

REGIONALIST CLASSIC BARREN LIVES IN GRACILIANO RAMOS ON WATTPAD: THE BEHAVIOR AND FORMATION OF THE PROSUMER READER

CLÁSSICO REGIONALISTA VIDAS SECAS DE GRACILIANO RAMOS NO WATTPAD: O COMPORTAMENTO E A FORMAÇÃO DO LEITOR PROSUMIDOR

CLÁSICO REGIONALISTA VIDAS SECAS DEL GRACILIANO RAMOS EN WATTPAD: EL COMPORTAMIENTO Y FORMACIÓN DEL LECTOR PROSUMIDOR



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ABSTRACT: This article analyzes the role of literature on digital platforms and the development of the “prosumer” reader in cyberspace, focusing on discourses regarding the classic novel *Vidas Secas* by Graciliano Ramos. This bibliographic and netnographic research adopts a qualitative approach grounded in Phenomenology. The structure is divided into three sections: the first discusses the relationship between Literature and Society (Cândido) and literary education as a space for subjectivity (Todorov); the second addresses cyberspace, ubiquity (Santaella), and convergence culture (Jenkins); the third employs a multimodal perspective (Rojo) to analyze reader comments on Wattpad about the regionalist work. The study concludes that changes in reading mediums and integration into connected communities are essential to contemporary digital culture. It emphasizes the need to expand research on this phenomenon beyond traditional resources, aiming for truly emancipatory educational practices to address current challenges in technology-mediated literary literacy.

KEYWORDS: Literary reader. Cyberliterature. Platform. Culture of convergence.

RESUMO: Este artigo analisa o papel da literatura em plataformas digitais e a formação do leitor “prossumidor” no ciberespaço, focando nos discursos sobre o clássico *Vidas Secas*, de Graciliano Ramos. A pesquisa, de natureza bibliográfica e netnográfica, adota uma abordagem qualitativa fundamentada na Fenomenologia. A estrutura divide-se em três partes: a primeira discute a relação entre Literatura e Sociedade (Cândido) e o ensino literário como espaço de subjetividade (Todorov); a segunda aborda cibercultura, ubiquidade (Santaella) e cultura da convergência (Jenkins); a terceira utiliza a ótica multimodal (Rojo) para analisar comentários de leitores no Wattpad sobre a obra regionalista. O estudo conclui que a mudança no suporte de leitura e a integração em comunidades conectadas são essenciais na cultura digital contemporânea. Ressalta-se a necessidade de expandir pesquisas sobre esse fenômeno para além de recursos tradicionais, visando práticas educacionais verdadeiramente emancipadoras diante dos desafios atuais do letramento literário mediado por tecnologias.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: Leitor literário. Ciberliteratura. Plataforma. Cultura da convergência.

RESUMEN: Este artículo analiza el papel de la literatura en plataformas digitales y la formación del lector “prosumidor” en el ciberespacio, centrándose en los discursos sobre el clásico *Vidas Secas*, de Graciliano Ramos. La investigación, de naturaleza bibliográfica y netnográfica, adopta un enfoque cualitativo fundamentado en la Fenomenología. La estructura se divide en tres partes: la primera discute la relación entre Literatura y Sociedad (Cândido) y la enseñanza literaria como espacio de subjetividad (Todorov); la segunda aborda cibercultura, ubicuidad (Santaella) y cultura de convergencia (Jenkins); la tercera utiliza la óptica multimodal (Rojo) para analizar comentarios de lectores en Wattpad sobre la obra regionalista. El estudio concluye que el cambio en el soporte de lectura y la integración en comunidades conectadas son esenciales en la cultura digital contemporánea. Se resalta la necesidad de expandir investigaciones sobre este fenómeno más allá de recursos tradicionales, buscando prácticas educativas verdaderamente emancipadoras ante los desafíos actuales del alfabetismo literario mediado por tecnologías.

PALABRAS CLAVE: Lector literario. Ciberliteratura. Plataforma. Cultura de convergencia.

Introduction

This study investigates the process of changing the reading medium of the regionalist literary work *Vidas Secas*, written by Graciliano Ramos, to the Wattpad platform, from the perspective of cyberliterature. The analysis and discussion focus on the possibility of forming a different type of reader of classical works within a digital, interactive environment, which enables potential reader experiences through dynamic interactions in a virtual community, as well as the emergence of alternative forms of literacy.

The study presents an overview of the Wattpad platform and its relevance within Digital Culture, highlighting its potential role in democratizing literary production and dissemination. It then examines *Vidas Secas* in the digital environment, which allows for the creation of multiple versions and derivative narratives, producing different impacts on readers by incorporating interactive and multimodal elements, such as comments, votes, and discussions among literary readers and platform users.

