

THE TEACHING PRAXIS WITH LITERARY READING: CONTRIBUTIONS TO HUMAN DEVELOPMENT AND EMANCIPATION

PRÁXIS DOCENTE COM LEITURA LITERÁRIA: CONTRIBUIÇÕES PARA O DESENVOLVIMENTO E EMANCIPAÇÃO HUMANA

PRAXIS DEL PROFESOR CON LA LECTURA LITERARIA: APORTACIONES PARA EL DESARROLLO HUMANO Y LA EMANCIPACIÓN

Suelen Cristina dos Santos KLEM¹

Gislaine Gomes Granado SANCHES²

Ângela Maria Franco Martins Coelho de Paiva BALÇA³

Sandra Aparecida Pires FRANCO⁴

ABSTRACT: The article is the result of work carried out with the discipline of Education, human formation and praxis: implications of Historical-Cultural Theory and of Historical-Critical Pedagogy for School Education of the Graduate Program in Master of Education at the State University of Londrina (UEL). The objective was to present contributions of teaching practices in the school environment, with a view to human and social development from the work with Literary Reading. It was based on the problem: how Literary Reading can contribute to the teaching praxis and for the development and human emancipation of the student? It is a critical-dialectical approach with qualitative data treatment. Data generation consisted of conducting bibliographic research. As results and discussions, we understand that the teaching praxis, when intentionally planned, provides the development and human emancipation, because Literary Reading has contributions in relation to language, the criticality and conscience of the reader.

KEYWORDS: Education. Literary reading. Teaching praxis. Development and human emancipation.

¹ University of Londrina (UEL), Londrina – PR – Brazil. Master's student at the Postgraduate Program in Education at the Londrina State University (PPeU-UEL). ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-0971-2704>. E-mail: suelen.cristina@uel.br

² University of Londrina (UEL), Londrina – PR – Brazil. Master's student at the Postgraduate Program in Education at the Londrina State University (PPeU-UEL). ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-9602-487X>. E-mail: m.gislainegranado@uel.br

³ University of Évora (UEVORA), Évora – Portugal. Assistant Professor with Aggregation and Director of the Department of Pedagogy and Education. Researcher at the Research Center for Child Studies (CIEC) - University of Minho (Portugal). She is a member of the Course Commission of the Masters in Pre-school Education and Teaching in the 1st Cycle of Basic Education. Visiting Professor at UNESP, São Paulo, Brazil. PhD in Education Sciences from the University of Évora (Portugal). ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-4159-7718>. E-mail: apb@uevora.pt

⁴ University of Londrina (UEL), Londrina – PR – Brazil. Professor in the Graduate Program in Education at the State University of Londrina (UEL). PhD in Literature (UEL). ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-7205-744X>. E-mail: sandrafranco@uel.br

RESUMO: O artigo resulta de um trabalho realizado junto à disciplina de Educação, formação humana e práxis: implicações da Teoria Histórico-Cultural e da Pedagogia Histórico-Crítica para a Educação Escolar, do Programa de Pós-Graduação, nível de Mestrado em Educação, da Universidade Estadual de Londrina (UEL). O objetivo foi apresentar contribuições das práticas docentes em âmbito escolar, com vistas ao desenvolvimento humano e social a partir do trabalho com a Leitura Literária. Teve por base o problema: como a Leitura Literária pode contribuir para a práxis docente e para o desenvolvimento e a emancipação humana do estudante? Trata-se de uma abordagem crítico-dialética com tratamento de dados qualitativos. A geração de dados consistiu na realização de pesquisa bibliográfica. Como resultados e discussões entendemos que a práxis docente quando planejada intencionalmente proporciona o desenvolvimento e a emancipação humana, pois a Leitura Literária possui contribuições em relação à linguagem, à criticidade e à consciência do leitor.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: Educação. Leitura literária. Práxis docente. Desenvolvimento e emancipação humana.

