

**THE PLACE OF THE LIBRARY IN LIFE NARRATIVES OF TEACHER TRAINERS: MEMORIAL PROCESSES IN THE CONSTITUTION OF READERS**

***O LUGAR DA BIBLIOTECA EM NARRATIVAS DE VIDA DE PROFESSORAS FORMADORAS: PROCESSOS MEMORIALÍSTICOS NA CONSTITUIÇÃO DE LEITORAS***

***EL LUGAR DE LA BIBLIOTECA EN NARRATIVAS DE VIDA DE PROFESORAS FORMADORAS: PROCESOS DE MEMORIA EN LA CONSTITUCIÓN DE LECTORAS***



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**ABSTRACT:** This work is an excerpt from post-doctoral research, whose object of study refers to the reading memories of teacher trainers in Higher Education. The theoretical framework is based on a historical-cultural perspective, focusing on reading practices and the social role of libraries as narrated by them. As a methodological path, we used documentary and bibliographical research, and the data were produced from (auto)biographical narratives of teachers working in undergraduate courses at the Federal University of Tocantins (UFT) – Campus Arraias. For this article, we aim to present data about the meanings attributed by educators to the library in their memories as readers. When we concluded the research, we noticed that this sector, in the narratives, represented a place of social, cultural, and educational importance, mainly in professional training and in readers' memories.

**KEYWORDS:** Library. Life Narratives. Teacher trainers. Constitution of readers.

**RESUMO:** Este trabalho é um recorte de uma pesquisa de pós-doutorado, cujo objeto de estudo se refere às memórias de leitura de professoras formadoras no Ensino Superior. O referencial teórico se fundamenta em uma perspectiva histórico-cultural, privilegiando o enfoque nas práticas de leitura e no papel social das bibliotecas narrados por elas. Como percurso metodológico, utilizamos a pesquisa documental e bibliográfica, e os dados foram produzidos a partir de narrativas (auto)biográficas de docentes atuantes em cursos de licenciatura da Universidade Federal do Tocantins (UFT) – Campus Arraias. Para o presente artigo, objetivamos apresentar os dados acerca dos sentidos atribuídos pelas formadoras à biblioteca em suas memórias como leitoras. Ao concluirmos a pesquisa, notamos que tal setor, nas narrativas, representou um lugar de importância social, cultural e formativa, principalmente na formação profissional e nas memórias de leitores.

**PALAVRAS-CHAVE:** Biblioteca. Narrativas de Vida. Professoras formadoras. Constituição de leitoras.

**RESUMEN:** Este trabajo es un recorte de una investigación de posdoctorado cuyo objeto de estudio se refiere a las memorias de lectura de profesoras formadoras en la Educación Superior. El referencial teórico se fundamenta en una perspectiva histórico-cultural que se enfoca principalmente en las prácticas de lectura y en el papel social de las bibliotecas que ellas mencionan. Como abordaje metodológico, utilizamos la investigación documental y bibliográfica, y los datos fueron producidos a partir de narrativas (auto)biográficas de docentes que actúan en carreras de licenciatura de la Universidad Federal de Tocantins (UFT) – Campus Arraias. Para el presente artículo, buscamos presentar los datos acerca de los sentidos atribuidos por las formadoras a la biblioteca en sus memorias como lectoras. Al concluir la investigación, notamos que dicho sector, en las narrativas, representó un lugar de importancia social, cultural y formativa, principalmente en la formación profesional y en las memorias de lectores.

**PALABRAS CLAVE:** Biblioteca. Narrativas de vida. Profesoras formadoras. Constitución de lectoras

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## Introduction

When we think of a library, we define it as a place of study and a collection of various books and documents for research. This context has already been the subject of different cultural plots, such as the film “The Name of the Rose”<sup>3</sup>, based on the novel classic by Umberto Eco, as well as in the writing of the Argentine chronicler Jorge Luis Borges, who portrays an infinite library in the short story “The Library of Babel”<sup>4</sup>.

During their school years, the library was part of the lives of most readers of this article. In this space, students experienced (and continue to experience) a unique developmental movement, as worlds are discovered, and others are hidden. It was also characterized, for a long time, as a sacred or punishing place for students. When we enter this space, we notice the construction of orders, where an architecture composes the environment to demarcate the places of each book on the shelves, with registers, chairs and tables available for prior reading. In this way:

[...] in the library, the reader is forced to awaken from that dream of intimate communion provoked by reading. He is forced to recognize the materiality of the world in the endless succession of spines, in the sound of pages turning on tables (Battles, 2003, p. 10, our translation).

