



From reading training of teachers to pedagogical practices as reader trainers¹

Da formação leitora de professoras às práticas pedagógicas como formadoras de leitores

De la formación lectora de docentes a las prácticas pedagógicas como formadores de lectores

Samuel Luis Velázquez Castellanos
Universidade Federal do Maranhão (Brasil)
<https://orcid.org/0000-0003-0849-348X>
<http://lattes.cnpq.br/5639830901440817>
samuel.velazquez@ufma.br

Abstract

The aim is to understand the dynamics established between the reading development of female teachers from Maranhão when they were children (born between 1910 and 1930), reading practices in teacher training and their respective projections in pedagogical practices, considering the support mobilized in teaching reading in primary school, in normal school, and in the training of readers who record individual/collective memories. Life history procedures are used to gather the reminiscences and voices of teachers through unstructured interviews conducted in cycles; these encounters allowed for the interpretation of interpretations, production of meaning from speech, silences, and gestures, pointing to a sensory history of their practices. It can be concluded that, regardless of issues of gender, ethnicity, identity, social class, and geographic location, pedagogical action in the formation of readers revolves around initial reading training, reading practices in pedagogical training, and the teaching profession, which point to a certain pedagogical isomorphism: "I teach as I learn!"

Keywords: Teachers' reading training; Reading practices; Teachers who train readers.

¹ English version by Ana Maria Dionísio. E-mail: dionisio.anamaria@hotmail.com.

Resumo

Objetiva-se compreender a dinâmica estabelecida entre a formação leitora de professoras maranhenses quando crianças (nascidas entre 1910 e 1930), as práticas de leitura na formação professor e as respectivas projeções nas práticas pedagógicas haja vista os suportes mobilizados no ensino da leitura na escola primária, na escola normal e na formação de leitores que registram memórias individuais/coletivas. Utilizam-se os procedimentos da história de vida visando-se as reminiscências e vozes das docentes via entrevistas não estruturadas formuladas em ciclos; encontros que permitiram interpretar interpretações, produção de sentidos a partir das falas, silêncios e gestos que aponta para uma história sensorial das práticas. Conclui-se que independente das questões de gênero, etnia, identidade, extrato social e localidade geográfica, a ação pedagógica na formação de leitores orbita entre a formação leitora iniciática, as práticas de leitura na formação pedagógica e na profissão professor que apontam para certo isomorfismo pedagógico: “ensino segundo aprendo!”.

Palavras-chave: Formação leitora de professoras; Práticas leitoras; Professoras formadoras de leitores.

Resumen

El objetivo es comprender la dinámica establecida entre la formación lectora de las maestras de Maranhão cuando niñas (nacidas entre 1910 y 1930), las prácticas lectoras en la formación docente y las respectivas proyecciones en las prácticas pedagógicas, considerando los artefactos mobilizados en la enseñanza de la lectura en la escuela primaria, en la escuela normal y en la formación de lectores que registran memorias individuales/colectivas. Se utilizan los procedimientos de la historia de vida para recopilar las reminiscencias y voces de los docentes a través de entrevistas no estructuradas realizadas en ciclos; encuentros que permitieron interpretar interpretaciones, producción de sentido a partir del habla, de los silencios y de los gestos, que apuntan para una historia sensorial de las prácticas. Se concluye que, independientemente de las cuestiones de género, etnia, identidad, clase social y ubicación geográfica, la acción pedagógica en la **formación** de lectores gira en torno de la formación inicial de la lectura, de las prácticas de lectura en la formación pedagógica y de la profesión docente, lo que apunta para a un cierto isomorfismo pedagógico: "¡Enseño como aprendí!".

Palabras clave: Formación lectora del profesorado; Prácticas lectoras; Profesores que forman lectores.

Received: 2025/07/08

Approved: 2025/11/24

Introduction

This work aims to understand the dynamics established between the reading formation of female teachers from Maranhão during their childhood, the reading practices in their own teacher training, and the respective projection in pedagogical practices to form readers; interaction with the supports and with the teaching of reading in primary school, in normal school, and in the teaching profession, which record and perpetuate the individual and collective memory of individuals situated in specific times and spaces. Memories that were expressed in the oralization of life stories as readers, through individualized meanings, in particular languages and with their own words (Bakhtin, 1988). Discourses not revealed in the past that are now said in the exteriority of the particular, since "Every individual speaks their own particular language and dialect; therefore, there is a way of speaking that is particular to an individual, and in this aspect, they are a concrete universe for the study of language" (Mattos, 2024, p.3).

In this way, to consider teachers' reading practices as mere textual contemplation would lead to a naive radicalism of viewing them in isolation from the aspects that enable the production/circulation of concrete thought and its variability, in this case understood as material records in tangible formats or as "subjectivities created from individual and collective experiences; perceptions, memories and diverse priorities [in] the domain of a sensory history [...]" (Castellanos, 2024c, p. 18). Reading practices, by their nature and importance, have contributed to the formation of mentalities, both in the factors implicit in the construction of individuality that intersect and interact with socio-historical, economic, political and educational aspects, and in the sense of shaping and molding subjects to a ready-made, alienating collective reality, of adjustment and ruptures with such processes, insofar as "the way in which the appropriation of knowledge by the teacher contributes to defining their own work is, without "doubt, historically variable" (Ezpeleta; Rockwell, 1989, p. 67).

In this logic, the problem is based on inquiring, to what extent, the relation between the strategies of imposing cultural materialities via the educational system and the tactics of appropriation by teachers in reading formation has been established in the processes inherent to the teaching of reading and reading practices, aiming to understand their respective representations of the written-read in different stages of training and how these practices echoed in the formation of readers in the teaching profession? Where and how did they teach, or rather, how did they transmit their knowledge? How did reading formation, the individual appropriations of cultural materialities and the respective practices with reading in different social cleavages, places of belonging, families, groups and identities in the field of action and performance, project themselves in the development of these teachers as producers and products of culture, in the transmission of their knowledge in the act of teaching to read, and in the different positions and conceptions of reading adopted?

In these terms, by inquiring about the life of a teacher and their pedagogical training, about their reading practices as children and those mobilized at the Normal School, in other non-school spaces, and in the exercise of their profession itself, it becomes possible to uncover how their mental frameworks were constituted. This is done considering memory as a methodological category to analyze and process speeches, events, and actions, and participant observation as an analytical tool in the cycle of interviews conducted individually and in groups, focusing primarily on the testimonies of teachers born in the last two decades of the First Republic (1890-1930). Analyzing the conceptions and positions regarding reading, text, books, and reader development in light of memories, as well as perceptions about pedagogical training, are aspects that, when expressed orally, allowed for the documentation of undocumented reality; that is, "From this undocumented history, the documented version becomes partial and produces a certain concealing effect on the real movement" (Ezpeleta; Rockwell, 2017). 1989, p. 67).

Therefore, rescuing the knowledge, reading practices, and forms of appropriation and representation of the teachers who worked in educational institutions during a large part of the 20th century, based on how they learned to read and how they taught reading, making use of cultural artifacts, methods in vogue, and experience in the formation of readers, made it possible to understand and give meaning to the intersubjective dialogue that has populated the school contexts in which they have participated and to the ways in which they act as educators of readers in teaching practice. Intersubjective dialogue, which *was narrated from within*, from the resurgence of an absent present, conditioning me to express it, "[...] as if it were told by someone who also makes one an actor to speak as one of them" (Fino, 2006, p. 4). Unveiling how former teachers appropriated cultural materials, aiming at reader development, the practices in reader formation, and their specific knowledge as teachers with or without pedagogical training in different social cleavages, helps me understand these practices, considering the places of belonging, the families, the groups, and the identities adopted in the field of action and performance.

1. The research process: between paths and clues

In this journey, the choice of life history to explore the reading development of teachers as children, the representations of the cultural materials in use, and the trajectories of pedagogical training through memory via a cycle of interviews (which was divided into three phases)², allowed me to understand how the people of the place (Bauman, 1998), teachers with diverse origins and affiliations, reconfigured their representations, their identities, and those of their families through cultural different lenses. (Erickson, 2006)³, in the individual, social and cultural spheres. Teachers who were chosen based on different selection criteria: 1) born between 1910 and 1930 with different age ranges, in order to investigate their trajectories as subjects of culture, which orbit between reading formation as children, reading practices in teacher training and the very formation of readers in the exercise of their profession; 2) women from different social cleavages and ethnicities with unequal access to reading instruction and cultural artifacts due to individual realities, in order to compare experiences, training and practices with respect to reading, the act of reading and the formation of readers; finally, 3) teachers who were from different regions of the State of Maranhão in order to analyze contexts, interactions and pretexts for dealing with reading and writing in various stages, times and spaces of training.