Regarding methodological procedures, the research adopts a netnographic approach, as it analyzes reading practices within a digital platform, and is also bibliographic, drawing on multiple authors to support theoretical frameworks related to literature, society, cyberspace, convergence culture, and the digital reader. The investigation aims to analyze how reader interaction occurs by observing acts of reading and engagement with the work in a digital environment. Additionally, it presents a brief analysis of Wattpad readers' interactions in the construction of meanings and their active participation in the recreation of different interpretations of this regionalist classical work.

The article also highlights both the opportunities and challenges of cyberliterature, such as expanded accessibility to broader audiences, renewed interest in classical works, and the preservation of literary heritage. However, it also addresses critical issues, including the disadvantages faced by classical literature amid corporate interests within a neoliberal context, noting that not all young people have access to reading communities and platforms due to factors such as lack of equipment and limited connectivity.

This paper demonstrates how cyberliterature, through the reading of *Vidas Secas* on Wattpad, can enable significant changes in reading experiences when compared to other interactive digital environments. Literature, regardless of its physical or digital medium, can promote a process of (re)signification in the life of the immersive reader (Santaella, 2021). Such reading experiences are individual and may be emancipatory, fostering interaction among



readers and redefining the concept of the classical literary work within a digital, consumer, and prosumer context.

The relationship between literature and society: the formation of the literary reader

There is a clear relationship between literature and society in the formation of the literary reader, which requires discussion from multiple critical and dialectical perspectives. On one hand, literature should not be approached solely through a didactic lens; on the other, the formation of the literary reader often occurs within pedagogical environments but can also be emancipated in non-didactic contexts, such as reading platforms. In this sense, theoretical discussion cannot overlook the school's significant role in shaping critical literary readers. However, emerging cultural dynamics point to a reader who is already formed and exercises autonomy and agency within reading platforms.

Being a critical reader is not an innate gift; it is learned. Therefore, it is accessible to all of us and unfolds gradually [...] The trajectory followed by the reader in their formative process reflects their increasing competence, which may or may not coincide with their school grade or chronological age (Silva, 2009, p. 28, our translation).

Antônio Candido (2006, 2000), a Brazilian literary critic, attributed fundamental importance to Literature in his understanding of society and culture. For the author, literature is far more than a school-based tool for textual interpretation or a mere art form; it is a profound reflection of society and human conditions. Candido (2006, 2000) argued that Literature plays an essential role in shaping national identity and in understanding Brazil's social and historical realities. Todorov (2009) raises critical reflections on the institutionalized and school-based manner in which Literature is presented to children and young people, warning of the risk of "rigidification."

Literature does not emerge in a vacuum, but at the center of a set of living discourses, sharing with them numerous characteristics; it is no coincidence that, throughout history, its boundaries have been unstable. I was drawn to these diverse forms of expression not at the expense of literature, but alongside it (Todorov, 2009, p. 22, our translation).

According to Candido (2006), Literature constitutes a powerful instrument for apprehending social complexities by eloquently exposing contradictions, conflicts, and themes



inherent to the human condition. The author sustains the premise that a literary work, by delving into the deepest dimensions of human experience, enables critical reflection on the intricate nuances that permeate contemporary society.

Efforts to integrate reading into the daily lives of Brazilians have been strengthened through various strategies, particularly with technological support, aimed at making books close companions for people of all ages and reading preferences, given that reading habits foster intellectual and social growth and contribute to the construction of citizenship (Baltazar; Fernandes, 2018, p. 71, our translation).

In this context, the promotion of reading in Brazil has been driven by multiple initiatives, especially through the use of reading platforms as strategic allies. The objective is to make books accessible and appealing to individuals of all ages and reading preferences. It is essential to recognize that reading practices not only enrich readers intellectually but also significantly contribute to their social integration and to their development as active and critical citizens.

A brief look at bookstore shelves reveals that the preferred literary form in popular literature is the novel. Extended fiction—novellas or novels—also predominates in youth sections. However, it is noteworthy that, in recent decades, collections of short stories for young readers have multiplied in Brazil (Silva, 2009, p. 38, our translation).

Indeed, this phenomenon is not recent. A preliminary analysis of bookstore or library shelves indicates that the dominant literary form in mass literature is the novel, a trend that extends to reading platforms. This preference is also reflected in youth literature, where longer fiction—such as novellas or novels—occupies a prominent position. This tendency may be attributed to several factors. First, novels are often more appealing to young readers because they offer complete and engaging narratives, aligning with fast-paced lifestyles and common adolescent preferences. Moreover, the thematic and stylistic diversity of novels enables broader literary experiences, contributing to the development of reading habits and the formation of more critical and versatile readers.

