

## Knowledge and Meanings Produced in the Educational Practices of Mova-Belém/PA

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**ABSTRACT – Knowledge and Meanings Produced in the Educational Practices of Mova-Belém/PA.** This article analyzes the knowledge and meanings produced by adults based on experiences in educational practices of the Youth and Adult Literacy Movement (MOVA), in Belém/Pará. We are anchored in the studies of Freire (2016; 2019) and Brandão(1984, 2002), in the field of education; in Araújo (2007), Gadotti (2008), Jardimino and Araújo(2014) and Moll (2011), in the field of youth and adult education; and in Kleiman (2007) in the field of literacy. Data were produced through semi-structured interviews, from the perspective of oral history. The results indicate that the knowledge and meanings produced from experiences in educational practices at MOVA enabled the creation and recreation of knowledge necessary for everyday life. The positive impact produced on their lives allowed them to participate in more effective literacy practices, such as acquiring a better job, reading printed materials that circulate on a daily basis, a more critical reading of reality, and increased self-esteem.

**Keywords: Knowledge. Everyday Education. Literacy. Literacy. MOVA Belém/Pará.**

**RESUMO – Saberes e Significações Produzidos nas Práticas Educativas do Mova-Belém/PA.** O presente artigo analisa os saberes e significações produzidos por adultos a partir de vivências em práticas educativas do Movimento de Alfabetização de Jovens e Adultos (MOVA), em Belém/Pará. Ancoramo-nos nos estudos de Freire (2016; 2019) e Brandão (1984, 2002), no campo da educação; em Araújo (2007), Gadotti (2008), Jardimino e Araújo (2014) e Moll (2011), no campo da educação de jovens e adultos; e em Kleiman (2007) no campo do letramento. Os dados foram produzidos por meio de entrevistas semiestruturadas, na perspectiva da história oral. Os resultados apontam que os saberes e significações produzidos a partir de vivências em práticas educativas do MOVA possibilitaram a criação e recriação de saberes necessários à vida cotidiana. O impacto positivo produzido em suas vidas, permitiu-lhes a participação em práticas letradas mais efetivas, como a aquisição de um emprego melhor, leituras de impressos que circulam no dia a dia, leitura mais crítica da realidade, elevação da autoestima.

**Palavras-chave: Saberes. Educação do Cotidiano. Alfabetização. Letramento. MOVA Belém/Pará.**

## Introduction

This article is the result of a Master's dissertation research, which discusses the literacy and literacy of young people and adults, from the Postgraduate Program in Education at the State University of Pará (PPGED/UEPA), whose objective is to analyze the knowledge and meanings produced by adults based on experiences in educational practices of the Youth and Adult Literacy Movement (MOVA), in Belém/Pará (Gomes, 2017).

After six years, we decided to revisit in this work several of the reflections developed in it, convinced that we are at an opportune moment for its wider dissemination, given its current situation, and because the education of young people and adults, according to Moll (2011), is a place for reunions of time and space.

The interest in this production is based on the theoretical-methodological relevance of studies on educational experiences developed in community practices, such as MOVA, in Belém/Pará. The scope of this study attests to the importance of looking at everyday education, in order to recognize and value the knowledge and meanings produced by human collectives that occur in experiences arising from the relationship between education and community.

Organized in literacy centers, the actions developed by MOVA took place in community centers, at night, by popular educators who, for the most part, already worked with adult literacy, and who lived in the locality itself. From this perspective, the experiences presented here contribute to recording the history of literacy among young people and adults in dialogue with their trajectory of struggle, demands and their educational processes in the community.

This study highlights that MOVA, in its historical trajectory in Brazil, presents a pedagogical proposal based on the ideals of Paulo Freire. MOVA's work base articulated, in the words of Jardimino and Araújo (2014, p. 68) "[...] constructivist theory and pedagogical practice, in a dialogical, emancipatory and interdisciplinary vision of the literacy process". According to the authors, this work base reaffirms the ideals of Freire's pedagogy, prioritizing themes from the students' daily social life, problematizing them so that the reading of the written word is critical and meaningful, in addition to reaffirming the commitment to promoting a culture of peace, training for autonomy and community organization.

Also according to Jardimino and Araújo (2014), the MOVA initiative had the following objectives: developing a literacy process that started from the critical reading of reality; contribute to the development of a critical awareness of the subjects involved; encourage popular participation and the fight for a more just and egalitarian society; as well as developing a literacy practice supported by both social and popular movements and public authorities.

Four graduates of MOVA Belém participated in the construction of this work, with ages ranging from 44 to 72 years old, all from the

class of 2010, from the Jurunas neighborhood, in Belém/Pará. To have access to the interviewees, we had the collaboration of a popular educator, who was willing to walk with us through the streets of the neighborhood looking for her/her former students.