To evaluate in these producers of culture and in their reminiscences, their diverse gazes, pauses, and tone of voice, the meanings in the formation of readers, and the significance of the place, considering the field of action through verbal and non-verbal action in this cycle of interviews, were crucial. Unveiling behavioral and bodily codes, their values, lifestyles, and ways of understanding themselves and others in their daily practice as teachers (analyzed from the perspective of the stranger or foreigner), allowed me to identify all the variations in scope that appeared in an intentional continuum of recognizing the other⁴; given that the stranger, "[...] becomes the [subject] who must question almost everything that seems unquestionable to the members of the group addressed" (Bauman, 1998, p. 19). Unveiling, in these discursive practices, the framing of differences and the context in which they are inscribed was essential to understanding the production of meaning, based on the procedures used, the individual capacities of the researcher, and the situational variations in the fieldwork (Fino, 2006).

² Phases: Finding the voices; Active Phase and Re-checking. (Castellanos, 2010)

³ The presentation of the professors and family members in 2006 was mediated by fellow professors who negotiated cooperation with the interview series. At the time, the Ethics Committee in Human Sciences at the Federal University of Maranhão had not yet been established.

⁴ All the variations that exist in the analyzed context, the multiple variables.

Regarding memories, there is a consensus that they are intrinsically linked to the place that women and men occupy, to the nature of the activities performed, and to the exchanges established in the social context in which "we are positioned and also position ourselves according to the 'social fields' in which we are acting" (Woodward, 2000, p. 30). Memory, which, by changing color, configuration, and texture, is progressively altered from generation to generation, bearing "[...] the marks of experience, however great the mediations it may have undergone" (Antonacci, 1998, p. 9). Therefore, memories that know no boundaries and that by definition cross walls, appear and deceive consciousness when they leap across discordant worlds (Derrida, 1994). Retained information that materializes in everything we know of the world and is constantly defined in our way of being, thinking, and acting: "I am what I remember" (Bem-Peretz, 1995). In this perspective, according to Bobbio (1977, p.31):

In remembrance we find ourselves and our identity, notwithstanding the many years that have passed, the thousands of events lived. We find the years that have been lost in time, the games of youth, the figures, the voices, the gestures of schoolmates, the places, especially those of childhood, the most distant in time and yet the clearest in memory (Bobbio, 1997, p.31).

Therefore, it is the memories and oral narratives of these actors—teachers-readers—that can still demystify the existing barriers between teachers and students, between individuals belonging to contrasting times/spaces, between educational institutions and the outside world, since in producing this history, the people who made and lived it can have a fundamental place through their own reminiscences (Thompson, 1992). That is, to revisit a life story through Oral interview or individual social history "[...] is also [presenting it] in numerous ways depending on the context in which it is reported" (Pollak, 1989, p. 13), transforming memory into the antidote to forgetting and a source of immortality (Le Goff, 1984). In other words, for our memory to benefit from that of others, it is not enough for them to bring us their testimonies: "[...] it is also necessary that it has not ceased to agree with their memories and that there are sufficient points of contact among them and others so that the memory that others bring us can be reconstructed on a common basis [...]" (Pollak, 1989, p. 4).

However, beyond the discussion of memory as a theoretical category, I have used memory here as a methodological category to mine events and actions from the perspective of life history and the cycle of interviews as an instrument for data collection, observation and analysis; borrowing from ethno history to document the testimonies of teachers born from 1910 onwards, whose words, knowledge and practices were not documented anywhere, since, "the very mechanisms that make any historical record possible also ensure that historical facts are not created in an equitable manner. This leads to silencing: a fact or an individual is 'silenced' [...] like a silencer silences a pistol (Rockwell, 2018, p. 270). The chosen methodology is based on the various contributions of the interview centered on participant observation (Lapassade, 1991), which relies on fieldwork techniques, dialogue practices as a device, and scenarios (re)constructed and reproduced through life stories, reminiscences, and intertextuality. In these terms, the most important aspect of participant observation is "[...] trying to understand events and people by adapting the roles and perspectives of those being studied" (Mattos, 2024, p. 12), describing the meanings of actions and interactions from the point of view of their interlocutors in the act of dialoguing (Fino, 2006). This investigative journey, divided into cycles of interviews, allowed me to recognize the social and cultural differences among the teachers, considering the borderline or boundary situations among their narratives. This reality invites greater reflection when considering how social groups or individuals conduct their lives, aiming to reveal the everyday meaning in which these subjects act, to document it, monitor it, and

arrive at the meaning of the action; that is, the “[...] way in which, in practices, representations, or productions, different cultural forms intersect and intertwine [...]” (Chartier, 1998, p. 56), which allows us to operationalize the undocumented. In other words, “When the non-significant becomes an indication, a possible clue to what [is] being sought, the records begin to document with greater precision the apparent dispersion [...]” (Ezpeleta; Rockwell, 1989, p. 17). Codes and meanings constructed in interaction with others, in a constant cultural consumption defined as another production that allows to interpret of different understandings (Chartier, 1998).

2. Education and reading development

When I address schooling and the modes of organization of school space in the interview cycle, the satisfaction and nostalgia for high school days are evident in all the teachers invited to participate in the research. In the home schools, according to them, the teacher occupied the center of the house, with several “*mochos*” surrounding the wall where the students sat and read aloud the *Carta de ABC* or “recited” the multiplication tables⁵; “[...] a place where *the children were becoming less stupid*” (E1. Nereida, 2007)⁶. When inquiring about the meaning of this term, Iris, Aphrodite, and Thalia, as well as Athena and Clio, explain that “less stupid” referred to young children who did not know how to read, “[...] *they were learning little by little, since before entering school, they had no knowledge of anything, they were like donkeys*” (I4. Tália, 2007)⁷.

When subterranean memories come into play (conflicts between emerging and established memories), the rejection of the *Cartilha de ABC* is reflected in the tones of voice and the content of the speeches, when Nereida and Selene⁸ point to difficulties in understanding the logic of the artifact. The first, with ease in mathematics and little aptitude for letters, “*got a lot of flak when I asked the teacher if there were two alphabets: one for the word and another for spelling.*” The second made so many mistakes when memorizing that the teacher suspected she had cognitive problems. Nereida, not understanding how a short word could multiply into many syllables when spelling, ended up punished, since instead of writing “*casa*” (house), she wrote “*ceacaceasa*” – “*ce - a - ca - ce - a - sa*” [using her logic]; Selene (E.7 2007), “*I took the lesson home [...] and couldn't say things in [her] own words. With the primer, after spelling, I had to join 'Taking letters, syllables [...] until the formation of the word.'*”

With Professor Íris, it was almost similar⁹. She developed her logical reasoning very early, listening to her mother read, commenting on her father's stories (who, although illiterate, memorized everything), and learned to read through the classes taught by her sister, a teacher. When thinking about spelling and already knowing how to read before entering school, she did not understand why the word “*caça*” (hunt) was spelled “*ce-a-ca-ce-a-ça*”, when in reality it should be with “*s*”, since “*in the word 'caça', instead of saying 'ce-a-ca-ce-a-ça', we had to say 'ce-a-ca-esse-a-sa', because of the sound of 'c' before the vowel that looks like 's'*” (I.2 Íris, 2007).

These modes of action through reflection and inquiry lead me to note the interference of family members and/or acquaintances with mastery of reading and writing in teachers when they were children; people of an environment that encouraged them not to learn mechanically and to think about what they were talking about. A reality apparently not understood by teachers at school, since the formality of practices (De Certeau, 1994) in the school space had to conform

⁵ Teaching carried out by teachers in their homes, where children received the fundamentals of reading, writing, and arithmetic.

⁶ Interviewee (1) - Nereida was born in 1918, in São Luís. She was 89 years old when interviewed in 2007.

⁷ Interviewee (4) - Tália was born in 1917, in the city of Paço do Lumiar (today 21 km from the capital). She was 90 years old at the time of the interview.

⁸ Interviewee (7) - Selene was born in 1920, in the city of Caxias (today 362 km from the capital). She was 87 years old.

⁹ Interviewee (2) - Íris was born in 1917, in the city of Penalva (today 253 km from the capital). She was 90 years old.

to the norms imposed in reader training: attention, repetition, and memorization. In these terms, has the formality of practices in reader training, regardless of the period in question, been in dialogue with practices of another nature in the act of reading and writing in children in initial training? In these formalities of practices, are points of convergence sought between the beliefs and attitudes of teachers and students in the reading teaching process, even if they depend on extracurricular or non-school practices?

If for Chartier (1995), each reader, based on their own “individual or social, historical or existential” references, gives a more or less singular, more or less shared meaning to the texts they appropriate (Chartier, 1995, p. 20); for Bakhtin (1985), what is transmitted from memory is the authoritarian word, which is monological, unlike when we appropriate the written-read text with “our own words,” which has a new, convincing, contemporary character, being at the same time bivocal and bilingual. Therefore, it is in relation to the cultural objects in a given school context, “[...] that one perceives how the social and pedagogical projects of education were constructed and the internal specificities of the policies, of the projects themselves and of the relevant practices” (Castellanos, 2022a, p. 13).