The growth in the publication of novels for young audiences also reflects the editorial market's response to shifts in reader demand and to new dynamics in cultural consumption. Conversely, with the advent of digital technologies and expanded access to information and entertainment, young readers' practices increasingly migrate toward other literary formats and environments, particularly digital reading platforms.



Many individuals regard literature as a civilizational phenomenon, intrinsically linked to a wide array of social factors that shape its constitution and characterization. However, successfully translating this interconnectedness into the essential characteristics of a specific work remains a considerable challenge.

Indeed, we all know that literature, as a civilizational phenomenon, depends for its constitution and characterization on the interweaving of multiple social factors. However, determining whether these factors directly interfere with the essential characteristics of a given work is a considerable leap, one that is not always successfully achieved. Likewise, we know that neuroglandular constitution and early childhood experiences shape the course of our way of being (Candido, 2006, p. 21, our translation).

Moreover, Candido (2006) attributed significant value to Literature as a driving force for empathy and understanding among different social strata. He emphasized the potential of this artistic expression to establish connections among individuals from diverse backgrounds, social classes, and life experiences. From the author's perspective, Literature holds the capacity to humanize and bring people together through identification with characters and situations portrayed in literary works.

In his view, Candido (2006) argues that it is inappropriate to dissociate the impact of a work from its very conception, since, from a sociological standpoint, a work only reaches its full realization when it resonates and exerts influence. Under this sociological lens, art is interpreted as a symbolic system of interhuman communication and thus becomes an object of interest for sociology. The author emphasizes that "every process of communication presupposes a communicator, in this case the artist; a communicated message, that is, the work; a communicant, namely the audience to whom it is addressed; through this, the fourth element of the process is defined, that is, its effect" (Candido, 2006, p. 25, our translation).

Literature is a mirror of society, capable of revealing profound aspects of the human condition, fostering critical reflection, and contributing to the understanding and construction of individual and collective identities. It can be defined as a subjective process of interaction and communication among the author, the work, and the reader. Within this convergence, the interpretive movement unfolds in a more subjective manner, without hierarchical or evaluative constraints imposed on the work. The relationship between Literature and society is intrinsic and complex, functioning both as a reflection of social dynamics and as an agent of transformation. In this section, we examine the influence of Literature on the formation of the

literary reader, seeking to understand how the interaction between literary works and social context contributes to the development of a potentially more critical reader.

Frye (2017) identified three principal modes of engagement with the essence of Literature in the life of the individual reader—that is, the constitutive and complex elements that permeate the act of reading a literary work: the state of consciousness or perceptivity, which distinguishes the individual; the practical attitude of creating a human world to inhabit; and imaginative action, understood as a vision or model of the world. Accordingly, Frye argues that there is a language associated with each mode of engagement, encompassing the practical skills of literature—such as the use of figurative language—and the identity between the human mind and the external world as represented in literature. This identity, he contends, is what matters most to the imagination.

Contemporary studies have examined the formation of the literary reader through the interaction between reading practices, sociocultural contexts, and new technologies. From this perspective, reader formation is not limited to decoding words; rather, it is a complex process involving cognitive, emotional, and social dimensions. Within this framework, a distinct and relatively new cultural configuration has emerged in relation to interactive virtual movements, referred to as Convergence Culture (Jenkins, 2022). This phenomenon is not without controversy and often generates a sense of unease, particularly among readers who favor printed materials.

None of us truly knows how to live in and with this era of media convergence, collective intelligence, and participatory culture. These changes are producing anxieties and uncertainties, even panic, as people imagine a world without gatekeepers³ and confront the growing power of corporate media (Jenkins, 2015, p. 238-239, our translation).

A contemporary approach embraces the concept of literary literacy, which transcends the mere ability to read and understand literary texts. This comprehensive perspective encompasses not only interpretive competence but also an understanding of contexts, expressive forms, and the multiple interpretations that may emerge from literary works. It is essential to underscore the importance of literary literacy as a foundational requirement for readers to develop more effective skills when engaging with reading platforms. Another critical point is the central role played by schools in the formation of readers. According to Ribeiro

³According to the online dictionary Linguee, the term gatekeeper has the following meaning: in the absence of corrective measures, News corp would be the “gatekeeper” of access to the technical platform via satellite.

(2021, p. 20, our translation), “what matters at this moment is recognizing that reading is dynamic; that is, it comprises an increasingly broad range of elements, from the cognitive skills of the reader to their consumption choices.”

Many young readers participate in networked groups that share similar needs and motivations, interacting with users who have common interests. This dynamic can be constructive if driven by cultural enrichment and by shifts toward more critical engagement, as access opens pathways to multiple possibilities, including the emergence of a connected and collective intelligence.