We chose the Jurunas neighborhood as the research field because it is one of the oldest and most populous neighborhoods in the city of Belém, and because it has the largest number of MOVA classes in the city. This number of classes is directly related to the location of the neighborhood, which is one of the main routes into and out of the city, especially the entry of families of riverside origin through the ports located on Avenida Bernardo Sayão, one of its main access routes. . Therefore, increasing the demand for the adult literacy process, the majority of which come from families from the interior of the state of Pará.

Our methodological construction was based on the critique of positivist epistemological thinking, refusing the assumption that only positivist science knowledge should be validated, highlighting the importance of popular knowledge and its contribution to the construction of a new social history. Therefore, for this study, we used Life History and Oral History to produce data.

To collect the data, semi-structured interviews were used, as they allow the researcher to know the meanings that the interviewees give to the phenomena and events of their daily lives, based on the link between memory and their ways of narrating (Meihy; Holanda, 2015).

In systematizing the data, two types of categorization were used: analytical and empirical. For Oliveira and Mota Neto (2011), in qualitative research carried out in the field of education, the interpretation and analysis of data constitutes a process that accompanies the development of research from its genesis until the moment of systematizing and analyzing the data, being at this stage, categorization is necessary.

In the first part of the article, we initially present the discussion of cultural knowledge and education; o MOVA: political-pedagogical conception; the research subjects; the research path: moments of narrative collection; reports on the knowledge and meanings produced from MOVA's educational practices; and we end the text with our final considerations.

## **Cultural Knowledge and Education**

As a starting point for this study, we present a brief reflection, in dialogue with Brandão (2002), about the importance of thinking about education in its relationship with the popular masses. An education whose project is presented based on the education-knowledge-culture relationship, and which proposes cultural work committed to the subjects and the preservation of their own modes of action, representation of reality and its reproduction as popular culture.

In Brandão's (1984) understanding, no one escapes education, as it occurs at home, on the street, at church or at school. In one way or another, everyone is involved in education, both to learn and to teach. Every day we are involved in education. From this perspective, educational actions take place in different spaces of society, distinguished by the way in which educational processes occur.

Education as a cultural practice, marked by different temporalities and contexts, is processed as a natural act, based on an intersection of cultures. An educational action mobilizes a set of knowledge created and recreated by subjects involved in different cultural contexts.

In the words of Brandão (2002, p. 139), “[...] all education is culture. The entire theory of education is a partial dimension of some motivated systems of symbols and meanings of a given culture [...]”. Thus, knowledge, values, codes and grammars of relationships between different subjects are constructed in their daily relationships, which are not limited to the school space.

According to Mota Neto (2015, p. 57), for contemporary human and social sciences, “[...] the study of everyday life is one of the most used ways to understand the culture of social subjects, social organization, the relationship between individuals and society, the appropriation of spaces, the history of common subjects and popular culture”. It implies recognizing that men and women, on a daily basis, produce history and culture. The study of everyday life, therefore, is a multiple concept for the study of human beings, culture, society and education.

In the field of education, everyday social life is understood as a space for the production and transmission of knowledge, as well as an arena for power relations and the construction of identities. From this perspective, education must be a contextualized social practice, capable of stimulating the knowledge, cultures, experiences and autonomy of students. For Mota Neto (2015, p. 59), “[...] the culture and wisdom of social groups, the various educational processes experienced in social relationships, the production of meanings in educational spaces, are emerging issues in studies of everyday life”.

By defending a permanent effort of reflection on subjects as possessors of multiple specific knowledge, collectively constructed in their daily practices, we dialogue with Freire (2019, p. 98) for deeply criticizing the “banking” conception of education, as an instrument of alienation. It suggests, on the contrary, a problematizing and liberating conception of education, which seeks “[...] the emergence of consciences, resulting in their critical insertion in reality”.

The “banking” conception and practice, for Freire (2019), ends up ignoring men as historical beings, while the problematizing conception starts from the historical character and historicity of men, making itself revolutionary. From this perspective, Freire proposes literacy from the inside out by the subject learning literacy, only adjusted by the educator.

This search movement, in which educators and students become subjects of the process, based on a humanist and liberating task, permeated the MOVA methodology, by prioritizing intellectual formation in dialogue with social organization.

Next, we will present the political-pedagogical conception of MOVA, which was born from an experience instituted in São Paulo by Paulo Freire, and which supported its political-pedagogical principles in a liberating conception of education.

### **MOVA: political-pedagogical conception**

The Youth and Adult Literacy Movement (MOVA) was inaugurated in São Paulo, in October 1989, under the management of Luiza Erundina (1989-1992). This literacy movement was conceived by educator Paulo Freire, then the city's education secretary, working in partnership with civil society.

A liberating conception of education was defended, highlighting the role of education in the construction of a historical project, which conceived the student as a subject of knowledge, and understood literacy not only as a logical, intellectual process, but, above all, a humanizing process, according to Jardimino and Araújo, 2014.

