewer discussions related to literacies that occur in a university, such as the appropriation, not always smooth, of the textual genres of the academic community. Quite the contrary, there is often a problematic relationship “(...) which leads us to conclude that this is a field of production of stigmas and symbolic violence. Teachers and students are victims of difficulties that can be alleviated if there is an investment in understanding the problems surrounding this theme and in proactive actions” (MARINHO, 2010, p. 383).

However, if this training, involving teaching strategies for working with textual genres in the academic sphere, has not occurred in many graduate courses, some researchers have addressed this issue. As we can see in the results within the set of articles studied, there is an expressive number of works aimed at proposing and discussing didactic models that guide the practices of specific genres, such as the works of Bittencourt and Avelar (2013), Florek (2016) and Ferragini (2018).

Ferragini (2018) justifies this methodological strategy, present in his article, as a possibility to bring the theory of discursive genres closer to didactics and demonstrate “(...) theoretical-practical directions that lead to meaningful learning and, consequently, to a more reflective training” (p. 296).

Some researchers, such as Bittencourt and Avelar (2013) and Silva and Franco (2017) justify the choice of the didactic-methodological approach, present in the articles, as strategies to recover reading and writing deficits that students bring from Basic Education. As we see in this excerpt from the research by Silva and Franco (2017): “(...) it is possible to perceive the difficulties of Brazilian students in reading, since students in the 3rd year of high school have the same knowledge in this area of students who are in the 9th Year of Middle School, even with three more years of schooling” (p. 83).

In this sense, a first point to be highlighted is that the genres that circulate in the scientific community have different structures and specificities from those that make up the literacy processes experienced in previous stages of schooling. Even students who excel well in their written productions in high school tend to have difficulties with these more specific genres of higher education.

Azevedo and Santos (2018), when analyzing excerpts from the speeches of university students about the writing of the conclusion work of the History course, highlight that there is a false understanding that autonomous literacy enables the reader to move through different texts with autonomy without considering “(...) that different textual genres require different skills from their readers/writers” (p. 381). Or, in the words of Bakhtin (2011): “(...) there are many people who, having mastered the language magnificently, immediately feel helpless in certain spheres of verbal communication, precisely because they do not, in practice, master the forms of the genre of a given sphere” (p. 303).

This conception of genres leads us to the understanding that it is not enough for the teacher to expose students to contact with academic texts, as this will not always guarantee the understanding of technical-scientific knowledge. It is necessary to mediate this meeting, calling attention to the particularities of the language used and how it is articulated for the production of meanings in the different texts (articles, essays, reviews, etc.); its production context; to situate the authors and the schools of belonging that confront each other or are silent. That is, the teacher needs to receive adequate training for these practices.

We can also historicize this need for practical approaches in research on literacies in higher education, aiming to better understand their centrality in academics, in this first moment of the rise of the theme as a field of research, as verified in the studies of Sartori (2015), Silva et al. (2016), Muniz and Vilas Boas (2018), Silva and Franco (2017), Pereira and Leitão (2015).

During the Fernando Henrique Cardoso (1994-2002) and Lula (2003-2011) governments, the main measures were taken to create programs to encourage student access and permanence at the university. As an example, we can mention the University for All Program (Prouni) and the Support Program for Restructuring and Expansion Plans of Federal Universities (Reuni), in addition to expanding the scope of existing programs, such as the Student Financing Fund (Fies). The Quota Law, number 12,711/2012, was also implemented, providing that half of the vacancies of all courses and shifts at federal institutions be reserved for students who studied the entire high school level in public schools. A part of these vacancies is reserved for browns, blacks, and indigenous people; the other part for students with a family income equal to or less than 1.5 minimum wage per capita, promoting the access of the historically disadvantaged population to higher education. These programs increased vacancies in public universities and, mainly, facilitated the access of the lower classes to private HEIs.

This new profile of students who entered the university subverted the idea of the ideal academic, requiring new forms of reception and care, as well as requiring structural changes in the pedagogical policies of the courses, for which the professors were not prepared. However, it is observed that:

The entry and permanence of popular layers traditionally excluded from academic spaces impact the established structures and the correlation of force and power existing in legitimized literacy practices. The University in the last decade has been responding to public policies that enable the entry of new actors but promotes or accepts few changes in its established traditions. (AZEVEDO; SANTOS, 2018, p. 383).

Regarding literacy, the absence and urgency of training for reading and writing practices, due to this heterogeneity, was partially supplied with didactic models of action in the face of specific genres. This is what this study showed us, which also revealed that the adoption of didactic-procedural models does not require an explanation of the conceptions that support them, especially the concept of student.

However, for the deficits in the acquisition of academic literacy do not fall only to the student and their cognitive disabilities, the analysis needs to include teachers and their practices, as discussed by Lima et al. (2014); the university as a whole, given the complexities of literacies in contemporary times, as pointed out by studies by Kleiman (2014), Szundy (2014), Silva et al. (2016) and Grande and Nascimento (2018); and the heterogeneity of the profile of students who make up higher education, so well emphasized by Azevedo and Santos (2018) and Fisher and Colaço (2017), at the historical moment when access policies are democratized.