Lévy (2015) discusses the emergence of collective intelligence as a phenomenon grounded in and aimed at mutual recognition and enrichment among individuals, rather than the veneration of fetishized communities.

Events, decisions, actions, and individuals would be situated within the dynamic maps of a shared context, continuously transforming the virtual universe in which they acquire meaning. From this perspective, cyberspace would become a mobile space of interactions among knowledge and knowers within deterritorialized intelligent collectives (Lévy, 2015, p. 30, our translation).

Another relevant aspect concerns the amount of time students allocate to reading practices compared to time spent navigating social networks. According to the responses obtained, approximately 70% of young people spend five hours or more connected digitally, with most of this time devoted to social media interactions. Furthermore, more than 70% of students dedicate less than one hour per day to reading, and 43% of this group report spending no time at all on this activity. These data support the conclusion that respondents have access to the internet and technological devices; however, their use tends to be indiscriminate (Santos, 2020).

In this context, digital literacy emerges as an effective and complementary tool for Literature classes. The formation of the digital reader follows the formation of the literary reader. A proficient digital reader is, first and foremost, a proficient literary reader—one formed within the school environment. This reflection helps explain the fragility observed in digital reading environments, as individuals who read and interact more frequently on platforms typically received stronger foundational training during Basic Education. Moreover, this approach not only integrates literary practices into digital environments frequented by students who lack the financial means to acquire multiple books, but also builds a bridge between literary

reading skills and the competencies required for critical and responsible navigation of online platforms.

Data from the survey *Retratos da Leitura no Brasil* (2016), conducted by the Instituto Pró-Livro, indicate that 44% of the Brazilian population is classified as non-readers. This survey examines reading indices in the country, book purchasing habits, average reading frequency, among other aspects, with the aim of outlining the profile of the Brazilian reader. The findings reveal, for example, a preference for purchasing books online rather than in physical bookstores, often due to the absence of bookstores in certain regions or the perception that online book prices are lower (Baltazar; Fernandes, 2018, p. 72, our translation).

These data explore multiple dimensions of reading habits in Brazil, such as book purchasing frequency and average time devoted to reading, in order to construct a profile of the Brazilian reader, including the preference for acquiring books online instead of in physical stores. This trend can be attributed both to the scarcity of literary establishments in some regions and to the perception—though not always accurate—that online book prices are more affordable.

Another point for reflection is that pedagogical mediation is crucial in the formation of the literary reader. Teachers, mediators, and parents play a central role in introducing literary works, guiding reading processes, and fostering discussions that deepen understanding and appreciation of literature. Over time, this reader becomes interactive and immersive.

Amid the plurality of definitions, it is always advisable to adopt the broadest one, precisely in order to preserve at least some aspects of this diversity. Thus, for operational purposes, which allow for a relatively shared understanding of what culture is becoming, culture can be understood as everything that constitutes the human: language and all other forms of language, communication, rituals, labor, sociability, habits, customs, artifacts, techniques, technologies, art, science, and the countless factors that have led humanity into a continuous process of transforming nature (Santaella, 2021, p. 68, our translation).

Within this operational framework, a broad understanding of culture is proposed as encompassing everything that constitutes human existence and the extensive range of elements that drive humanity through an ongoing process of transforming nature. At the same time, a new landscape emerges that directly impacts attitudes toward the formation of the contemporary literary reader, shaped in turn by new media and technologies.

Reading also shifts in response to technological developments—manuscript, print, and digital—encompassing materialities, inscriptions, formats, as well

as modes of social and school organization, the provision of texts, and the means by which they are disseminated. Reading evolves in relation to other forms of memory extension and in dialogue with media and nonverbal languages, such as television, cinema, and web radio. Consequently, the relationship between readers and the texts they engage with is likewise transformed (Ribeiro, 2021, p. 22, our translation).

Digital reading, the availability of classical works on digital platforms, audiobooks, literary podcasts, and other formats contribute to expanded access to literature by enabling innovative forms of interaction with texts and fostering more dynamic and participatory reading experiences. In this way, distinct practices of literary appreciation are delineated.

According to Santaella (2013b), the advent of mobile devices gave rise to a new type of reader, referred to as the ubiquitous reader. This reader not only possesses the skills of the digital native reader but is also able to interact while in motion, communicating simultaneously with mobile devices and the surrounding environment. The ubiquitous reader responds concurrently to stimuli from both the physical and connected worlds, resulting in heightened interaction and dynamism. As a result, attention is distributed across multiple focal points, without deep immersion or prolonged dedication to any single one. This behavior reflects the multitasking capacity and fluidity that characterize reading experiences in contexts of technological ubiquity. It is important to emphasize that this reader was initially formed within traditional institutional systems.