RESUMEN: Este artículo es el resultado de un estudio realizado en la disciplina de Educación, formación humana y praxis: implicaciones de la Teoría Histórico-Cultural y de la Pedagogía Histórico-Crítica para la Educación Escolar del Programa de Posgrado en Maestría en Educación de la Universidad Estatal de Londrina (UEL). El objetivo fue presentar aportes de las prácticas pedagógicas en el ámbito escolar, con miras al desarrollo humano y social a partir del trabajo con la Lectura Literaria. Se basó en el problema: ¿cómo puede contribuir la Lectura Literaria a la praxis del profesor y al desarrollo y emancipación humana del alumno? Se trata de un enfoque crítico-dialéctico con tratamiento de datos cualitativos. La generación de datos consistió en una investigación bibliográfica. Como resultados y discusiones entendemos que la práctica docente cuando se planifica intencionalmente proporciona el desarrollo y la emancipación humana, porque la Lectura Literaria tiene aportes en relación con el lenguaje, la criticidad y la conciencia del lector.

PALABRAS CLAVE: Educación. Lectura literaria. Praxis docente. Desarrollo y emancipación humana.

Introduction

The present discussion was based on studies carried out in the discipline of Education, Human Formation and Praxis: Implications of Cultural-Historical Theory and Critical Historical Pedagogy for School Education in the Postgraduate Program, Master's Degree in Education, University of Londrina (UEL). Our goal in this research is to present contributions about teaching practices at school, aiming at human and social development through the work with Literary Reading. In this context, the following question was pertinent: how can Literary Reading contribute to the teaching practice and to human development and emancipation?

That said, we explain that our starting point was the understanding of the bases of Marxist thought, of Critical Historical Pedagogy, and of Cultural-Historical Theory. The contribution of Historical and Dialectical Materialism to education helps in the analysis and understanding of the educational phenomenon. This theoretical branch conceives man as a subject, both social and historical, who appropriates the accumulated culture to objectify his social relations (MARX, 1978).

Therefore, the study of dialectical characteristics and the various universal forms of being points to Historical and Dialectical Materialism as a valid research method for social analysis, raising the cultural level of man so that he can assimilate its essence and transform his reality.

The appreciations present in this article reflect, above all, inquietudes about the relevance of praxis, involving the teaching of reading in the current school context. To this end, the contributions of Historical and Dialectical Materialism present themselves as an adequate instrument of analysis to try to understand the improvement of the praxis in the teaching of reading.

The Cultural Historical Theory stands out in this work because it views the child as an individual who is in constant development, driven by the interactions he establishes with his sociocultural environment. Thus, it defends that the school space is fundamental, along with the intentional educational work of the teacher, which together play a relevant role in the intellectual and human formation.

The importance of Critical Historical Pedagogy, conceived by Dermeval Saviani, is due to the fact that its fundamentals enable us to understand and organize an adequate pedagogical praxis, aimed at transforming education.

These theories conceive education as a process of human formation, provided by the appropriation of culture; therefore, they conceive man as a historical, cultural, and social individual. In this sense, we highlight the relevance of using them as a basis for reflection on the educational process.

Human development in the light of Historical and Dialectical Materialism and Cultural-Historical Theory.

Man is matter of nature and in face of his needs seeks to appropriate and objectify the knowledge produced and accumulated by previous generations and thus transform himself and the environment dialectically, seeking to overcome his reality and break alienation (MARX, 1978). With the appropriation and contact with culture happens the objectification of human activity and, through social relations, the individual becomes humanized. To deny contact with culture is the same as denying human existence. Understanding the social practice of being humanizes man to make him an integral part of the society to which he belongs.

The ontological character of the Marxian method is expressed as the theoretical investigation of being, in the broad and fundamental, multiple and concrete dimension of reality. We can say that the great contribution of this theory is the conception of man as a historical and social subject who also possesses in his being the synthesis of multiple determinations. In his human formation, this subject systematizes the cultural knowledge accumulated historically.

Marx (1978), when dealing with human nature, starts from the conception that man is part of nature with his biological particularities, but motivated by need is able to overcome them from the interaction and transformation of nature.

According to Malanchem (2019), it is through activity, that is, through work, that changes occur in man's biological and social order, leading him to the process of humanization. Bernardes (2012, p. 33) explains that "just as man, throughout his historical development, exerts influence and controls nature through the invention and use of instruments, these promote changes in the internal formation of man himself, that is, in his psychic constitution. In this way, the relations of human beings with nature and with other men are conditioned by labor. In this process, man developed as a social being, producing his existence and his material and symbolic culture (MALANCHEM, 2019).