Regarding the creation of MOVA, Gadotti (2008, p. 56) explains that:

At the time [of the construction of MOVA] the draft Law on Guidelines and Bases for National Education (LDB) was in the process of being discussed, in which educators defended the inclusion of a specific chapter on youth and adult education. In it, educators supported the thesis that the right to fundamental education for those who did not have it at their appropriate age could only be guaranteed by cooperation between the State and civil society. The city of São Paulo anticipated what was being defined in the LDB.

Based on the Freirean precepts that no one teaches anyone to read and write and that the literacy teacher is only the mediator of the literacy process of his/her student, the pedagogical conception of MOVA had as its guiding principle the conception that, in the words of Jardimino and Araújo (2014, p. 67): “[...] it is the student's action on the literate world, thinking and acting on their own writing and the writing of others, the starting point for reading the world”.

Thus, we realize the importance attributed to education in the process of autonomy of MOVA students, as well as to the mastery of linguistic codes in the literacy process, for the construction of intellectual autonomy and critical reading of the reality of these students. to the.

With the success of MOVA's experience in São Paulo, other states, municipalities, NGOs and social movements sought this partnership, implementing the methodology used in the movement's culture circles. The MOVA-BRASIL Network was thus created, with the purpose of strengthening the movement at a national level, through

the construction of spaces for dialogue between the different experiences of MOVAs, as well as through the expansion of public policies aimed at education of young people and adults, according to Jardimino and Araújo (2014).

We highlight the expansion of MOVA across the country, considering the words of Jardimino and Araújo (2014, p. 69), who clarify that:

MOVA's have spread throughout the national territory and maintain a common pedagogical line, receiving in their name the name of the State, municipality or locality in which it operates, for example, MOVA-Porto Alegre, MOVA-MG, MOVA-Belém, MOVA -ABC. [...] There are different projects, but all built based on the ideals of Freirean pedagogy [...]. All of this is supported by a literacy process that goes beyond literacy, translating into critical and emancipatory training

In Belém/PA, MOVA was inaugurated in 2001, under the management of Edmilson Rodrigues (1997-2004), at the time, from the Workers' Party (PT). His mandates, called “Cabano” – in a reference to the Cabanagem<sup>1</sup> movement – presupposed, in the words of Pojo (2006, p. 54), “[...] a process of collective construction of a government project that had as its basic objective an inversion of priorities, so that these were embodied in the principles of social inclusion and popular participation [...]”. This “inversion of priorities” therefore consisted of giving priority assistance to economically disadvantaged social strata.

According to Pojo (2006), “The People's Government”, as Edmilson Rodrigues' administration was called, invested in the qualification and expansion of the popular movement, giving it the opportunity to define the direction of the municipality of Belém in partnership with the municipal administration.

MOVA Belém was the result of the demands and demands of the popular movement, which presented as one of its main objectives the overcoming of illiteracy in the capital of Pará (Pojo, 2006). It also presented itself as a resistance movement in the face of the hegemonic, neoliberal discourse, which aims to train workers linked to market logic. In this sense, the MOVA Belém proposal aimed to provide humanizing training for its students.

Regarding the functioning of MOVA Belém, Araújo (2007, p. 105) highlights that:

The classes lasted one year, but what determined the student's transition to formal education at school was the pace of construction of their learning, the development of their potential and the construction of new knowledge; Classes took place from Monday to Thursday for two hours, in classes close to the students' residence, under the mediation of a literacy teacher.

The popular educator was the one who organized the classes in their localities. She went out knocking on doors, issuing invitations to people interested in participating in the movement's literacy process.

As one of her criteria, the classes only started after reaching a total of 20 students. The meetings took place from Monday to Thursday, lasting 2 hours a day, and on Fridays, the educators received continued training from their coordinators. The remuneration of the educators was R\$ 400.00 monthly.

To work as an educator at MOVA Belém, only completed high school and availability to work as a literacy teacher were required. And, one of his duties was to find a place to hold meetings with his students, which most of the time took place in community centers.

After the MOVA Belém literacy process, the students were enrolled in schools closer to their homes, which served the EJA public. The formal schooling process for its graduates began, preferably in the municipal education network.

After the end of Edmilson Rodrigues' management period, in 2004, MOVA Belém lost strength. Its leaders continued to fight to keep the movement alive. The classes resisted until 2014, at the beginning of Zenaldo Coutinho's administration (2013 - 2020), when the program definitively ended its activities, with no return expected, mainly due to the lack of resource transfers from the Federal Government, which he was the one who financed the movement.

MOVA, throughout its existence, fought against social injustices, with work committed to social issues, which it recognized as its own students as the starting point of its literacy process. It reaffirmed the popular participation movement and the fight for citizens social rights.

## **The Research Subjects**

Four graduates of MOVA Belém participated in this study – identified by fictitious names to facilitate reading –, residents of the Juru-nas neighborhood, from the class of 2010, with ages ranging from 44 to 72 years old, two of whom were men. and two women.

They all came from the interior of the state of Pará looking for a better life. They are people from riverside families, who have had to help support the family since childhood, justifying the fact that they did not attend school as a child, with the exception of Mrs. Margarida, who did not study due to lack of personal documentation.