Thus, in the socialization process among Mnemosine¹⁰, Afrodite¹¹, and Nereida, differences in literacy and schooling are evident in the first Mnemosine compared to the other teachers. Surrounded by books, her father's poetry, and the ever-present example of her grandmother (a poet and improvisational poet), Mnemosine doesn't remember tracing letters or spelling. She believes she learned by naming things and animals in the pictures her mother showed her, and writing the correct word under each image; first only words, then sentences. In gatherings organized by her father (a friend of Humberto de Campos)¹², Mnemosine sometimes had to sing or recite verses, developing her childhood among books, readers, poetry, and writing. At school, *La Fontaine* lives in her memory as her first reading, when she recalls her Portuguese classes.

The Portuguese classes were three times a week. Monday was dedicated solely to composition. The teacher criticized loudly in front of everyone, and to avoid embarrassment, I studied every day; I was also constantly pressured by my parents. Depending on the mistake, the teacher would give a grammar lesson explaining what hadn't been understood. Tuesdays were about grammar, based on individual questioning by each student; nobody knew who would be called on. Fridays were a lesson solely on verbs, conjugation in different persons, and Saturdays were for the analysis of assignments, almost always based on Camões. (I8. Mnemosine, 2007)

For Afrodite, despite entering school without basic reading skills, she manages to be the best student in the class thanks to the demands of her aunt, her father, and the encouragement of her teacher; however, she is forced to abandon her studies to accompany her convalescent father. For Nereida, however, not receiving guidance and being forced to exchange her pencil and notebook for a weaving machine, it was much more difficult. Coming from a very humble family with an illiterate mother, she had no one to help her: “*I studied a lot, but at school, time was minimal! There were many students from different grades in the same classroom. The teacher was kind, but she couldn't spend much time with each one*” (I1. Nereida, 2007).

¹⁰ Interviewee (8) - Mnemosine was born in 1912, in the city of São José de Ribamar (32 km from the capital). She was 95 years old when interviewed.

¹¹ Interviewee (3) - Afrodite was born in São Luís, in 1909. She was 97 years old.

¹² Journalist, columnist, writer and politician from Maranhão who joined the Brazilian Academy of Letters in 1919.

Schooled in a “barefoot”¹³ school using the individual method, with few resources and minimal teacher attention based on the number of students, she finished the fifth grade with serious reading difficulties, forcing her, as an adult, to take an intensive Portuguese course to correct her mistakes: “*even today [the errors] escape her, and when I worked at the school, I had to have the Portuguese of any work I wrote corrected*” (I1. Nereida, 2007). In this logic, in order to objectify the reading practices of these teachers in reading training in a cross-sectional analysis, it is necessary to rethink the relations in an infinitely more complex way, to understand “how a group or ‘common subject’ appropriates, in its own way, which can be transformative or mutilating, the ideas or beliefs of its time” (Chartier, 1988, p. 53), since the recognition of practices is distinct and unforeseen at the individual or group level as ways of legitimizing oneself. Hence the need to “[...] differentiate the actions carried out in the consumer network by the product system and establish distinctions between the margins of maneuver allowed to users by the circumstances in which they exercise their art (De Certeau, 1994, p. 44).

The teaching of reading and writing, in turn, seems to be greatly harmed by the symbolic effect and repressive meaning of not understanding texts, not pronouncing words correctly, and not using the proper intonation of sentences; obstacles exacerbated by psychic and physical punishments that materialize by kneeling or standing in front of the wall and/or feeling the pain of the paddle and ruler in the multiplication table quizzes, for example. According to Clío¹⁴, all children should pay attention to the teacher's call as a ritual, and trembled with fear when summoned because they had to stand up, reading the indicated passage, in order to correct pronunciation, grammatical rules, and posture; also when they had to “[...] *go in front of her. After being called [on the roll]. And she would ask 2 x 2; 3 x 8; if I got it right, all good; if not, there came the paddle in my hand. I stretched out my arms to receive the blows*” (I6. Clío, 2007). The punishments, more than just punishment, were embarrassing and humiliating in public, encouraging tasteless jokes and the use of nicknames: “*I had a lot of difficulty learning the multiplication tables and dividing. That's why they called me Maria the paddle. Sometimes I cried from shame*” (I5. Atenas, 2007)¹⁵. However, even more degrading was standing, facing the wall with the primer in hand, to memorize the lesson when we couldn't put the letters together: “*on my knees my soul ached, the pain was enormous. "The teacher had no heart"* (I7. Selene, 2007). Natural and regular punishments, even approved by parents in most public or private schools during that period, even though they were abolished in the Public Instruction Reform in 1919 (Castellanos, 2024a). However, contradictorily to my judgment at the time of the interviews, the teachers recall that they used similar punishments in the exercise of teaching, although they did not adopt the same regulatory methods, the same disciplinary principles were mobilized; a circumstance that points to a certain pedagogical isomorphism – “teaching as I learn” (Castellanos, 2024a, p. 14).

With respect to writing, guidance work about spaces, linearity and clarity through calligraphy exercises was constant. The notebooks “[...] *were always used. It was mandatory that we had them, because we learned to write the letters in a beautiful way*” (I8. Mnemosine, 2007). For all of them, these supports “*were full of lines where [they] had to write, without going from one line to another, without making a mistake, otherwise, [they] had to repeat from the beginning*” (I4. Tália, 2007). Therefore, “[...] a series of school objects that would enable such action, such as the blackboard, textbooks for teaching, and posters, among other artifacts conceived as school material culture

¹³ Name of the Municipal Schools created by the writer and journalist Sousândrade (1832-1902) to serve the poorest population in the City of São Luís.

¹⁴ Interviewee (6) - Clío was born in 1923, in the city of Rosario (today 46 km from the capital). She was 84 years old at the time of the interviews.

¹⁵ Interviewee (5) - Atenas was born in 1914, in the city of São João dos Patos (today 548 km from the capital). She was 93 years old in 2007.

(Castellanos, 2024b, p. 6) became necessary; although Íris always suffered from the teachers and her own mother, since she couldn't write without smudging her handwriting because she was left-handed, even though she excelled in reading and dramatization.

It was very difficult for me; I received a lot of blows from my mother. Without meaning to, I would smear my hand with the paint. When it was that handwritten lettering, it was worse. I cried a lot and she ended up leaving me. Sometimes, when she had her back turned, I would switch hands; I ended up learning to write with both hands (I2. Íris, 2007).

The pedagogical ritual in school groups always began with all the students, boys and girls separated in single file, to do the religious and patriotic exercises. A school space where, as in private schools, memorization exercises, calligraphy practice, and oral exams were developed. Those with better reading skills earned the right to represent the class in school festivities such as Mother's Day or Brazilian Independence Day, reading poems they had created themselves: festivities that certainly constituted a form of encouragement/reward for those who developed reading skills more effectively; but also, it was a form of discrimination against those who, for various reasons—shyness, language deficit, visual impairment, absence of an external mentor outside the school environment, individuals from low-income families or low cultural levels, among others—did not develop these skills quickly; politically oriented and mystified ways of promoting exclusionary selectivity (Castellanos, 2010).

At that time [in the school groups] I started reading novels. But I already had a reading habit before. I inherited it from my father. When he went to São Luís, he brought books for me and my sisters. Here in São José [de Ribamar], books were hard to find back then [...] Even though it was near São Luís, you had to go by horse to Anil, then by tram [...] It's not like today, it's quick. Sometimes it took more than a day. If it was winter, it was worse."¹⁶ (I8. Mnemosine, 2007).

While for this teacher, reading novels was a common habit, for others, consuming the genre depended on artifices: 1) *Afrodite read Amor de Perdição, by Camilo Castelo Branco, [...] a beautiful book! also Machado de Assis, José de Alencar; but hidden from her father and aunt, because they thought they weren't books for girls*" (I3. Aphrodite, 2007); 2) Athens' aunt was addicted to José de Alencar's novels and she would take them secretly! *"To continue reading when [her aunt] wasn't home, she left the page numbers, recorded in her school notebook, and pretend I wasn't reading"* (I5. Athens, 2007); Clio, on the other hand, only had access to one novel, which had been borrowed *"[...] by a boy who was a teacher in Anajatuba¹⁷. It was a beautiful story. Beautiful, beautiful, it was about love. I remember crying a lot. I read it twice"* (I6. Clio, 2007); and Nereida only read the lives of the Saints: *"It was a priest from here in Rosário¹⁸ who lent them to me. Or I borrowed them from the priests' houses to read. But it was church work." "Things like that, God knows"* (I1. Nereida, 2007).

¹⁶ São José de Ribamar is one of the 4 municipalities that make up São Luís Island and is 32 km from the capital.

¹⁷ 140.8 km from the capital and 2h36 today, via BR 135.

¹⁸ 70.6 km or 1h18 via BR 135.

According to the testimonies, despite the censorship of novels in family or school environments, potential readers used multiple inventive ways to read them. Even knowing about the constant prohibitions in school institutions such as the *Escola Normal*¹⁹, the *Seminário Santo Antônio*²⁰, and the *Colégio Rosa Castro*²¹, it does not mean that young readers did not plan counter-hegemonic means. Various tactics of appropriation and transgressions in confrontation with strategies of imposition by inspectors, directors, teachers, and even family members, which intersect and create tension in the polemological model of cultural consumption defended by De Certeau (1994), which defines, on the one hand, positions and functions in relation to the reading, the text, and reading practices; and on the other hand, it determines the formalities, the modes of operation, and the unequal "ways of doing" in the very elaboration of these practices.