Accordingly, this phenomenon can also be understood as a form of intellectual mastery acquired through active participation. Simultaneously, the playful act of role interpretation emerges as an inspiring source for the development of literacy skills, which are already recognized and valued by traditional educational systems. What is particularly noteworthy in this process, however, is that it occurs outside the classroom, without direct adult supervision. In this context, children assume the role of educators, transmitting to one another the knowledge necessary for full integration into convergence culture. Increasingly, educators have begun to recognize the intrinsic value of learning that unfolds within these informal spaces (Jenkins, 2015).

Within this scenario, it becomes imperative to acknowledge that diversity and representativeness have emerged as central elements in the formation of the contemporary reader, alongside increased accessibility to works that were previously commercially restricted. Another factor of considerable relevance is the inclusion of works that address diverse cultural, ethnic, gender, and social perspectives, thereby expanding opportunities for identification and



empathy. Such inclusion not only enriches the reading experience but also promotes a broader and more contextualized understanding of society.

Convergence culture and the formation of the prosumer reader

This section introduces the concept of collaborative and convergence culture, offering a concise analysis of results and discussions derived from a netnographic approach focused on observing interactions within a literary reading platform. Convergence and participatory culture represent an intersection of technology, media, and active audience participation in the creation, sharing, and consumption of content, as outlined by Jenkins (2015). This conception is grounded in the notion that boundaries between media producers and consumers are becoming increasingly permeable, fostering a culture in which individuals are not merely passive consumers but are encouraged to contribute to the production and dissemination of content.

Convergence culture is intrinsically linked to the use of digital technologies, which enable the convergence of different media forms—such as text, audio, video, and images—within multifunctional platforms. This phenomenon allows audiences to consume content in a personalized manner, interact simultaneously with multiple media forms, and create new content by combining elements from diverse sources.

Through online discussions about fan writing, adolescent writers develop a vocabulary to discuss writing and learning strategies in order to improve their own work. When discussing the books themselves, they compare them with other literary works and establish connections with philosophical and theological traditions; they debate female character stereotypes; cite interviews with the author or read critical analyses of the work; and employ analytical concepts that they would likely encounter only at the university level (Jenkins, 2015, p. 258, our translation).

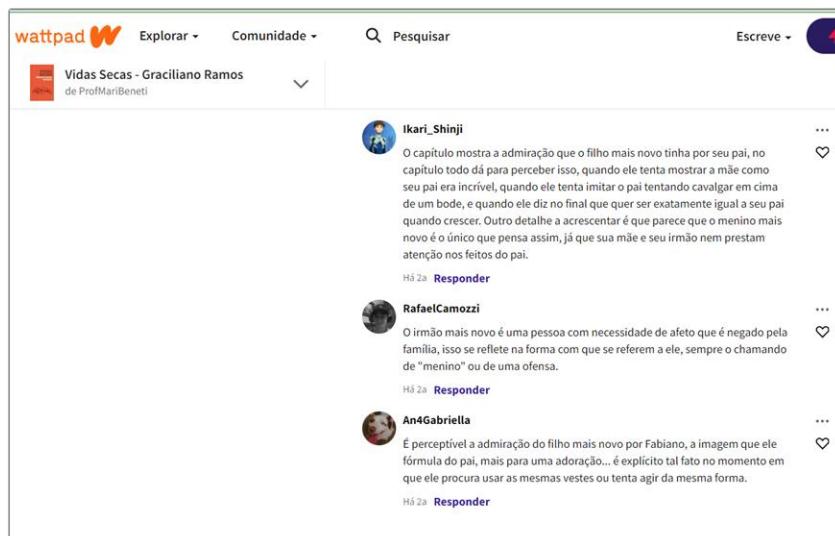
In the current landscape, it is evident that many children and adolescents not only demonstrate an affinity for literature but also actively engage in interactions on digital platforms, acquiring knowledge—whether formally or informally—through diverse connections and interactions. This underscores the need for adaptations within basic education, with particular emphasis on integrating digital technology to foster the development of competencies essential for the twenty-first century. Beyond academic knowledge, students must cultivate core skills such as critical thinking, problem-solving, creativity, collaboration, and effective communication, as prescribed by the National Common Core Curriculum (BNCC, 2018).



In place of the “invisible hands” of termite mounds emerge the visible hands and imaginary dynamics of expanding virtual universes. By interacting with multiple communities, individuals who animate the Space of Knowledge—far from being interchangeable members of immutable castes—are simultaneously singular, multiple, nomadic, and in a state of continuous metamorphosis (Lévy, 2015, p. 32, our translation).