Below, some excerpts from the speeches of these people, who, like many, were unable to enjoy their childhood years:

At the age of 10, I separated from my mother. I am the son of Chaves [Pará]. He told my mother that at that moment my interest was to work, earn money and help around the house (Mister João – verbal data);

When I was a child, I lived in the country. I never had a [birth] certificate, because I was adopted when I was very young. So, the family that adopted me never tried to take away my documents. Therefore, there was no way I could study. I wanted to play with my classmates at school, but I couldn't, because I didn't have the necessary documents to enroll (Ms. Margarida – verbal data);

I only studied a little bit [in childhood]. Only ABC. Already five, six years old. I couldn't afford it! He lived in Igarapé-Miri [Pará] and worked catching cuuba (su Raimundo – verbal data);

I'm from Bujarú [Pará]. I'm from the interior, really. There from the Colonies. When I was a child, I didn't have classes, I just had work (Ms. Lurdes – verbal data).

Mr. João, 72 years old, the oldest among those interviewed, told us that at the age of ten he left home, in the municipality of Chaves/PA, to work in fishing, contrary to his mother, who wanted to see him attending the school. He also told us that he traveled to many places, even to another country, such as Peru: “My life was traveling around the world fishing in the North. I walked a lot in this life, I even went abroad. I even went to Peru” (verbal data).

Today, João is a widower, retired, and lives alone in a rented room. Because he is very religious, he says he doesn't mind being alone, because God is always with him: “I live here in this house. This is God's house, isn't it? Only God and I live in this house. I don't have a “dick” to give water, do I?” (verbal data).

Ms. Lurdes, 65 years old, who is the oldest among the women, told a story of great struggle. She comes from the colonies in the municipality of Bujarú / PA. Where she lived, as a child, there were no schools, hence the reason she did not go to class. At the age of 14, she came to Belém/PA, to work in the family home, as her family did not have the financial means to continue supporting her: “I came here [Belém/Pará], at the age of 14, to try a better life. I continued without studying. He just worked, really. At that time, we were almost slaves. It wasn't what I expected” (verbal data).

Because she started working very young, she has been retired for a long time, and she continues working in a chestnut factory, in Outeiro / PA, as she is unable to let go of work. She is “loved”<sup>2</sup> and has seven children.

Mr. Raimundo, 53 years old, comes from a riverside family, from the interior of the municipality of Igarapé-Miri/PA. He told us that since he was a child he started working to help support his family. He explained that the work was very tiring, and that when she got home she didn't have the “head” to study:

He lived a very tiring life. He worked a lot. She didn't have the strength to go to school. I spent the whole day working, because my family needed the money I earned. When I got home, I no longer had a mind to study. But, I regret it a lot (verbal data).

Today, Mr. Raimundo is married and has his own home, which has always been his biggest dream. He works as a butcher, and says he is satisfied with the salary he receives, because what he received, in his youth, for the tiring activity he carried out was little, barely enough to live on.

Ms. Margarida, 44 years old, is our happiest interviewee, despite having a life path marked by embarrassment and humiliation because, until she was a teenager, she didn't know how to read and



write. She comes from the municipality of Moju / PA, adopted daughter of a riverside family. She told us that she comes from an illiterate family, justifying the fact that for many years she lived without having her documents, not even her birth certificate. She started having them after she was thirty years old. As a child, she attended school, however, she was a “reluctant” student, as she was unable to formalize her studies due to lack of documents. She counted on the teachers' understanding to attend classes, as reported in the following excerpt:

I was going to school, but they didn't know I wasn't enrolled, you know? I just attended. That's because I didn't have a document to prove that I existed. The teachers simply felt sorry and tried to teach me something. But, in the interior, teaching is very weak (verbal data).

Currently, Ms. Margarida works in a restaurant as a kitchen assistant, with all her rights guaranteed. She is “loved”, and has a couple of children and two grandchildren, who she helps raise.

As for schooling, these are people who had to postpone their entry into school, due to the fact that, each with their own specificity, they have life stories marked by the denial of rights. All four interviewees pursue the dream of continuing to study, however, day-to-day tasks make it difficult to achieve this, as we can see in their statements:

I had to stop [studying] because my daughter got pregnant, so I had to take care of her son. She went to work. I didn't have any more time. Then I stopped. But, I think I'll go back (Ms. Margarida – verbal data);

I wanted to go back to studying. My desire was to grow, but I can't afford it, because I work. I don't have time (Mrs. Raimundo – verbal data);

I can't study anymore, because I still work. My work is very far away. When I get home I want to go to sleep straight away (Ms. Lurdes – verbal data).

It is worth mentioning that, after the MOVA Belém literacy experiences, everyone was enrolled in a municipal school in the neighborhood. This is explained by the fact that the program, after its activities, sends its graduates to schools, primarily in the municipal education network, closer to the homes of its students, and that serve the EJA public.