However, Martins (2015) warns that it is not just any activity that promotes new psychic functions in man. According to the author, such activity only occurs through the mediation of consciousness, in other words, first the man idealizes the product he wants to build, then defines the process he needs to execute, and only then, through work, transforms the idealized product into real material. Thus, the process of "[...] human vital activity is conscious and objective material action, that is: it is praxis." (MARTINS, 2015, p. 36).

The appropriation of culture is a collective activity necessary for human existence, transmitted by the educational process (MALANCHEM, 2019). The more experienced man

teaches another man how to use the historically produced instruments and thus appropriates the objectifications of culture becoming a generic being and participant in life in society (MARTINS, 2015). In this process, man develops his capacities, aptitudes, attitudes and values, which lead him to overcome biological limits, and also incorporates cultural meanings.

From this perspective, Martins (2015) explains that work is the basis of the structuring of consciousness, because it presupposes an intentionality and develops through pre-ideation of its realization. But work alone does not transform man; it is necessary that consciousness be concretized through language. When man surpasses "[...] the limits of the immediate representation of reality (proper of animals), man starts to represent cognitively the phenomena of reality, naming them as words of his language and as a result concepts and meanings are formed" (MARTINS, 2015, p. 39). This means that it is through language that man performs the mediation between socially produced historical instruments and other men. The appropriation of the historical objectifications forms the abstract meanings, the concepts, which will represent the internal mental activity of the individual, that is, the consciousness (MARTINS, 2015).

In this we understand that language is fundamental to the process of human development, given its capacity for communication and interaction between individuals. According to Bernardes (2012), work and language have an influence on the evolutionary process of human consciousness. This happens since man-made objects and social phenomena are represented by signs, which reflect in the individual's psyche the subjective image of the objective world (MARTINS, 2015).

Man in his historical, cultural and social process discovered that oral language can be represented by written signs, "[...] which represent oral language and objects of the real world, reality" (SILVA; SILVA, 2019, p. 93). In this sense, written language is a human cultural objectification, a means by which men leave recorded messages that serve to remember, share, or communicate something to someone or to oneself (SILVA; SILVA, 2019). Every written text is meant to convey a message, it is up to the reader to understand it. However, understanding is not given naturally, one must appropriate the signs of language to understand the meanings of words and thus assign meaning (ARENA, 2010).

According to the assumptions mentioned above, we realize that for there to be human development it is necessary that the individual participates in social relations in the environment in which he lives and learns to use the material and immaterial instruments of culture. Each individual is able to develop in the interaction with his or her family, school, and society, becoming a unique, singular, and historical subject. However, it is through an organized and

intentional pedagogical praxis that this development is promoted, in a school environment, with more potentiality.

The choice of cultural meanings that are relevant to the formation of individuals in school time is up to the teacher. Decide, based on the subjects' needs, which instruments and appropriate cultural meanings will be able to contribute to the student's development. Organize his practice with the purpose of teaching the socially constructed meanings and the meanings that will be elaborated and appropriated by the learning subjects, which will allow them to act consciously in the society in which they live (ARENA; MILLER, 2011). "The bigger and better the possibilities of access to the cultural content historically produced and accumulated by previous generations, the richer is the process of development of younger generations" (ARENA; MILLER, 2011, p. 346).

Interactive relations are an important element. The involvement of the learner subject during an interactive situation along with the organization of the teaching process focuses on the pedagogical characteristic of these interactive relationships, which leads to the appropriation of social meanings and that will constitute the basis for the formation of higher psychic functions in the developing subject. Thus, the teaching practice that aims at transformative education needs to be conscious, in order to promote the expansion of the cultural universe and the humanization of the subjects.

In this context, we understand that literary reading constitutes an important instrument for development with regard to the higher psychic functions, since, through the story, the individual "imagines situations that he has not seen, not lived, not witnessed" and by doing so he is working on his cognitive development (SILVA; SILVA, 2019, p. 97).

In Literature are embodied the customs, the culture, the author's ideas, the values, the way of life of the time when it was written. Girotto and Revoredo (2011) note that some themes are universal, timeless, so they are recreated according to the sociocultural context in which they were written. Therefore, a literary work contemplates several determinations and therefore becomes an indispensable cultural instrument that helps students understand cultural and temporal diversity.