Digital technology thus emerges as a conducive environment for enhancing the skills outlined in the BNCC, enabling their practical application in real-world contexts. In this regard, contemporary society experiences the emergence of what Santaella (2021) terms ubiquitous reading, wherein digital technology functions as a facilitating substrate for the expression and effective development of these skills across various domains of everyday life.

Figure 1 – Selected comments on Chapter 5, “The Younger Boy”



Source: Wattpad Platform (2024).

The comments related to the chapter under analysis highlight the representation and significance of the younger son, addressing his treatment within the family and the underlying reasons for the absence of his name. These observations reveal subjective perspectives on the narrative excerpt, and all interpretations are considered valid insofar as they reflect readers' viewpoints and demonstrate empathy toward the child's emotions and the admiration he felt for his father.

The imperative of awareness and educational praxis resonates with the principles articulated by Paulo Freire (2013), most notably in *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. Within this framework, emphasis is placed on the necessity of a liberating education that enables students to develop critical consciousness of their social reality and motivates them to transform it. Freire

(2013) underscores that human consciousness is constituted through consciousness of the world.

Along these lines, it is possible to identify a marked transformation in the educational landscape over recent decades. Contemporary studies by authors such as Ribeiro (2021), Rojo (2019), and Santaella (2021) outline the characteristics of a new reader emerging in cyberspace, endowed not only with the ability to consume information but also with the capacity to produce and interact with networked content.

Rojo (2019) highlights the emergence of multiliteracies within contemporary phenomena, manifested in spaces of virtuality and interactivity, as well as in the cultural diversity of textual production and circulation. This concept encompasses the multiplicity of languages that shape such phenomena and is characterized by elements such as interactivity, collaboration, the transgression of established power relations, hybrid constructions, and the interplay of languages, modes, media, and cultures.

The underlying idea is that the semiotic empowerment of citizens must necessarily involve the mobilization of multiple languages, semiotic modes, and technological resources, oriented toward emancipation and citizenship rather than toward restriction and intellectual impoverishment (Ribeiro, 2021, p. 14, our translation).

Young readers are immersed in a constantly evolving context, and discussions of these phenomena within the educational sphere foster an understanding of skills that go beyond technical and traditional resources. They also encompass processes of emancipation and the development of a more critical stance, prompting reflections on how cyberspace permeates human social interactions.

Digital culture and the Wattpad platform: A brief analysis of *Vidas Secas* by Graciliano Ramos based on reader interaction

As societies differentiate, evolve, and experience demographic and artistic growth, among other factors, distinctions among audiences become increasingly evident. In this context, reference to a differentiated public gains relevance, particularly within modernity. A new literary panorama thus emerges, marked by the availability of works on reading platforms. It is imperative to recognize that contemporary young readers seek to diversify their reading and writing media as forms of interaction.



Reading and writing have increasingly become integrated actions [...] within this context, the production of multimodal texts must be as accessible as reading itself. New technologies can enhance our abilities, without exempting us from developing skills related to selecting expressive modes and resources at any historical moment (Ribeiro, 2021, p. 17, our translation).

The current era does not shy away from scientific inquiry, nor from the provocative questions arising from the post-digital context—a term discussed by Santaella (2021). It is within this scenario that the present study is situated, proposing a concise analysis of netnography and communicative interactions manifested in cyberspace as a pedagogical approach applicable to basic education.

It is important to clarify that blogs, e-books, and other tools currently used for reading do not constitute a new textual genre; rather, they are merely different media. Just as printed books, clay tablets, and papyrus once served the same purpose, this shift in medium is part of human evolution, as it creates additional possibilities for reading [...] on clay tablets, for instance, texts were shorter and difficult to transport; with papyrus scrolls, it was difficult to return to previously read passages; with print, earlier limitations were overcome, yet interaction between reader and text or reader and author was absent (Santos, 2020, p. 91, our translation).

The theoretical foundation of this study draws on Ribeiro's (2021) approach to multimodality and Rojo's (2019) perspective on multiliteracies. These frameworks constitute the argumentative basis of our analysis. We propose a foundation for ubiquitous learning, as articulated by Santaella (2013), in light of the complexities inherent in the profile of the prosumer reader, as defined by Jenkins (2015), from a transmedia perspective. Our focus lies in problematizing issues through the lens of cyberspace, acknowledging that literature extends beyond the classroom and surpasses traditional educational frameworks.

Within ethnographic approaches, netnography stands out as articulated by Kozinets (2014, p. 61-62, our translation), who defines it as “participant-observational research based on online fieldwork.” From this perspective, our discussion centers on what the author terms “semiotic analysis,” which we regard as highly relevant both for educational research and for classroom practices—particularly with respect to textual genres manifested in cyberspace. In this context, netnographic research in basic education plays a significant role, as it not only analyzes and collects data but also interprets behaviors within networks and collaborative, participatory digital platforms.