3. Teacher training and performance as a teacher

Knowing that each life story, each trajectory, and each path of reading formation is unique, and recognizing that only in this way could capture how each person, each teacher, each teacher-reader (while remaining true to herself) transforms herself. These aspects, revealed through a cycle of interviews, showed how the teacher-readers, in their singularities, mobilized knowledge, values, and energies that shaped their identities, in a constant dialogue with the texts, with the contexts, with the groups of students, and with themselves, trying to understand, in this variability of practices, the emergence of differences, cultural diversity, and the multiplicity of human experiences, in a tenuous process of establishing otherness: "[...] the recognition of the other in the relations between people and groups" (Nóvoa, 1995, p. 35).

In the life story of a teacher-reader who trains readers, continuities and ruptures, coincidences in time and space, transfers of concerns and interests, and the frameworks of reference of inhabited places (De Certeau, 1982) can be identified by maintaining a relation of sharing, collaboration, and empathetic listening with the teacher during the act of the interview in a cycle of repeated meetings with focused questions²² and aided by participant observation. From this perspective, I used memory not as a category of analysis, but rather as an investigative instrument. In this way, temporality and spatiality (even if they are not defined) revisit each other, intersect, and bifurcate between argued and unremembered elements, between forgotten

¹⁹ The *Escola Normal do Maranhão*, as a public institution that had great importance in the state's education from 1890 to 1940, was replaced by the *Instituto de Educação do Maranhão* (IEM), which operated until 1973; a transition that reflects the transformations in educational policy at the time, marked by the unification of teaching systems and educational guidelines that will not be explored in depth here because they are beyond the scope of this work.

²⁰ The *Seminário Santo Antônio* in São Luís, MA, originated from the old Franciscan convent, founded by Friar Cristóvão de Lisboa in 1625. It became a diocesan seminary in 1838, on the initiative of D. Marcos Antônio de Souza, to address the lack of priestly training in the region, occupying the place of the old Jesuit College. The complex, which includes the Church of Santo Antônio, underwent several reconstructions, especially in the 19th century, and today is an important historical and religious landmark.

²¹ Although privately initiated, the *Escola Primária Rosa Castro* operated according to the legislation in force in the State, immediately becoming equivalent to the *Curso Normal*, by Law 714, of March 31, 1916 and by Decrees No. 44 of October 24, 1917 and No. 688 of June 28, 1923, thus adopting the official curriculum and legislation consistent with that of official normal schools; The equalization of private schools with state public schools as a federal guideline, which began with the Benjamin Constant Reform (1890) and was resumed by the reforms of Epiácio Pessoa (1901), Carlos Maximiliano (1915) and Rocha Vaz / João Alves (1925). That is, the Institute should follow the requirements of curricular alignment with the *Escola Normal*, have a suitable teaching staff and didactic-pedagogical equipment for the application of teaching.

²² A crucial question is raised as a topic for debate, and the interviewee defines what to say, how to say it, and the pace for speaking without interruptions, which allows observation beyond the discourse, gestures and body movements, silences, pauses, and anxieties, which demand reflection with the other, an elaboration of discursive practice. (Mattos, 2006).

practices and confused representations, having the opportunity to understand and feel (as a historian!) the differences and changes in attitudes towards the reading by the teacher-reader of dated periods and in various stages, and the teacher-reader currently interviewed, situated in a unique identity in the act of remembering (Hall, 2000). Although the memory to be revitalized through the personal relation with bygone times is a subjectified memory, "[...] that (re)connects the contemporary [subject], trapped in the rarefied framework of modernity, to the past as a source of identity and status of origin" (Lowental, 1998, p. 143).

Observing the educational backgrounds of Mnemosine and Athens, both graduates of the *Escola Normal Primária Rosa Castro*, they present multiple singularities despite being contemporaries. Mnemosine was taught to read by her grandmother and mother, helped by her father, and accustomed to moving among books, readings, and readers; Athens, from a very humble family, only encountered letters at the age of six in church and in the classes of her godmother at her Confirmation. The former attended the *Escola Padre Antônio Vieira* in Anil until the fifth grade, entering the *Colégio Rosa Castro* the following year at the age of 10, and remembers the rigorous "[...] teacher Arimatéia Cisne [who] always corrected the mistakes, but at the same time encouraged [her] to read many authors, among them French ones. [She] preferred those!" (I8. Mnemosine, 2007). The second student, who started late in a rural, one-teacher school, managed to reach the fourth grade and interrupted her studies for a year and a half, when she returned to school with the help of relatives and a boarding scholarship she won at the same school in Mnemosine: the *Escola Normal Primária Rosa Castro*. As a scholarship student, Atenas recalls the difficulties in buying books:

I always had to study with others, sometimes I needed to read alone to understand things. Sometimes I managed, when someone lent me the book, but I had to take advantage of the opportunity. I had to take notes on everything and then rewrite it neatly in my study notebook, which I used for exams (I5. Atenas, 2007).

The educational paths of Afrodite, Iris, and Selene, although different, are more homogeneous in terms of the nature of their reading practices, their relation with books, and the demands and support they received from their families. Afrodite, after losing years of schooling due to economic reasons and being a refined reader thanks to her primary school teacher and the constant demands of her relatives, continues studying diligently at the *Escola Modelo Benedito Leite* and manages to complete the *Curso Profissional at Liceu*.²³ Selene, after failing the second grade of primary school and being taken from Paço do Lumiar to her uncles' house in Anil – a neighborhood in the capital – when she finished the fifth grade, manages to graduate from the *Colégio São Luís* of Professor Luiz Rêgo and enters the vocational teacher training course. Iris, who was homeschooled by her parents and sister using various methods, and who was reprimanded and punished for writing with her left hand, managed to finish her studies at the *Grupo Escolar João Lisboa* in Caxias, later transferring to the *Colégio Caxiense* where she completed her secondary and teacher training.

²³ Benedito Leite, during his administration (1906-1914), remodeled the *Escola Normal* and created the Model School. Later, Godofredo Viana, considered a legitimate representative of the phenomenon characterized as "enthusiasm for education," promoted the dissemination of education throughout the state during his administration, in order to combat the scourge of illiteracy – the publication of statistics from the United States denouncing Brazil as the world leader in the number of illiterate people (Andrade, 1984). Therefore, he created urban and rural schools in an attempt to meet the high demand for enrollment in the capital, equating the primary courses of the *Escola Normal Primária Rosa Castro*, the *Colégio São Luis Gonzaga*, the *Colégio Santa Teresa*, the *Instituto Fernandes*, and the *Educandário Maria Auxiliadora* to the primary course of the *Escola Modelo Benedito Leite*". See Castellanos (2010).

The three teachers, with disparate educational backgrounds, interacted with books and reading gradually, but incisively. The desire to grow and be independent led Afrodite and, especially Selene, being the daughter of a farmer, to strive for pedagogical training. The first one helped her father in the business from a very young age, a place where she was able to play with numbers and letters in a self-taught way. When attending the teacher training course, she had no problems with the subjects: "*I loved chemistry, all the girls wanted to study with me. I liked it, so I learned and practiced as a teacher*" (I3. Afrodite, 2007). The second, more reserved in her testimony, manages to remember the times she woke up early, forced by her uncles who insisted she study and do household chores, and the embarrassing situations she went through, mainly because she was poor:

In the *Curso Normal*, she noticed a bit of prejudice among people who had more opportunities than others, including the teachers' preferences. *I didn't see that in primary school, because everyone in the school was poor, there was nothing to discriminate against!* When I tried to get closer, some with their noses in the air wanted to humiliate me, either because of my clothes or the groups they formed. It was a little difficult to study, both because of the content and also because of the relations inside and outside of school (I7. Selene, 2007, my emphasis).

Unlike Selene, although the comments come from different institutions, Atenas, Mnemosine, and Afrodite did not experience or go through these discriminatory processes at the *Normal Primário*, partly because teacher Rosa Castro did not "[...] *distinguish between rich and poor, and gave many scholarships. I, for example, was a scholarship student and a pensioner all the time, but for that I had to get an average above seven*" (I5. Atenas, 2007)²⁴. Thus, the conflicting testimonies indicate that prejudice apparently depended on the context and the subjects involved, not existing as an institutional practice in principle, at least in the teachers' view. Regarding the six female teachers who graduated from teacher training colleges, in addition to their different approaches to reading, their various appropriations of reading, and the differences between teacher training institutions, they all agree on the demands placed on teachers in teaching reading and the difficulties in passing exams due to their complexity:

I joined a class of 19 girls, only 8 of us graduated. The study was very demanding, and we had to do teaching practice, then study and prepare for the exams. Only those who had a lot of willpower and resources could succeed, of course! (I8. Mnemosine, 2007).