Literary Reading and its importance in human development

The act of reading stands out for its importance in the acquisition of knowledge of the individual reader; it corroborates for the development of human psychic functions of extreme relevance, such as creativity, imagination, memory, expansion of linguistic vocabulary and improvements in writing. Literature has a peculiar character because it can "become an act of learning" for the reader (COELHO, 2000, p.17). Literature is a cultural instrument to reflect on human, family and cultural relations, pluralities, and contradictions among different historical subjects in different times and spaces.

Besides enriching the cultural and human formation of the reader, Literature inserted since childhood provides countless benefits to the individual's reading formation, enabling him/her to establish relations with the surrounding world so that he/she can learn, imagine, and create. In this sense, we believe that the teaching practice can contribute to the development of capacities for cultural insertion and the literary act.

As a human product, Literary creation is complex and reflects man's cultural objectivations (COELHO, 2000; MARTINS, 2014). It is through Literature and the Arts in general that "men have the opportunity to amplify, transform or enrich their own life experience" in a greater intensity, in a dimension that surpasses the imaginary, besides enabling its reader to travel from the real to the fictional field (COELHO, 2000, p. 28).

According to the Historical-Cultural Theory, the contact with literary narratives mediated by a teaching practice with pedagogical intentionality can provide several cultural proximities and symbolic experience, because at the same time that it instigates the reader it also leads him to know more of the literary universe.

The reading mediated by the teacher in a school space inserts the reader in the process of formation of the taste for Literature and contributes to the humanization process. According to Vygotsky (1995), the access to cultural objects such as books, works of art, stories, films, and music, is configured as a cultural tool and a means for humanization. Thus, reading several literary works contributes to the development of the subject's higher psychic functions. Man has a social nature, and through human interactions he learns. In the school sphere are the study and reading activities, pedagogically intentional and organized by the teacher with a view to learning. These activities enable the subject to internalize and appropriate typically human cognitive functions, such as the development of thought, language, reasoning, imagination, and others (LEONTIEV, 1978).

Reading a literary work with students is configured in a possibility for the development of critical reader, provides them a moment of appropriation of all social, economic, cultural dimensions, among others, going through the school contents. To give meaning to the text, to appropriate worldviews, objectifications and human culture through their senses and thus raise the potential of their higher psychic functions (MERETT; FRANCO, 2019). According to the authors, education plays a fundamental role in the qualitative elevation of human potentialities.

Literary works are considered a totality, composed of multiple singularities of the characters and spaces, resulting from the writer's particularity. Because it is a real complex, it is possible that through the act of reading a work, the student starts from the concrete - from a real situation - to reach the abstract, in the understanding of what is not perceptible. The works can have a wealth of content to be appropriated by students that allows them the qualitative elevation of their higher psychic functions and their humanization (MERETT; FRANCO, 2019, p. 336).

Therefore, in this conception, literary works related in study activities are pedagogical tools that allow the student to appropriate the elaborated culture and raise human potentialities. Literary Reading can start from a rich school environment, with access to a wide variety of works. It is essential that it be organized by the teaching practice in an intentional way so as to promote dialogues and experiences related to reading in the reader's life.

Listening to stories and interacting with them arouses interest in all ages. When one reads and understands a story, the reader becomes capable of commenting, questioning, doubting, discussing about it, confronting ideas, thoughts, in a collective environment and prepared to guarantee rich literary experiences and interaction with others. "The text allows an interaction between the reader and the experienced world, and through the text the reader can come to know and apprehend a certain reality, having as a consequence a better understanding of his own" (ADOLFO, 2007, p. 33).

Literature from a Marxist point of view not only contributes to the literary formation of the individual, but also instigates him to transform his social reality and his conscience, in order to seek to overcome the various forms of alienation. Therefore, based on the assumptions of Historical and Dialectical Materialism and guided by the conception of man as a historical, social subject who develops through the appropriation of knowledge accumulated by the written culture, the individual objectifies his social relations while humanizing himself (DUARTE, 2014; MARX, 1978; MARTINS, 2014).

In this regard, we argue for teaching mediation with Literary Literature as a praxis capable of assisting readers in the appropriation of human culture. The cultural contribution of

teaching knowledge is constituted in the praxis. According to Duarte (2014), the search for the development of man's appropriation and objectification guided by his social practice generates new needs, such as the need to know more and more about the culture produced by men. Therefore, reading is not just decoding a sign with no relation to private and social life, it is to present students with readings of human and social specificities, expanding the knowledge of the world and of our own humanity.