Only Ms. Lurdes stayed at school for a little longer, studying up to the 3rd year of elementary school. The rest gave up soon after. Until the moment the research was completed, none of the interviewees were attending school, and they justified their withdrawal from studies, among other reasons, due to the change in the teaching methodology applied by the school. Training in community centers, according to reports, allows them to train closer to their realities, consequently generating a feeling of belonging. The environment becomes more welcoming.

### **The Research Trail: moments of narrative collection**

To access the interviewees, we had the collaboration of a popular educator from MOVA, a resident of the Jurunas neighborhood, who

was willing to walk with us through the streets of the neighborhood looking for her former students. We walked the streets of the neighborhood, knocking on doors, hoping to convince them to participate in this study.

The educator called us whenever she managed to speak to someone, and asked us to meet her immediately. We spent three weeks walking around the neighborhood, morning, afternoon and night, during the Carnival celebrations.

As it is a very busy neighborhood with a large number of street parties, it was often difficult to find some graduates in their homes. Another reason that made the meetings difficult was the issue of the religiosity of some people, who often went to church, so when they weren't at work, they were at church.

Many did not agree to participate in this study, claiming they did not know how to answer the questions. However, the educator explained to us the real reason for the resistance presented. She told us that a few months ago before the start of our visits to the neighborhood, a person who claimed to be a candidate for councilor started frequenting the area, promising to get older residents a pension, especially those who couldn't read. However, it turned out that it was all a scam. Since then, they have become distrustful of everyone who came looking for them.

After many conversations and insistence, especially from the educator, who is very loved by everyone in the community, four people agreed to participate in this study.

The phase corresponding to the interviews was carried out according to the availability of each interviewee, and the choice of the best location was at the discretion of each person. The interviews took place in their respective homes, with the exception of Ms. Margarida's interview, which took place at the home of the educator who was helping us, at the request of the interviewee herself, who claimed that her home was a place of intense noise due to two young grandchildren passing by the day with her. Dona Margarida lived next to the educator's residence.

Regarding the issue of choosing the location for the interviews, Meihy and Holanda (2015, p.c56) emphasize that:

In order to produce better conditions for interviews, the chosen location is essential. Whenever possible, the employee should be allowed to decide where they would like to record the interview [...] but generally the person's home, when there is no impediment, becomes the chosen space.

In such a situation, we respect the decision of each interviewee. Therefore, one of the first difficulties that arose and which made this period of interviews take a long time was the period of intense rain, which falls during the first months of the year in the city. The interviews took place between February and March 2016.

Our approach to the community began in the first month of 2016, so that residents could become familiar with our presence, as well as to make sure that our intention was to develop research for the State University of Pará. These first contacts were very important to gain the community's trust in our research, as illicit activities are carried out in some places in this community, and the presence of strangers is always a threat to those who carry out such activities.

The second difficulty we encountered was the long period that the interviewees were away from home, as they worked in places far from the neighborhood. For example, Ms. Lurdes, who works in the District of Ilha de Outeiro/PA, 18 kilometers from the center of Belém/PA, and who needed to leave at 5:00 am and only returned at 7:00 pm, extremely tired. The exception was João, who is retired and spent most of his time at home.

Due to the difficulty of meeting these people in their homes from Monday to Friday, we decided to interview them on weekends, especially during Carnival week, a period when some would be at home. The proposal was well received by everyone.

The first interview was carried out with Mr. Raimundo, in the first contact we established with him. It didn't take much effort to convince him to participate in the research. When we found him on the street, he was coming from the bike fair, heading towards his residence. After introducing ourselves, he asked us to wait for him at his mother-in-law's residence, which is across the street from the educator who was accompanying us. When we arrived, we were warmly welcomed by his mother-in-law, wife and sister-in-law, who had gathered in the living room to welcome us. At the end of the interview, he presented us with some uxis and mangoes, typical fruits from our region, which he took from one of his bags.

The interview took place on February 6, 2016, around 9:30 am, lasting 24 minutes, without interruptions, although an intense noise coming from a bar located in front of the residence was quite disturbing. When we started asking the first questions, we realized that Mr. Raimundo was comfortable corroborating our study. The first answers were very confident, especially those that asked him to talk about the reasons that led him not to attend school as a child.

As the questions were asked, Mr. Raimundo became more comfortable answering them, he even got emotional when narrating an embarrassing situation he had suffered two years ago in line at a bank. He told us that, because he didn't know how to use the self banking service, he had to queue for more than an hour to deposit money at the self banking service. When it was his turn to be served, the bank employee asked him to deposit the money into the self banking service.

Mr. Raimundo asked this employee to help him, receiving a refusal. The employee told him that he could not help him at that moment, asking him to wait a little. Mr. Raimundo waited another hour, and the employee didn't show up. So, he asked an unknown person for help depositing the money. Luckily, he came across an honest per-

son. Given this lack, we highlight this passage from the interview to glimpse how Mr. Raimundo felt comfortable talking about his life and some of the challenges he faced in his daily life.