I always read, it was already a habit, but I could only really study when two or three of us classmates got together at home, or sometimes at the Public Library when we didn't have the books. I explained some things, they explained others. The three of us graduated together (I3. Afrodite, 2007).

There were many things my sister helped me with. I used her books, and she got some for me; But she had to do the assignments for the subjects alone because she was working (I2. Íris, 2007).

²⁴ Rosa Castro, a teacher who graduated from the class of 1910, received her diploma and the distinction bestowed upon her by Governor Luiz A. Domingues da Silva on October 19th of that year, and in 1916 she founded the *Escola Normal Primária* that bears her name.

These fleeting conversations and revisited memories point to the many stratagems and tactics that the teachers in training used to transform themselves into teacher-readers and educators of readers. Tália, in her constant struggle to connect with letters, for example, manages to start formal schooling somewhat late, even though she is literate. Clio, on the other hand, could only look at letters and writing from afar, although she tried to learn in childhood. The first begins school amidst changes and longing for her family, and thinking about her father's desire to see her graduate, she invents a mechanism of exchange within and outside the school, lending her donated books and asking as collateral for others that were read during the loan for use period. The second, far from her studies, invents and reinvents words, imitates the names written on the labels of medicines in the pharmacy where she was employed in a solitary game of intellect. Little by little, Clio discovers the meaning of semantic signs and the function of their uses, managing to read and graduate as a young woman in a primary school for adults. Therefore, "If reading is a product of the conditions in which [the subject] has been produced as a reader, the fact of becoming aware of this is perhaps the only chance to escape the effect of these conditions" (Bourdieu; Chartier, 1996, p. 235).

Although Tália was unable to become a teacher, she was already giving her first classes as João's teacher when she was finishing the 8th grade. A shop assistant and friend of her father, who, because he did not have material to practice with and had no way to acquire it, ended up paying for her reading instruction with books he found on his travels. In class, she read and commented about the stories, increasing her cultural and material repertoire; in the exchange, the traveling salesman learned:

I was sometimes busy, but my father never kept his friend waiting. I had to read, on some occasions, two or more times. *He was so clever that he learned to read by heart. Sometimes I was surprised, because without knowing how to read, he would look for the page and paragraph he wanted me to repeat* (I4. Tália, 2007, my emphasis).

In a history of ways of reading, I must identify the specific positions that distinguish communities of readers from the tradition of culture. A place where forms produce meanings, and reading is a practice approached in gestures, spaces, and habits that are consistent with the infinitude of the written-read. That is, what converts the text into infinity is this "vivification," this approximation, this constant "[...] dialogical recontextualization, this permanent translation into *our own words*, the key to its plurality, its polysemy, its richness" (Bakhtin 1988, p.123, my emphasis).

Clio's pedagogical practice was driven by collaborators from the Church, explaining topics to be discussed and reading to children: "*at first she was afraid, she didn't feel capable, then the number of students increased, and the parents congratulated her, everything went well*" (I6. Clio, 2007). Initial practices that "*later continued at home, until I was recommended by a relative to teach literacy classes*" (I6. Clio, 2007). In this practice, experiential knowledge was mobilized, diversifying the teaching materials, the methods of evaluation, the way of grouping students and the very sequences of the programs that had an impact on the teaching of reading and writing; in other words, before stabilization, the uncertainties, inconsistencies, and general failure "[...] tended to preferentially restrict any attempt to diversify classroom management and to establish a certain pedagogical rigidity" (Humerman, 1995, p. 41).

These empirical pedagogical practices, even though they risk not employing the didactic principles legitimized by teacher training at the Rosa Castro primary normal school, for example, and even though the methodologies oriented and prescribed for teaching reading are not applied, seem to bring positive results in the reading development of students, when reading strategies learned and practiced in the initial reading training of the teachers themselves are

applied in the act of teaching. Non-mechanical teaching, because not only the apprehension of content and the operationalization of grammatical rules are at stake; but the relation of affection and trust established between the (student-reader, poor-reader and non-reader), the teaching of reading and the teacher as a guide for these reading practices at different moments of the act of reading. In other words, “[...] teachers’ knowledge is temporal, plural and heterogeneous, personalized and situated and, moreover, carries with it the marks of its object, which is the human being” (Xavier, 2014, p. 5). On the other hand, for Xavier (2024, p. 6), considering the personal nature of the act of teaching, the perspective of crossing the life stories of teachers with the professional development of the teaching category, “[...] stands as an important piece of data for us to broaden our knowledge about school education in its most diverse dimensions”

Therefore, even though some teachers attended other schools before the *Escola Normal*, such as that of *Prof. Arimatéia Cisne* or the *Colégio São Luís* (recognized for their importance and for their rigorous teaching that was positively accepted); the state *Escola Normal* and the *Escola Normal Primária Rosa Castro* are the breeding grounds for pedagogical training, a primary requirement for working in the field of education. Among the curriculum subjects, some opted for literature and the arts, such as Portuguese or Music, over mathematics because it was too difficult; others preferred Chemistry or Geography. The testimonies did not identify any concrete links between the choice of literature or science and gender issues. In turn, those teachers who had prior reading experience specialized it through Portuguese and foreign works, notably French ones; the formality of the practices, even if they didn't remember the titles, is explained by English and French being part of the curriculum.

Other types of cultural media consumed, such as almanacs, pamphlets, newspapers, and magazines, appear as another form of production. For Iris, "*At that time [in the interior of Caxias]²⁵ newspapers were very difficult to find. Now, there was the Bristol almanac, which featured the moon, eclipses, and was used to name children*" (I2. Iris, 2007); for Afrodite, the most sought-after and read parts of the newspapers were the novels, short stories, and poems: "*Stories told in parts [...] that I really liked. Every week was a chapter of the story. It was like today's soap operas, in bits and pieces*" (I3. Afrodite, 2007). In turn, if Iris's access to women's magazines only materialized when she was at her aunt's house in São Paulo, and she took them "[...] to Maranhão, [because they were] a success" (I2, 2007); for Selene (I7, 2007), the *Revista Elegante* in São Luís was crucial, since "*It brought fashion news, [and] little by little [she learned] to sew in her free time and make some pieces, for [herself] and for some needy students.*"

Nevertheless, from the group of teacher-readers, the way in which Tália and Clio (the two non-normal school teachers) exercised their reading practices and appropriated a cultural collection that allowed them to give private lessons and be recommended by third parties to work in public education stands out. Tália, becoming emotional and moving me during our penultimate meeting, recalled the difficult paths she took to become a teacher and fulfill her father's dream. During the interview, she relived the constant frustrations she faced in mastering reading and writing.

Because I was very poor, I was taught to read and write by a midwife and helped by my father, who was almost illiterate, under a kerosene lamp. After working in the fields, at his insistence, I tried to learn to read, write, and count. Since there was no school here in the interior of Penalva²⁶ and we had to move because the rain had ruined the crops, we were taken in by relatives in Viana, where I ended up accepting lessons from a neighbor who, lacking notebooks or books to study with, ended up collecting old papers and writings from the trash so we could practice. My father had to return home

²⁵ City 168.7 km from the capital or 6h04 minutes currently via BR 135.

²⁶ Interior of the city of Viana, 257.1 km from the capital of Maranhão today or 4h56 minutes via BR 135.

because he couldn't find work, leaving me with this family to help with the household chores. But my father left me on the condition that I would study. It was the only way to let me stay at other people's houses. I went to school there until the fifth grade. I studied everything, I liked studying at night; the dim light and discomfort ended up ruining my eyesight. Because I was very dedicated and had very beautiful handwriting from practicing every day so the teachers wouldn't scold me, the lady of the house would have me write letters to her son who lived in Belém. And in those letters, without her knowing, I would ask for books and magazines. And he would send them saying it was for me to read to his mother. A lie! I knew it was for me. It was a secret. So I kept reading, reading lots of books. Sometimes I lent them out. I became a kind of book lender. But I had to return them. Then I decided to do the following: I would only lend my books if someone lent me another one. That way I read a lot. To this day I like to read, it's just that my eyesight doesn't help. After I got married, household chores made me stop reading a little, I had seven children. But when I could, I read. Later, as a teacher, naturally, I had to read (I4. Tália, 2007).

In short, all the trajectories in the reading development of the teachers, from childhood to pedagogical training in most of them, broadened my perspective on the diverse modes of formation as a reader and as a teacher-reader in the different contexts in which various practices developed that mark the differentiation and, consequently, the inequalities of practices in various reading situations. But, certainly, the difficulty inherent in the age of the interviewees hampered the obtaining of more consistent data due to memory gaps. Therefore, I cannot reduce reading practices and forms of appropriation to rational dimensions that emphasize the technical dimension, since the relation between teacher/student and conviviality in the educational process are necessary for the development of the practices themselves. According to Nóvoa (1995, p. 18), if every individual is the singular reappropriation “[...] of the social, [cultural] and historical universal that surrounds him, we can know the social [and cultural practices] from the irreducible specificity of an individual praxis”.