The emergence of the Internet, as currently conceived, can be attributed to a historically necessary movement aimed at developing more effective forms of communication. This process



led to an extraordinary expansion in both access and the number of users. Consequently, the Internet has significantly reconfigured traditional roles and challenged hegemonies that historically shaped the production of human knowledge and cultural and media content (Aguiar, 2019).

In the educational domain, netnography plays a highly relevant role by providing valuable insights into interactions within virtual environments and by expanding researchers' understanding of young people's needs and behaviors in digital contexts. Its application in education enables a contemporary understanding of social dynamics and online learning practices.

The application has been on the rise since its launch in 2006. For example, version 6.48.1 has recorded more than 50 million downloads on mobile platforms. Its market niches have also diversified: initially designed for the free enjoyment of amateur writers, it later became integrated into specialized communities (Santos; Silva; Souza, 2020, p. 158, our translation).

Within the reading platform environment, immersive reading experiences play a crucial role in shaping individuals' perceptions of their surroundings. By engaging with literary works, readers establish connections with characters, plots, and themes, fostering empathy and an understanding of diverse realities and perspectives. Such engagement contributes to the development of critical consciousness and enhances the ability to apprehend social complexities.

According to Oliveira (2021), and based on information obtained from the platform under analysis, this online publishing community emerged in Canada in 2006. Having consolidated itself within the entrepreneurial market as an accessible platform, its creators designed it with a mobile-first focus—that is, as an application through which individuals can both share their writing and read content.

One of the best-known platforms and the focus of this study is Wattpad, which emerged in Toronto, Canada, in 2007 with the aim of bringing books to the screens of mobile phones for people who did not have time to read—a resource that has become increasingly scarce. Based on this idea, the platform was created and expanded internationally in 2014. Currently, it encompasses subsidiary companies such as Wattpad Brand Partnerships, Wattpad Studios, and the Wattpad Stars Program, in addition to having several investors from Canada, the United States, and the Asian continent (Oliveira, 2021, p. 128, our translation).



Based on observations of the platform, it is evident that there is a connection among individuals interested in reading. The free book application functions as a social network for reading and sharing short stories, books, and comments related to literature.

Reading as an educational instrument is essential to society; however, reading as personal enjoyment is indispensable. This study sought to present Wattpad and reading in the digital environment not from the scientific/educational perspective it often carries, but rather from a cultural and leisure-oriented perspective, which also constitutes a field of practice for librarians, given their role as information professionals and mediators of reading (Oliveira, 2021, p. 135, our translation).

In this sense, reading in the educational sphere is fundamental; however, when it becomes a source of pleasure and a personal pursuit, it reaches another level from a more subjective perspective and from the standpoint of readers' and users' experiences. Users may also publish their own texts, including articles, poems, or short stories. In 2020, other writing and reading social networks had already achieved success using similar strategies, but none compares to Wattpad's scale. In addition to its 70 million users, the platform already hosts 565 million stories. In Brazil, more than 800,000 users are loyal readers and producers of the works shared.

When Wattpad provided the opportunity for any writer—whether well-known or not—to publish their works freely, along with receiving advice and interventions from readers, the growth of the application was proportional to its increasing recognition among diverse social groups of readers and writers, which, as noted, expanded gradually (Santos; Silva; Souza, 2000, p. 159).

Vidas Secas, a work by Graciliano Ramos, is considered a regionalist classic of the 1930s, in which the author from Alagoas addresses themes that reveal various vulnerabilities of an underprivileged and marginalized society. The choice of this work proved challenging, given that popular children's and young adult books, such as *Harry Potter* and *Amor Gelato*, typically lead reading preferences. Nevertheless, it was observed that *Vidas Secas* stands out as a classic that is widely read and discussed on the platform in question.

Through analyses conducted on the platform, it was possible to identify a significant number of readings of the book's chapters, in addition to numerous interactions, comments, and likes addressing various aspects, such as characters, plot, climax, and resolution. Some readers also actively participate in discussions regarding the meaning of specific words and expressions

present in the work. It is important to emphasize that the focus of this analysis lies on the discourse of community participants, rather than on literary analysis per se.

Figure 2 – Main image of the interaction related to the reading of *Vidas Secas*



Source: Wattpad platform (2024).

Human existence resembles a work in constant deciphering, in which we interpret the world at all times and under any circumstances. Reading, in this sense, transcends the written word and the physical structure of books, manifesting itself as a continuous process of perceiving reality. From this perspective, it is understood that although spaces and media have undergone changes, the literary work persists in its essence. Within this context, the possibility emerges of exploring other intellectual potentials in a subjective and interconnected manner.