After this peaceful experience with the first interviewee, we began to conduct the remaining interviews more calmly, as we realized that we were dealing with people who needed to vent about embarrassing experiences that saddened them, motivated by not knowing how to read and write. Therefore, in all other interviews we arrived at the agreed location an hour in advance, so that the interviewees could talk about what bothered them, and so that they did not deviate from the focus of the interviews. However, many still repeated in interviews what they said in conversations.

Regarding this strategy, we based ourselves on the statements of Meihy and Holanda (2015), when they highlighted the importance of some questions being answered before recording begins, for example: is it necessary to know a little more about the interviewee or not? The answer depends on the type of project we are structuring. In the case of our study, knowing a little more about the interviewee was very important, so our questions gained directions that resulted in more consistent answers.

The second interview took place on the same day, with João, at his home, at 4:00 pm. However, we arrived at 3:10 pm to talk about the intention of our study and listen a little. It is important to highlight that all interviewees live on the same street.

The interview lasted 30 minutes, without interruptions. However, the problem we had in Mr. Raimundo interview repeated itself again: the intense noise coming from a bar. This noise was related to a carnival party that the establishment was promoting.

During the interview, João seemed very comfortable and willing to collaborate with whatever was needed. He repeated many times that he was an evangelical, justifying all his decisions, especially accepting the invitation to participate in MOVA Belém, to learn how to read the Bible. However, we often had to return to the question so that we could answer what was in our interest, as there were some leaks in the speeches that referred, once again, to the fact that he was evangelical. We waited for him to complete the idea, and we asked the questions again. Throughout the interview, he appeared to be a very happy person, making our interaction easier.

On February 8, 2016, on Carnival Monday, we interviewed Ms. Lurdes. The interview took place at her home, at 8:15 pm. We arrived at the place at 7:35 pm to talk about our research. However, we had to explain our objectives to one of her children, who was attending higher education, so that Mrs. Lurdes felt confident in corroborating the production of the data necessary for this study.

At first, Ms. Lurdes seemed a little nervous, asking us if she would be the ideal person to be interviewed. We answered yes, and explained the objectives of the research again. We waited for her to calm down, and we continued with the interview. We made it very

clear that she could interrupt the interview whenever she felt necessary, but that did not happen.

The interview with Ms. Lurdes took place without any interruptions, lasting 29 minutes. Enough time to answer all questions without difficulties. However, she asked all her family members who were in the room to leave, so she could be more comfortable expressing herself.

Finally, we carried out the fourth and final interview with Ms. Margarida, on February 11, 2016, at 7:40 pm. For reasons already mentioned above, the interview took place at the home of the educator who accompanied us in this study.

Very friendly, Ms. Margarida answered all the questions, constantly asking if we understood what she was saying, and with gestures we answered yes. In a very spontaneous way, with each question answered, she asked, with gestures, if she was doing well. Her interview lasted 20 minutes, making it the fastest interview ever carried out, and this fact is explained by her spontaneity. She has great ease in expressing herself and answering questions. When we asked a question, she would repeat what we had asked to see if she had really understood the question. Thus, she facilitated our interaction. Some questions were condensed to others, shortening the interview time.

With great sympathy, Ms. Margarida narrated a passage that marked her life, as she did not know how to read: when she was young, she had a boyfriend who always invited her for walks, and on one of those walks she read an advertisement for soft drinks in the wrong way, and in the At the same time, attention was drawn to the boy. This fact left her very embarrassed, to the point of breaking up with her boyfriend.

When we asked Ms. Margarida about her literacy experiences at MOVA Belém, she seemed very proud. It was there that she learned to read and write, at the age of 42, and today, she says she feels safe reading things on the street.

At the end of the data collection phase, we clarified that all recorded interviews would be transcribed manually, then transcribed onto the computer, and, finally, taken to the interviewees to be checked.

Transcribing the interviews was a very delicate step. Initially, we made an absolute transcription of the oral reports, that is, the words were written in their raw state, keeping the questions and answers, so that repetitions, errors and words were written without semantic weight, based on the guidelines of Meihy and Holanda (2015).

At the end of the transcriptions, we present a final version, which was accepted by the interviewees, to compose this production.

### **Reports on the Knowledge and Meanings Produced from MOVA Educational Practices**

Living in a literate society, especially in urban spaces, characterized by a huge written universe and requiring different types of read-

ing, it can be said that there is no illiterate, in the sense of the discursive effect and the strict meaning of this conception, according to Moll (2011). For the author, many people manage to create their own strategies to overcome small and large challenges, which require the appropriation of the written code.

From this study, we were allowed to meet men and women immersed in various literacy situations who, for the most part, have no education, but who were initiated into the literacy process. They are people driven by dreams, and who found in MOVA Belém the hope of making those dreams come true.