In these terms, regardless of different paths of pedagogical training in distinct times/spaces and the varied tactics of appropriation in the act of reading by teachers who are readers and educators of readers, affective distance between teacher and student should be avoided, which may stem, in part, from “[...] belonging to different generations and, therefore, from their different ‘subcultures,’ between which dialogue [would be] easier” (Humerman, 1995, p. 45). In these terms, the concern with the reader and not with reading, when analyzing techniques of *how* to read, the grammatical forms of writing, the correct intonation, and the number of books used, becomes totally irrelevant; the person who transmits meaning when reading, the effort of their practices, the path of their reading training, and the various stratagems in the construction of reading skills that are projected by teacher training are left aside. Thus, one cannot directly read “cultural alterity in the profuse specificity of the objects destined for it, but rather in the use that is made of them” (Chartier; Hébrard, 1998, p. 30).

In this logic, to understand pedagogical practices, the analysis can focus on the ways of dealing with the act of reading in the classroom and on the relations inherent in the act itself. Readings and reinterpretation of forgotten moments in the school and non-school space, as well as practices hidden in the corners of memory, which, when filtered through *mental lenses of the present* via memories of oneself in relation to life stories, tend to be interpreted. Remembering the past is crucial for the sense of identity; knowing what we were confirms what we are, since “our continuity depends entirely on memory; recalling past experiences links us to *our former selves*, however different we may have become” (Lowenthal, 1998, p. 63, author's emphasis).

Thus, understanding the history of these practices and their applicability in school and non-school settings leads me to interpret *how* readers-consumers of writing were able to approach, traverse, invade, and inhabit (even without authorization) textual spaces (De Certeau, 1994).

For Selene, her time at *Colégio São Luís*, her training in the *Curso Profissional do Liceu*, and her success in the *Tirocínio*²⁷ were incentives to continue a preparatory course, submitting herself to a selection process to work at the rural school in the Maracanã neighborhood in the capital; they were "*newly graduated full-time teachers, to be distributed among rural schools in the interior of the State*" (I7. Selene, 2007). For Íris, being congratulated on the last pedagogues' exam symbolized forming a family and giving tutoring lessons; she practiced with the students "[...] *what they had to present. It was a support lesson for them to do better*" (I2. Íris, 2007).

However, for Mnemosine and Athens, the teacher training at the *Escola Normal Primária Rosa Castro* had other meanings. The first one, after receiving "merit with distinction" at the end of the course, joined the teaching staff at *Sítio do Apicum* in the interior of São José de Ribamar, even though she lived in São Luís, since "*the government had determined that only those who had taught for two years in the interior could work in the schools of the capital*" (I8. Mnemosine, 2007); a tenured teacher for 23 years in the 5th grade at the *Escola Modelo Benedito Leite*, she was later promoted to school inspector. For the second, the teacher training after a grueling *Tirocínio* enabled her to teach in the 4th and 5th grades at the *Colégio Paulo Ramos*, built by the mayor Dona Noca of her hometown – São João dos Patos²⁸ –; the school environment that fostered teaching, formed by *grupos escolares*²⁹, allowed her to participate in a continuing education course and culminated her career as a school inspector³⁰.

Afrodite, immersed in books and reading, and Nereida, working in the tow factory where she studied while weaving (as the last pedagogues of the group), share their experiences as teachers and their challenges in teaching reading and writing. Afrodite is appointed to Rosário upon graduation with top marks. There she settles and starts a family, experiencing rural education. Later, she returns to the capital and, upon joining the *Grupo Escolar Enequina Leite*, confesses the limited applicability of "teaching practices" in rural schools, since: "[...] *I was distressed, [because] the problem was the degrading conditions I had to work in, without materials to write with, without chairs to sit on. Many students of various ages in the same class, how could I teach?*" (I3. Afrodite, 2007). In turn, Nereida, after a period of sacrifices/deprivations and being behind in age, manages to enter the Normal Course and graduate, albeit with many difficulties; but "with her mission accomplished" (I1. Nereida, 2007). Upon completion of the course, through Dona Zenobia Jansen Pereira (a primary school teacher), she begins teaching in the rural area of Tibiri, in the surroundings of São Luís: "*a very small school, one classroom and a place where we kept books. I loved teaching, I worked alone and could invent new methods different from teaching by the primer*" (I1. Nereida, 2007). Selene, referring to the 1st to 5th grade classes in Paço de Lumiar, agrees with Nereida: with the children who could not read, she worked on one part, and the other (the practical part) "[...] *was with the 5th grade students who worked acting as monitors. Another teacher was needed, but she never came*" (I7. Selene, 2007). In turn, in the search to develop a desire and interest in books, Atenas (2007) assures that "[...] *despite the scarcity in São João dos Patos and the total disregard on the part of the children, [she adopts] the Cartilha de Luís to have some result*" (I5. Atenas, 2007).

²⁷ Selection process for female students to complete their degree and obtain their diploma.

²⁸ 590.07 km from the capital or 8:53 am currently via BR 135 and 136.

²⁹ The state of Maranhão was the third to create *Grupos Escolares*, in 1905, after São Paulo and Rio de Janeiro. See Castellanos (2010)

³⁰ A function that emerged in 1843 and took on new responsibilities from the 1950s onwards, with educational planning, signifying "the inquisitor" in full scientific administration (Motta, 2003).

Of all the female teachers working in public education (except for Íris), only Mnemosine speaks in favor of education and structural forms of work. This is not surprising, since as early as 1904, the director Barbosa de Godóis had already referred to the privileged situation of the *Escola Modelo Benedito Leite*, a place where teaching methods, physical structure, teacher appointments, content selection, and teaching materials could be compared to the best schools in São Paulo. This school space, while in reality more closely resembling foreign educational models contrasted with the local educational situation, nevertheless forced all schools and school groups in the state to conform, even without the minimum conditions, although it appeared in the Governor's reports as an ideal model of education to be followed and implemented. A fictitious model when compared to primary education in the interior of the state.

Our path is different [...] Where in São Paulo the teaching of the mother tongue is done through syllabification and word-based methods, here the sentenced method is used; Instead of using Parker's tables, a mechanical process, here we use Calkins' method; lastly, instead of imitating figures, we draw from nature, as recommended by the most competent pedagogues.³¹

Thus, evidence suggests that the schooling and reading development of some of the teachers was essentially influenced by the reality of reading and writing instruction at the *Escola Modelo Benedito Leite*, 24 years after this text was written by Antonio Barbosa de Godois (director of the *Escola Normal*) at the time. In this sense, the life stories of the teachers, their narratives, and the very tactics used, learned, sought, or invented in reading development seem to indicate repetition, duplication, and a change in form; but they remain unique trajectories in the act of reading. paths that “[...] remain heterogeneous to the systems where they infiltrate and where they outline the cunning of different interests and desires” (De Certeau, 1994, p. 97).

The *Cartilha de Luís*, used by Atenas, as an example, was authored by the teacher Zuleide Fernández Boguea and published by Typogravura Teixeira in 1929. Considered ideophonetic, starting from sound to syllable, to word, and then to sentence, in contrast to the previous literacy and lettering system, this primer constitutes a unique instrument in the teaching adopted by all schools in the State (Motta, 2003). Up to this point, I have been a spectator of two distinct pedagogical dramaturgies of fighting for reading, for reading practices, and for the appropriation of cultural artifacts: one alive at the time of the interview (teacher Atenas), who can tell her story through memories of the past; another that, through the use of cultural artifacts (Zuleide F. Boguea), emerges in the remembrances of bygone times, marking with her work and her pedagogical action the spaces already mentioned: the act of telling a story that “[...] ensures that it is preserved from oblivion [...] creates possibilities for it to be told again in other ways” (Benjamin, 1993, p. 58).

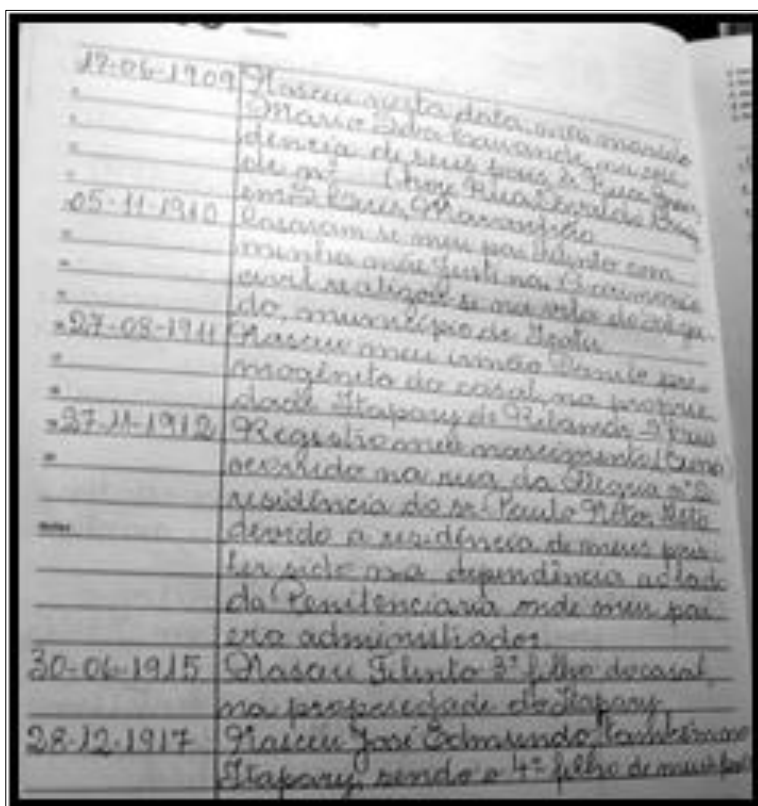
If I speak about Selene's practice, similar processes occur: “I liked to invent, to create so that [the students] could read without learning by heart. *Even though we were forbidden from deviating from the indicated text; I took advantage of any occasion to comment in the classroom and listen to opinions*” (I7. Selene, 2007). Up to this point, it seems that Selene, in her pedagogical practices and in the specific strategies she mobilizes, tries to resolve in *others* what was difficult for her in her schooling. In Íris's case, the difference in how her children and students were taught to read and write is evident: her children were taught using the *Carta de ABC* when she was still attending night school in Caxias, having them “[...] *spell and trace the letters, making and remaking sentences and making quantitative copies of the errors*” (I2. Iris, 2007); with her children, according to her, “*the Carta de ABC was out of the question! She*