Santaella (2013a, p. 23) emphasized that “the internet establishes new configurations for reading, new forms of writing, new dimensions of communication, and new possibilities for social interaction, offering a new type of reader.” Jenkins (2015) contributes to this understanding by presenting the idea of convergence culture, highlighting significant social, industrial, and cultural transformations. The author grounds his argument in three fundamental concepts: media convergence, collective intelligence, and participatory culture. Collective intelligence refers to a new dynamic of consumption that has become a collaborative process, constituting a renewed source of knowledge. Discussions emerge through close analysis of online interactions, supported by the assertions of authors who address and interpret the observed phenomenon.

Throughout history, literature has played a fundamental role in the transmission of knowledge, the expression of culture, and reflection on the human condition. On digital platforms, this importance is further enhanced by expanding reach and diversifying formats for

accessing reading materials. In this context, it becomes relevant to discuss the role of literature on digital platforms.

First, it is important to emphasize that digital platforms offer a wide range of resources for the dissemination of literature, providing access to a broader and more diverse audience. Through e-books, audiobooks, literary blogs, and social networks, readers have the opportunity to explore different works, authors, and literary genres, contributing to the democratization of access to knowledge and culture.

Moreover, digital platforms enable greater interactivity between readers and literary texts, offering spaces for discussions, reviews, comments, and analyses. This interaction fosters enriching dialogue among readers, encouraging the exchange of ideas, debate of viewpoints, and deeper understanding of literary works.

Another relevant aspect is the possibility of experimentation and innovation in the ways literature is presented and consumed on digital platforms. According to Jenkins (2015), resources such as transmedia narratives open new possibilities for writers and artists to explore new narrative formats and writing styles, providing immersive and engaging experiences for readers. Digital platforms also contribute to the preservation and dissemination of literary heritage by making classical and contemporary works available in digital formats, facilitating access and consultation and ensuring their continuity over time.

The same media that provide access are also media of communication. Wireless and, consequently, mobile networks constitute the current technological trend. This enables a form of ubiquitous, pervasive, and at the same time embodied and multiply situated communication that is beginning to permeate everyday objects with embedded technology—the so-called Internet of Things (Santaella, 2021, p. 13, our translation).

In light of the foregoing, the discussion highlights the importance of literature on digital platforms as an essential tool for promoting and expanding access to reading. With mediation grounded in the school context—school-based literacy—processes of maturation, cultural enrichment, and the development of critical thinking take place. “With regard to readers, who construct meaning based on what they read, reading always involves active mental work” (Ribeiro, 2021, p. 27). Based on the ideas raised, it is evident that by exploring and making effective use of the opportunities offered by these platforms, it is possible to broaden access to literature and strengthen its role as an instrument of social and cultural transformation. This



represents a new cultural configuration that, according to Jenkins (2015, 2022), corresponds to the phenomena of Convergence Culture and Connection Culture.

Final Considerations

Considering the developments arising from the research conducted on the platform, an understanding emerges of the inherent potential of multiple forms of literary literacy in virtual and interactive environments. Notably, when engaging with a young audience already immersed in the context of school literacy, the relevance of literary literacy within the educational sphere becomes evident, underscoring the importance of pedagogical mediation in the process of forming the literary reader.

The evolution of reading media—now centered on virtual platforms—acts as a catalyst for the formation of communities of literary enthusiasts. These communities not only engage in in-depth discussions but also express empathy and move beyond the limits of the plot, providing compelling evidence of the humanization of the reader through the literary experience, regardless of the medium used, whether paper or screen.

The results obtained—supported by a solid theoretical framework—offer a brief analysis of the development of multiliteracies (Rojo, 2012) related to multimodal texts (Ribeiro, 2021) within reading and writing practices on interactive platforms. Furthermore, the pervasive presence of literature across different media highlights the convergence of author, work, and reader, revealing that levels of interpretation cannot be standardized due to the intrinsic subjectivity of each individual. This subjectivity gives rise to distinct perspectives and singular impacts when engaging with the same work, which cannot be reduced to dichotomous categorizations of relevance.

From a theoretical standpoint, the study's approach focuses on discussing the potentialities and intersections between Transmedia Culture and Convergence Culture, representing a significant step toward preparing young readers for the development of literary reading skills through interaction on digital platforms. Nevertheless, it is imperative that future research adopt a dialectical perspective to examine the influence of neoliberal policies and the growing inequality of access within the context of reading platforms, thereby enabling a more comprehensive understanding of these emerging dynamics.



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