Below, we present some reports from the interviewees regarding their motivations about MOVA Belém:

I had a lot of desire to learn. I have been a servant of God for years! But, I don't read the Bible. I just wanted to learn how to read the Bible. It was just what I wanted in MOVA (su João – verbal data);

I really wanted to learn. I wanted to read my Bible, verses, these things about God. And, also, I thought it was beautiful to see people reading (Ms. Lurdes – verbal data);

I really wanted to grow. Have a better job, but for that I needed to learn to read and write (Mr. Raimundo – verbal data);

My dream was to learn to read and write a little. Learning to write my name (Dona Margarida – verbal data).

Everyone deposited their dreams in MOVA Belém, hoping to make them come true. Dreams ranged from signing your own name, reading the Bible, to professional advancement. At this moment, we realized the value of reading and writing, highlighting them as essential for the realization of these dreams.

Regarding reading the Bible, we noticed that it stands out among the speeches of the interviewees. This situation is justified because they are, for the most part, very linked to spiritual belief. Three of the four interviewees said they attend church daily, and reported feeling embarrassed about only listening to the “word of God” and not being able to read it. As an example of this situation, we present the speech of João, who was initiated into the literacy process, however, he did not consolidate the reading and writing process:

I wanted to learn to read, because it is very important to know the Bible. It is within her that the truth lies! There is the only place where the truth of Jesus is! I really wanted to learn, because you can't keep “flattering” others: - “So-and-so, read this paper to me!” (verbal data).

Before MOVA Belém, the interviewees said that they did not know how to read, as we can see in their statements:

Before [MOVA Belém] I didn't read anything. I saw people read it and thought it was beautiful (Ms. Lurdes – verbal data);

I didn't read anything. I learned to read after I joined MOVA. Today, I read a little. I can do my things more easily (Mr. Raimundo – verbal data);

I accepted the invitation and went to study at MOVA. It was there that I learned to read a little, to write my name, because I didn't know anything. I didn't know anything! My whole life has been working (Ms. Margarida – verbal data).

Given the statements of the interviewees, we realized that only João was unable to consolidate the literacy process. However, with our experience at MOVA Belém, we realized that it was able to create survival strategies to deal with everyday situations, namely:

Today, taking a bus is something I can do. It just got a lot easier! I can recognize the buses that pass by my house. There are buses that I already read the name of, because I memorized the name. For example, the Pedreira bus is 'P', isn't it? It starts with 'P', has a big name and ends with 'A'. The Ceasa bus: starts with 'C', is small in size, ends with 'A', and is green in color. Before, I didn't even know the names of the letters (su João – verbal data).

The reason João did not learn to read and write and the other interviewees did, is directly related to economic and social issues, issues that are very present among the public of youth and adult education in our country. They are people with different life experiences, expectations and cultural backgrounds. However, they have very similar life stories: they were unable to start or continue their studies in childhood, for various reasons, including economic issues.

We noticed an increase in each person's self-esteem through contact with MOVA Belém's educational practices. This high self-esteem is directly related to integration into the social world, which in the case of urban social groups with little literacy, highlights a condition of exclusion from certain cultural aspects of the society in which they are integrated. In this sense, according to Kleiman (2007), writing presents itself as one of the main foundations of the literate way of thinking.

Mr. João showed himself to be a person with the highest self-esteem after his experience at MOVA Belém, when he narrated a fact that for many may not mean much, but which is a source of pride for him, namely:

Now, they will no longer force me to write my name on my finger, like they used to do. Now, it's a joy, because I'm already writing my name on paper. I'm not going to get my finger dirty anymore (verbal data).

For João, being able to sign his own name makes him more important in the eyes of society. It is a form of self-affirmation. It means the possibility of a more dignified life. According to the interviewee, this was the greatest asset he acquired at MOVA Belém.

All interviewees recognized that small everyday actions, such as reading the time, were impossible to perform properly due to lack of knowledge of the written code. Below are some statements that illustrate the importance of reading the time:

Today, I know how to read the time. Before, I was embarrassed to wear a watch on my arm, afraid that someone would ask me: – 'what time is it?' and I wouldn't know how to answer... Do you know how I felt? A loser! Now you can ask me and I'll answer right away! And, I don't need those clocks with numbers [digital clock], I

can now read the time on clocks with hands [analog clock]. I owe all of this to MOVA (su Raimundo – verbal data);

Thank my good God I now know how to read the time. It was horrible not knowing the time. Not knowing if it's early or late. I felt lost! Every time I had to ask someone. Sometimes I would spend the day at home with the radio on to catch up on the times of the day. It's very good when we learn to read and learn to read the time straight away (Ms. Lurdes – verbal data);

One of the things I really appreciated about MOVA was learning how to read the time. Think of something good... have you ever thought about a person that age not knowing the time? Is very sad. Now, I even inform people about the time (Ms. Margarida – verbal data).