³¹ Godois, Antonio Barbosa. Report presented to the Governor of the State (1905, p. 3).

bought colored ribbons and letter strips, placed the ribbons with names in front of the pictures, and removed some letters, she would leave out the vowels, guiding them to put other letters to form other names. (I2. Íris, 2007).

Similar situations were cited. For Mnemosine, there were students who wanted to read and others who did not. Despite identifying difficulties with letters and vowels and, in other classes, with correct reading, she had to focus on the programmed activities. This circumstance prompted her to give private lessons at home to her own students with reading problems and somewhat behind due to “[...] ‘*Livro de Lúcia*’; [here] *I would read the stories to them and then ask questions; little by little and outside the school context, they seemed to feel more confident, I think!*” (I8. Mnemosine, 2007). Like the previous ones, she seems to repeat the same teaching methods originating from the activities carried out with her mother, her grandmother, and at school. Although, incredibly, at 95 years old (at the time of the interview cycle/2007), she kept records in notebooks (which, although not in diary format), were intended to preserve autobiographical narratives. In this notebook, she records, from the 1920s, perhaps even earlier, in handwriting that remained enviable, situations and encounters, disappointments and practices of personal and family life, including her own profession. The autobiographical writing notebook, on the one hand, leads us to perceive practices regarding reading and methods of teaching writing; on the other hand, it shows the logic and dynamics of appropriations and representations as a female reader and as a shaper of readers, since she intertwines her knowledge and experience with other cultural supports in her pedagogical practices. Although these are not her own, she manages to transform them into her own, using and reinventing them to create multiple activities.

Photo 1: Mnemosine's Diary/Notebook



Source: See Castellanos (2010, p. 251)

The *Livro de Lucia*, used by Mnemosine in class, belongs to Professor Rosa Castro (Director of the primary *Escola Normal* that bears her name) and was published in 1924. Although subject to differing opinions, presenting skeptical readings and polar meanings (Saldanha, 1995), it assists in reading work with primary school students due to the scarcity of textbooks (Motta, 2003); a school artifact that, since 1860, has been transforming itself in the Province/State of Maranhão into a channel for disseminating anonymous and renowned authors “[...] who transformed their styles, conceived new ways of interacting with a specific audience and gained recognition in local educational spaces and in the local press” (Castellanos, 2024b, p. 3).

In this context, I start from the "non-neutrality of reading" (De Certeau, 1994) and the broadened concept of reading practice (Chartier, 1995) to analyze how the reader, in the geography of the written word, appropriates unintentionally uninhabited spaces and places with "poaching," where what is not theirs becomes theirs, since the written word is transformed into a read text (De Certeau, 1994); a reading that, when conceived as "appropriation," "distrust," "deviation," and "resistance" (Chartier, 1995), allows me to affirm that, regardless of the content of *Livro de Lúcia* and its presentation, the plural reader would appropriate, in any place more or less, and never linearly, what the author says, comparing the understanding of the text with previous readings, appropriating the text read *outside-the-text* with the peculiarities of the context in which they read, arriving at singular and unique conclusions beyond the author's horizon of expectation.

Thus, when referring to the methods used in her reading practices as a reader educator and the strategies applied in teaching letters, Professor Nereida again, almost mechanically and unconsciously, refers to her childhood, to the hardships she had to endure to be able to study, and to the reinvented ways of navigating reading. With eyes almost moist and words interrupted by shame or embarrassment with the rest of the group, she refers to the classes she taught at the factory and the "*pipira*"³² outfit she assumed, since she was forced to abandon her studies to help her mother. Like all the previous teacher trainees, Nereida mirrors the strategies she created in her reading education and tries to transmit and instill them in her students. Looking at herself in *others*, she sees herself! This teacher (a child-reader at the time) seeks a *system of exchange* where those who teach also learn, "making it impossible to distinguish active literacy from passive literacy" (Roche, 1996, p. 183). Reading practice and continued study ensured her return to the school environment. Differentiation of reading practices can only be understood when associating “[...] the roles attributed to writing, the forms and supports of writing, and the ways of reading” (Chartier, 2010, p. 2), which generate inequalities in practices. “Inequalities projected in the tension between strategies of imposition and tactics of appropriation that generate inventiveness in transgression” (Castellanos, 2024b, p. 14).

Conclusion

In conclusion, I understand that the analysis of reading and the concrete aspects of practices, reading skills and the relation with writing, reading styles, and the social uses of printed materials are transformed in the teachers who train readers into forms of uncontrolled and uncontrollable appropriations due to the variability of objects to be read and the multiplicity of their use in teaching. The creativity of users, based on unorthodox readings and the versatility of practices, is accentuated as situations of cultural consumption are reiterated and quantitatively more numerous (De Certeau 1994).

Without disregarding places of belonging, social cleavages, rudimentary or non-rudimentary forms of reading, and classifications in relation to the lexical act, when I pointed to the reading practices of teachers who train readers and to the circulation, distribution, and commercialization of different written media during the period, I tried to distinguish the variability

³² The term used to describe the female weavers who worked in textile factories, starting in the 19th century (Correia, 2006).

of ways of reading and the heterogeneity of representations about the teaching of reading; different ways of interacting with the text, which intervene in the constructed meaning of what is read and of who reads, in different reading situations, where the materiality of the medium is inseparable from the spirit of the representations that its uses originated (Chartier, 1995).

Therefore, if the school environment contributed to reading development and the multiple aspects implicit in the choice of readings, books and authors, titles and ways of engaging with what was read for some of the teachers; the presence of the family (parents and/or other people) also contributed, since this affective representation was an indispensable link and directly responsible for the initial practices as readers. In turn, if life history narratives have been essential to highlight the differences in the ways reading and writing are appropriated according to the testimonies, dependent on the subjects who use them, whether in the educational process as an individual and in school reading training, or in their role as a teacher-reader; the differentiation of these practices points to inequalities in access to reading, school materials, and teacher training itself, making it indispensable to analyze *the representations of the practices and the practices of representation* of these teachers inserted in the social and cultural structures of which they were a part and, in the possible conjunctures, in which they acted in a space and time demarcated in constant confrontation with social dynamics and the probable ruptures that orbit around the object in question: initial reading training; reading practices as teachers in training; and the reading practices themselves used to train readers in pedagogical practices.

Regarding pedagogical training, although it is projected onto the reading practices of teachers and guides the reading development of students in the exercise of their profession, regardless of whether they are certified teachers or not; when they establish reward systems in reading instruction for the frustrations and adversities overcome, experienced, and lived in the processes of learning to read and in the act of reading, they end up applying to their own pedagogical practices their particular knowledge and personal strategies, similar to those appropriation tactics used in their individual trajectories as readers, whether in initial training as children or as teachers in training. In this logic, if beliefs about reading instruction and reading practices seem to influence attitudes in the act of reading, then it becomes necessary to change these beliefs; although this pedagogical strategy is a necessary but not sufficient condition for a systematized reading practice, the teacher training readers, assuming her role in the process of teaching reading, even if she seeks to modify them, these transformations must be thought out, planned and put into action according to the particular needs of the students in reading training.

In other words, transforming the representations that the student brings or constructs in the school and non-school space about the self-reader and about expectations of reading success, is situated at the intersection of the representation that the student gives of himself and the credibility attributed or rejected by others to this representation. Interactions among readers, poor readers or non-readers can occur, whether in school communities or in parental programs, where the family occupies a secondary-present role, the teacher the place of facilitator as a supporting actress and the student-reader or non-reader is the main actor in the dramaturgy of the written text to be read, taking into account their forms of appropriation and representation. in the process and learning of reading.