Regarding the educational demands of contemporary literacies, there are two (2) articles, among those analyzed, that indicate important advances in the way of thinking about teacher training, so that this professional can respond to these new forms of communication. Kleiman (2014), based on Bakhtinian architecture, highlights that, for the formation of autonomous and emancipated subjects, capable of acting as real participants in different discursive situations, teachers should not be mere replicators of theories imposed by the academy, but must understand that the genres that circulate in it are part of a complex cultural communication; that need to be reflected, debated, complemented, discussed and transformed in contact with other genres of discourse (KLEIMAN, 2014, p. 89).

With the same theoretical basis, Szundy (2014) emphasizes the importance of responsive training that enables teachers from the most different areas to “(...) guide verbal and non-verbal choices to reveal the refracted meanings from the choices carried out and problematize how meanings that cause suffering, exclusion or reveal prejudices can be reconstructed more critically and ethically” (p. 20). In this way, these professionals, when exercising teaching as a responsible act, would be able to seek more dialogical and persuasive experiences, aiming at the (re) construction of meanings about reading and writing at the university.

Many other analyzed articles also brought theoretical contributions anchored in the architecture of the Bakhtin Circle, mainly to support the discussions about the discursive genres present in the university, although, at times, oriented in a perspective more focused on the compositional structure, circumscribing in the background its dialogical orientation, that is, its historical and active responsive character, which gives voice to the academic community.

Divorcing the axiological and structural dimensions of language can reduce it to a transparent means of transmitting knowledge from a certain professional sphere, which is recurrent in universities, a reflection of a conception of language that understands reading and writing as products of a system abstract of signs aimed only at technical use. This character “(...) naturalizes the production devices of what they intend to form, on prevalent social values such as productivity and competition, to the detriment of the social, affective, language-transforming dimension” (ALMEIDA; PAN, 2017, p. 96).

It is necessary to bring to the discussion the understanding of language in its discursive dimension, permeated by a myriad of dialogic relationships that involve the different socio-ideological contexts of organization of the courses and of how the professionalization for the performance in universities occurs, mainly understanding that:

Reading and writing the technical language of the profession combined with the domains of language norms, without the discursive, creative, political, and authorial dimension, is the subjugation of the author creator's role to assume a technical reproducer of the use of language and knowledge. (ALMEIDA; PAN, 2017, p. 92).

As a consequence of this objective view of language, many university professors, as well as students, are not aware of the discursive modes that operate in certain professional areas and that they require different reading and writing resources (ALMEIDA; PAN, 2017), not least because such learning is not always done intuitively.

FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

The articles analyzed, to a greater or lesser extent, demonstrate to be involved in the concern with the conduct of literacies practices developed in universities. Although many are focused on students and their reading and writing difficulties, they touch a wide field that still needs to be unveiled.

At the end of this work, readers must be asking themselves about the reasons that led to the proposition of a systematic review to show that there is very little research relating the training of professors who work in higher education with the literacy practices that occur at the University. Yes, that is the fact: pointing out the almost invisibility of the theme and demarcating its urgency.

It is the silence that moves the senses and tells us a lot. In the tiny space dedicated to this topic, most of the discussions remain focused on undergraduate students, on their difficulties in appropriating the genres of the scientific sphere, and on the indication of methodological strategies, suggesting that teacher training is directed towards a more technical training of uses of language, without, however, advancing the debate on the importance of the role of language in their formation, as a producer of meanings attributed to the literacy practices that they experience and produce at the university.

We need new studies that consider the dialogic complexity manifested in the relationship between academic literacy practices and teacher training, so that, in this way, we can bring to light new, more interdisciplinary training models that understand the socio-ideological character of utterances that make up the communicative forms that occur in universities, that is, the living language of the academic community, which reflects and refracts institutional and social voices, producing modes of subjectivation (ALMEIDA; PAN, 2017).

We also observed that, if, on the one hand, the voices of students are already present in research on academic literacy, through narratives, interviews, etc., the same is not yet observed in higher education professors and, therefore, much of what is said about them remains centered on interpretations based on evaluative results based on the productions of university students. Part of the discussions focuses on criticisms and notes on how the university professor should act, but in rare exceptions their experiences in professional practice and their life and training trajectories have become audible, seeking to understand how they are constitutive of their teacher identity, configured as a possibility of (re)creation of meanings and contributing to the construction of a collective voice (PAN; LITENSKI, 2018, p. 529). Therefore, we highlight the urgency of listening to teachers in their needs and anxieties, aiming to understand the language conceptions that underlie literacy practices and give meaning to them.

We also concluded, through this literature review, that discussions about the relevance of the role of language in teacher education remain very focused on a technical conception of language uses, aiming at urgent responses to the difficulties encountered by students and teachers during the encounter with scientific genres, especially in courses in which language is the object of study. In the same direction, Linguistics is circumscribed as the main field of investigation of the formative practices of academic literacies.

We emphasize the need to advance in research, based on a discursive conception of language that perceives its centrality in the training practices of university professors in different areas of activity, as well as an interdisciplinary look at the study of language, expanding the scope of analyses, and understanding that it permeates all communicative practices that occur in universities.

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Author 1 – Data collection, data analysis, and text writing.

Author 2 – Project coordinator, active participation in data analysis and review of the final writing.

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The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest with this article.

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