Another action that stands out among the interviewees' statements is the possibility

It was all good! Now that I know how to read, I can go to the grocery store, right? Then I say: – 'Ivan, give me two eggs!' I said 'two eggs', understand? – 'give me two eggs!' Give me some butter... (Ms. Margarida – verbal data);

MOVA helped me be more educated. I already know how to speak 'properly' to people, especially at my job, because people have more money there. Anywhere I go I can talk to people, I know how to ask for information. I'm no longer 'shy' (Mr Raimundo – verbal data);

I started communicating much better after participating in MOVA. The teacher always 'corrected' me when I said something wrong. She didn't do it to embarrass me, but to help me. Even my children praise me (Ms. Lurdes – verbal data);

I know how to speak better now. I can obey people now. This is very important (Mr. João – verbal data).

A speech that really caught our attention was that of João, when he said that because he knows how to communicate better, he is consequently able to "obey" people better. We conclude that what he wanted to express is that he can now understand what people want to tell him. However, we noticed a speech in which he places himself in a condition of inferiority in relation to people, due to his condition as a 72-year-old person who does not know how to read and write.

This report from João has a strong relationship with the feeling of shame for not knowing how to read and write, especially when he needs to sign documents with his thumb or depend on the help of other people to identify product prices, read documents, among other situations.

According to Traversini (2009, p. 578), with regard to literacy programs, he tells us that:

The need to change such characteristics attributed to illiterate people is recurrently found as a justification for carrying out literacy programs for young people and adults. One of the widely announced actions to achieve the promised change focuses on restoring self-esteem. If we pay attention not only to literacy programs for young people and adults, but also to other proposals derived from inclusive educational policies, we will find the recovery of self-esteem as an investment to achieve the desired goals.



Thus, rescuing self-esteem is a task considered important in the literacy process. The feeling of oppression and inferiority, shame, stigma for not knowing how to read and write and the fear of prejudice are conditions that hinder the literacy process for young people and adults. In this way, the relationship between self-esteem and learning can be strengthened with the dissemination of emancipatory pedagogical practices.

Literacy, for Traversini (2009), when part of the reality of its students, allows them to be trained to act as transforming agents of their own realities, based on critical training. This practice makes it easier for students to remain in literacy programs.

After the experiences in the literacy process at MOVA Belém, we noticed a greater participation of graduates in literacy practices, therefore highlighting the program's great contributions. In addition to more effective participation, daily practices themselves gained breadth. What stands out, above all, is the overcoming of the interviewees' low self-esteem, which appeared as a constant before MOVA Belém's activities.

The knowledge and meanings produced from experiences in educational practices at MOVA are perceived, in this study, as reflections of the human complexity of living in a literate society, based on the creation and recreation of knowledge necessary for everyday life. We noticed a new meaning of everyday life in each speech, from the moment they began to interact with the social environment with more autonomy.

## **Final Considerations**

The people who in this text presented the knowledge and meanings produced from their experiences in educational practices at MOVA Belém, recognized the importance of writing in their lives, as well as the need to expand knowledge to deal satisfactorily with some everyday practices .

Although one of the interviewees did not effectively use the written code, like João, we realized that, based on the learning he was given, he was able to create survival strategies to deal with everyday situations that require reading, such as taking the bus, signing your name, express yourself with more confidence, among others.

The positive impact produced on their lives, through the literacy process, allowed them different possibilities of participating in more effective literacy practices, such as acquiring a better job, reading printed materials that circulate on a daily basis, more critical reading of reality, increased self-esteem.

From what we observed, we realized that the knowledge constructed responds to the desires for social, cultural and economic promotion, thus allowing them a new form of citizenship.

It must be clear that all those interviewed felt welcomed in this literacy process, especially due to the fact that the classes took place

in a community center in the neighborhood and were taught by a popular educator from the neighborhood itself. The loving and family environment allowed them to lose their shame and fear of not being able to learn. Regarding this, Freire (2016, p. 36) teaches us that “[...] those who are not capable of loving unfinished beings cannot educate”. For him, there is no education without love.

Faced with such a scenario, popular organization and mobilization constitute a political struggle for the right of the popular masses to say their words, express their knowledge, affirm their cultures and life experiences, and impose their epistemologies. It is in this sense that the educational practice of teachers and popular educators must move forward, developing a social practice that is deeply contextualized and committed to students.

We highlight the importance of training teachers and popular educators from a dialogical perspective, which stimulates the autonomy, knowledge, experiences and cultures of their students.

The educational practice developed in community spaces, therefore, must encourage the protagonism of its students, pointing to history as a possibility and not as a determination. This requires an innovative pedagogical discourse, collective construction of knowledge, fight against the most different forms of oppression, as well as lovingness and affection.

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## Notes

<sup>1</sup> Cabanagem was a popular revolt that took place between 1835 and 1840 in the province of Grão-Pará (northern region of Brazil, current state of Pará). It received this name because most of the rebels were poor people who lived in huts on the banks of the rivers in the region. These people were called cabanos (Ramos, 2022).

<sup>2</sup> Married without official document.

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