Therefore, the renewed interest in the teachers' life stories, taking into account their schooling and initial training as young readers, for example, and reading practices in teacher training, can help stimulate new research that contributes to producing a properly pedagogical (and not just anthropological, historical, psychological, or sociological!) thought about the teaching profession (Huberman, 2007), about the act of reading, and about reading practices in teaching reading and writing. That is, a more vertical approach that affirms the subjective character of the profession itself, drawing attention to the dynamics of identity negotiation processes (Dubar, 2005) that are activated throughout teaching trajectories, both individually and in institutional contexts.

References

- ANDRADE, Beatriz Martins de. *O Discurso Educacional do Maranhão na Primeira República*. São Luis: UFMA, 1984.
- ANTONACCI, Maria Antonieta. Apresentação. *Projeto história*, São Paulo, n. 17, p. 29-44, nov. 1998.
- BAKHTIN, Mikhail. *Cultura popular na Idade Média e no Renascimento: o contexto de François Rabelais*. São Paulo: HUCITEC, 1985.
- BAKHTIN, Mikhail. *Marxismo e filosofia da linguagem*. São Paulo: HUCITEC, 1988.
- BAUMAN, Zygmund. *O mal-estar da Pós-modernidade*. Rio de Janeiro: Jorge Zahar, 1998.
- BEM-PERETZ, Miriam. Episódios do passado evocados por professores aposentados. In: NÓVOA, António (Org.). *Vidas de professores*. Lisboa: Porto, 1995.
- BENJAMIM, Walter. *Experiência e pobreza*. In: Obras escolhidas I. São Paulo: Brasiliense, 1993.
- BOBBIO, Norberto. *O tempo e a memória*. Rio de Janeiro: Campus, 1997.
- BOURDIEU, Pierre; CHARTIER, Roger. A leitura: uma prática cultural. In: CHARTIER, Roger (org.). *Práticas de leitura*. São Paulo: Estação liberdade, 1996.
- CASTELLANOS, Samuel Luis Velázquez. Childhood of the artificer apprentices in Maranhão Empire (1841-1899). *Paedagogica Historica*, v.6, p.1-17, 2022a. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1080/00309230.2021.1979054>
- CASTELLANOS, Samuel Luis Velázquez. Leitores deslegitimados, leituras anônimas e livros de leituras de autores maranhenses na imprensa local (1822-1889). *Revista Brasileira de Alfabetização*, p. 1-17, 2022b. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.47249/rba2022664>
- CASTELLANOS, Samuel Luis Velázquez. *Práticas Leitoras no Maranhão na Primeira República: entre apropriações e representações*. 1. ed. São Luís: EDUFMA, 2010. v. I. 296p.
- CASTELLANOS, Samuel Luis Velázquez; CASTRO, César Augusto. Livros escolares maranhenses: ler ou civilizar? *Educação em foco* (Juiz de Fora), v. Vol. 29, p. e29052, 2024a. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.34019/2447-5246.2024.v29.45073>
- CASTELLANOS, Samuel Luis Velázquez; FARIAS, Claudio Magno Pereira. A cultura material escolar nas instituições públicas de ensino primário do Maranhão (1843 - 1870). *Revista Brasileira de História da Educação*, v.24, p.1-24, 2024c. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.4025/rbhe.v24.2024.e310>
- CASTELLANOS, Samuel Luis Velázquez; SANTOS, Jarina Serra. Circulação do livro escolar na imprensa local (1840-1940): O Paiz, Publicador Maranhense e Pacotilha. *Pró-Posições* (UNICAMP. ONLINE), v. 35, p. 2024c0503BR-26, 2024b. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1590/1980-6248-2021-0104en>

CHARTIER, Anne-Marie; HÉBRARD, Jean. A invenção do cotidiano: uma leitura, usos. *Projeto história*, n. 17, p. 29-44, nov., 1998.

CHARTIER, Roger. “Cultura Popular” revisitando um conceito historiográfico. *Estudos Históricos*. Rio de Janeiro, v. 8, n. 16, pp. 179-192, 1995.

CHARTIER, Roger. Escutar os mortos com os olhos. *Estudos Avançados*, v.24, n. 69, São Paulo, 2010. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1590/S0103-40142010000200002>

CHARTIER, Roger. *História cultural: entre práticas e representações*. Rio de Janeiro: Bertrand-Brasil, 1998.

CORRÊA, Carlos Humberto Alves. *Circuito do livro escolar: elementos para a compreensão de seu funcionamento no contexto educacional amazonense (1852 – 1910)*. 2006. 240 f. Tese (Doutorado em educação) - Programa de Pós-Graduação em Educação, Universidade Estadual de Campinas – UNICAMP, Campinas, SP, 2006.

DE CERTEAU, Michel de. *A escrita da história*. Rio de Janeiro: Forense Universitária, 1982.

DE CERTEAU, Michel de. *A invenção do cotidiano*. Rio de Janeiro: Vozes. v.1, 1994.

DERRIDA, Jacques. *Espectros de Marx: o estado da dívida, o trabalho do luto e a nova Internacional*. Rio de Janeiro: Relume-Dumará, 1994.

E1. *Relato*. São Luís (Maranhão), 14 jan. 2007.

E2. *Relato*. São Luís (Maranhão), 21 jan. 2007.

E3. *Relato*. São Luís (Maranhão), 20 fev. 2007.

E4. *Relato*. São Luís (Maranhão), 15 fev. 2007.

E5. *Relato*. São Luís (Maranhão), 15 fev. 2007.

E6. *Relato*. São Luís (Maranhão), 15 fev. 2007.

E7. *Relato*. São Luís (Maranhão), 03 mar. 2007.

E7. *Relato*. São Luís (Maranhão), 15 mar 2007.

ERICKSON, Frederic. *O que faz a etnografia da escola etnográfica*, 1999: <http://www.scielo.br/scielo.php>. Acesso em: 8 mar. 2021.

ERICKSON, Frederick. *What makes school ethnography ‘ethnographic’*: Council on Anthropology and Education Newsletter. United Kingdom: city of Cambridge, 2006.

EZPELETA, Justa; ROCKWELL, Elsie. *Pesquisa participante*. 2. ed. São Paulo: Autores Associados, 1989.

FINO, Carlos Nogueira. *A etnografia enquanto método: um modo de entender as culturas (escolares) locais*, 2006: <http://www.uma.pt/carlosfino/publicacoes/22.pdf>. Acesso em: 8 mar. 2021.

GODOIS, Antonio Barbosa. *Relatório apresentado ao Governador do Estado*. (1905, p. 3).

HALL, Stuart. *Identidade e diferença: a perspectiva dos estudos culturais*. Petrópolis: Vozes, 2000.

HUMERMAN, Michael. O ciclo de vida profissional dos professores. In: NÓVOA, António (org.). *Vidas de professores*. Lisboa: Porto, 1995.

LAPASSADE, George. *L'Ethno-sociologie. Les sources anglo-saxonnes*. Paris: Méridiens Klincksieck, 1991.

LE GOFF, Jacques. *Memória*. Lisboa: Imprensa Nacional-Casa da Moeda, 1984. (ENCICLOPÉDIA EINAUDI, v. 11).

LOWENTHAL, David. Os muitos tempos da memória. *Projeto história*, São Paulo, n. 17, p. 29-44, nov. 1998.

MATTOS, Carmem Lúcia Guimarães de. Autoetnografia: self, identidade e reflexão como categorias de análise em etnografia. *Cadernos de Pesquisa*, 2024. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.18764/2178-2229v31n2.2024.24>

MOTTA, Diomar das Graças. *As mulheres professoras na política educacional no Maranhão*. São Luís: EDUFMA, 2003.

NÓVOA, António (org.). *Vidas de professores*. Lisboa: Porto, 1995.

POLLAK, Michael. Memória, Esquecimento, Silêncio. *Estudos Históricos*, Rio de Janeiro, v. 2, n. 3, 1989, p. 3-15, 1989.

ROCHE, Daniel. As práticas de leitura nas cidades francesas do século XVIII. In: CHARTIER, Roger (Org.). *Práticas de leitura*. São Paulo: Estação Liberdade, 1996.

ROCKWELL, Elsie. Recuperar la historia en la antropologia de la educación. In: ARATA, Nicolás et. al. (org.). ROCKWELL, Elsie. *Vivir entre escuelas: relatos e presencias*. Ciudad Autónoma de Buenos Aires: CLACSO, 2018, p.265-289. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctvn96f7w.13>

SALDANHA. Lílian Maria Leda. *Reconstrução histórica do processo de formação do professor primário no Maranhão (1889-1930)*. 1995. mimeo.

THOMPSON, Paul. *A voz do passado: história oral*. Rio de Janeiro: Paz e Terra, 1992.

WOODWARD, Kathryn. Identidade e diferença: uma introdução teórica e conceitual. In: HALL, Stuart. *Identidade e diferença: a perspectiva dos estudos culturais*. Petrópolis: Vozes, 2000.

XAVIER, Libânia Nacif. A construção social e histórica da profissão docente: uma síntese necessária. *Revista Brasileira de Educação*, v.19, n.59, p.827-849, out./dez., 2014. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1590/S1413-24782014000900002>.