The importance of the teaching of literary reading mediated by the teaching praxis happens by the practical relations between social and cultural readings, based on human experiences and needs. The teacher is a mediator in this process of knowledge acquisition that takes place through the learning of social practices systematically organized by the teaching action.

The teaching praxis with the use of literature

From the data explained, we understand that the school needs to enable the historically produced knowledge so that the development of more complex human capacities occurs. According to Mello (2009), the teacher is responsible for selecting the cultural contents that must be appropriated by students and seek the most appropriate ways to enable the appropriation, so that the new generations can appropriate the highest human qualities. Therefore, the teacher is the most appropriate mediator. According to the author, the teacher intentionally presents the social culture to the new generations through experiences, life experiences, and situations.

This intentional educational process is relevant, because the higher psychic functions are first formed in an interpsychic process, that is, in the collective and social, in the relationship with other people, to later become intrapsychic, internal and subjective functions of the individual.

In this same line of reasoning, Duarte (2014) argues that human beings are not born fully individual and human, but will become so through the educational process in which the material and spiritual wealth produced by society is transmitted. In other words, the educational work when thought intentionally in the quest to elect the elements of social history that develop humanity, transforms the individual into human. The individual needs to appropriate human material and spiritual riches, since they are necessary for the formation of individuality. According to Duarte (2014), the basis of the formation of individuality, in principle, is through

the appropriation of socially produced objectivity, then, in school, through the appropriation of the teaching of spiritual wealth.

However, for the development of the psychism to occur, it is important that the individual actively perform an activity. This activity needs to have a meaning, a reason that leads him to act, related to a result to be achieved in the end. And this only occurs when he understands why and for what he is performing such activity. Thus, Mello (2009, p. 368) states that "the subject is active not only intellectually, but also emotionally". For this reason, it is important to work with contents that interest the student, since he or she will feel motivated and engaged in the study. Cognitive and affective are not separate, they constitute a unit (MELLO, 2009).

In social and collective activity the individual learns the ways of using objects of culture and thus exercises the faculties involved in the social use of these objects. By learning to use them unaided, that is, by internalizing them, they become human qualities.

In this scenario, it is important that the teacher understands that the student is a unique and particular being and has his individuality. The organization of the educational process must present the most elaborate forms of culture to the individual. The teaching practice requires that the most relevant contents of the culture be selected in order to generate the motive, interest, and need to learn, essential elements for teaching-learning to make sense. Thus, it is necessary that school activities enable the active participation of students so that they feel they are an integral part of the school, in the sense that they can express themselves, give their opinions, suggest the contents to be studied of their interest, and dialogue with others, because, as we have seen, it is through the social and collective relationship that the individual develops, forms his psyche and his conscience.

According to Franco (2012), human formation requires a commitment to educational practice, thus reading and writing can be considered educational praxis in favor of human formation. A conscious pedagogical practice that aims at human development is exercised as praxis, since it leads the student to perceive the world around him and to understand the most varied cultures, histories, different human behaviors, and in this set of educational actions it enables the individual to emancipate himself.

Duarte (2014) mentions that one of the elements of social history relevant to pedagogical praxis is art, since in it there are rich objectifications of human experiences, distinct from everyday experiences. Thus, the author explains:

[...] the value for human formation, of the great works of art and of literature lies precisely in the fact that they preserve and synthesize the historical experience of the human race and through them the individual can experience this experience as if it were his life. Through a literary character the individual comes into contact with the synthesis of many personalities [...] (DUARTE, 2014, p. 41).

In this sense, literature represents the experiences of human life, which contributes to the reader's knowledge of the historical past and the appropriation of experiences different from his own. By appropriating the elaborated culture, the individual forms his psyche, attributes meaning to his reality, so that he can act on it consciously.

From the perspective of this teaching action, we understand the importance of a praxis focused on the development of the reader, but which, at the same time, promotes improvements and updates in the teacher's own training, since the educational action is valid for both the teacher and the student, both learn together, mediated by ample objectifications that may be the literature books, their artistic illustrations and human culture contents, all this in a constant process of humanization.

These actions for the formation of readers start from an organization of educational practices that promote critical literary reading, by means of experiences in the school environment, such as: reading classes interspersed between moments of individual or collective reading, presentation of the main ideas or themes approached in the books, conversations and debates about the works, their characters, analysis of the production context, relation of the authors' lives and bibliography, that is, to promote a reflection of the work read to contribute to the formation of the reader's individuality and his/her social environment. These teaching actions are based on the theoretical path of Marxism, once they conceive the dialectic vision of human formation resulting from its relations, in a constant historical movement of analysis of the contradictions and of its social environment, while it humanizes itself.

The teaching mediations with Literature play an important role, for they are the ones that allow the contact with different cultural approaches and the reflection about the existing contradictions that are grounded in reality. Therefore, the teaching work with reading needs to meet a practice that promotes the formation of critical readers, able to read the world around them and be able to perceive events in their multiple dimensions (social, political, economic, cultural etc.) with readers more humanized by experiencing a transforming praxis (FRANCO, 2012).

We highlight the importance of literary works as cultural objects that when appropriated by the reader enable human development, through the reading of a literary work, short story or

any narrative that provides the opportunity to know the various cultures, identify with the characters, feel their emotions or human contradictions during the reading, which provides reflections of aesthetic and ethical values in the reader's consciousness (VYGOTSKI, 1995; 2005).

We know that the urgency of the teaching praxis is limited due to the immediate tasks of a school system that aims to fulfill the curriculum and goals. The fragility of the initial professional training corroborates so that teachers look for immediate solutions, which, many times, do not contribute to the formation and human development. Therefore, we can see the relevance of continuing education, which, in addition to helping teachers in their professional qualification and in the improvement of their teaching practice, helps them understand their role as educators of conscious individuals.

This framework signals the need for critical reflection on the educational praxis. Saviani (2017, p. 10) defines praxis as "[...] theoretically grounded practical human activity." In this sense, we can infer that the teaching praxis is complex and demands a work of studies and research based on a solid theory that shows the human development in order to organize it so that it can correspond to the specificity of school education, that is, as Saviani (2003, p. 15) states, the "transmission-assimilation of systematized knowledge".

For the educational praxis to be successful, the teacher needs to know how human development occurs, so that he/she can intentionally plan his/her action. This process, combined with the choice of objective and meaningful social and historical content, contributes to the formation of human psychic capacities. At this core, it is relevant that the student's subjectivity is also considered. Uniting the educational praxis with the student's interest, the student's emancipation can be achieved, a fundamental characteristic to fully participate in social relations in contemporary society.

Final considerations

Through the bibliographical study of the theoretical assumptions of Historical and Dialectical Materialism, Cultural-Historical Theory, and Critical Historical Pedagogy, we reached the general objective of presenting contributions from the teaching praxis at school level.

In view of the theoretical discussions presented, we can highlight as contributions of teaching practices at school level, aiming at human and social development from the work with Literary Reading, the following actions: a) reading is a source of knowledge and learning, so when stimulated early on it enables the cultural and social formation of the individual; b) the student acquires an active position in his learning process; c) it allows contact with new information, experiences, cultures, recognition of reality, with a view to thinking critically about it and forming his own opinion; d) new skills can be developed, thus awakening awareness, so that he becomes an active citizen before society.

Literary reading enriches its reader; therefore, we believe that the mediation of the teaching practice, through the confrontation of ideas and thoughts, together with the interaction of the collective environment of the classroom, is capable of developing language and thought. Always in the interaction with the other, through the rich literary experiences, we highlight that praxis has an essential role in the humanization of individuals. The works stimulate the capacity for imagination and thought, and create the need for reading in order to understand reality.

Based on the theoretical assumptions of human development of Historical and Dialectical Materialism, we conceive Literature as a cultural product, which mediated by the teaching practice gives us support to understand human development. In this sense, we answer our initial problem: how Literary Reading can contribute to the teaching praxis, the development and the human emancipation of the student.

Through contact with the accumulation of cultural experiences, mediated by verbal signs, during the reading of a literary work, the content of this experience is appropriated by the reader from the activity objectified with the reading. However, to promote in the reader the ability to understand Literary Reading and its social determinants, it is necessary to have an intentionally planned, systematized, and organized teaching practice with the students. The more culturally diverse the literary works and the measurements of the teaching practice, the more formative experiences and appropriation of knowledge readers may have.

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