Nowadays, libraries take on new configurations, from the organization of printed books to research in digital collections (Suaiden, 2000; Valentim, 2016). However, such changes do not erase our memories of school or even private libraries, marked by the idea of belonging and acceptance; this is because “memory appears as a subjective force that is at once profound and active, latent and penetrating, hidden and invasive” (Bosi, 1994, p. 47, our translation).

In fact, memorialistic work can expand or hide experiences lived by subjects, by demarcating singularities of a resignified history – in view of this, “memories can be similar, contradictory or overlapping” (Portelli, 1997, p. 16, our translation). Thus, we base ourselves on the following problem in this article: what meanings are constructed by teachers about their experiences in public and private libraries?

We believe that the ideas discussed in this paper can contribute to the constitutive processes of the teacher educator, in order to broaden a singular and plural reading of the experiences and experiences of teachers around the library as a place of education and

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<sup>3</sup>ECO, Umberto. *The Name of the Rose*. Translated by Aurora Fornoni Bernardini and Homero Freitas de Andrade. Rio de Janeiro: O Globo; São Paulo: Folha de S. Paulo, 2003. Film: ANNAUD, Jean Jacques. *The Name of the Rose*. Original title: *Der Name Der Rose*. Color. Subtitled. Duration: 130 min. Germany, 1986 me:

<sup>4</sup>Borges, JL *The Library of Babel*. In *Fictions* (pp. 69-79). (Work originally published in 1944).

memories. We hope to address the life and training of the teacher reader (Guedes-Pinto, 2002), as well as the social function of the library in their trajectories, since university teaching goes beyond a teaching perspective based solely on the spaces defined for classes. It is essential to reflect on the identity processes and singularities that mark teaching within the university. In these terms, “such a perspective does not imply a lack of interest in the conjunctural conditions that surround it, but we believe that these need to be thought of based on the way they are experienced and understood by teachers” (Isaia; Bolzan, 2008, p. 46, our translation).

Given this assumption, there is a need to deepen reflections on the meaning of reading practices in the life history of educators, especially the place of the library, when taken by their memories. This is justified by the fact that the teacher exercises “his profession in an institution and, just as he influences the space in which he works, his action is also affected by his culture, objectives and values, expressed in his educational project” (Cunha, 2018, p. 8, our translation).

For the author, in addition to considering the training of university professors in the areas of teaching, research, extension, management and publishing, it is essential to understand their knowledge and training trajectories in this articulation, which may directly or indirectly influence pedagogical knowledge-making. Furthermore, a study that values the life history of the professor “offers opportunities to become aware of the various registers of self-expression and representation, as well as the dynamics that guide their training” (Josso, 2008, p. 19, our translation).

### Origin of libraries: brief notes

Regarding the origin of the term “library”, we emphasize that its meaning encompasses something movable defined by its content and, later, books in a notebook, whose constitution in the Greek language refers to the book cabinet (Barbier, 2018). When analyzing the emergence of the library in world history, we note that the first records date back to the 7th century BC and correspond to the archives of the Assyrian, Sumerian and Babylonian kings, in which these peoples used clay tablets to record knowledge; therefore, the set of these tablets was “considered a library” (Milanesi, 1983, p. 17, our translation). *A priori*, the contemporary library was a resource for preserving records, that is, a repository for keeping the memory of a people and their culture. With this, Papyrus emerged as a light and flexible technology for recording the written word, which made it the most widely used product in Egypt with large-scale production, the roll of which was called *volumen* (Milanesi, 1983). Later, parchment was created as a form of recording.

Another landmark in the historical context highlighted by literature was the Library of Alexandria, which suffered major fires during its construction. The function of that place was to aggregate the knowledge produced by humanity; in turn, “unlike the papyrus scrolls of Alexandria, the first libraries could not catch fire, as they were full of books engraved in clay” (Battles, 2003, p. 31, our translation). For the aforementioned theorist, when the Caliph’s army arrived in Alexandria, the legendary library had suffered other fires, despite there being two libraries in the city. In this sense, “Alexandria was the center of the Mediterranean book trade practically from its foundation until the third century of our era” (Battles, 2003, p. 31, our translation).

Hébrard (2004), when studying the school libraries that were established in France in the 19th century, highlights how the cabinet designated in the classroom to store books to be read and studied played a fundamental role in the process of teaching the written language in his country. The author recognizes that the “library cabinet”, in the most remote places and in rural areas, encompassed a meaning of sociocultural advancement, of progress, in terms of the political project of a dated era. Hébrard (2004) then concludes his article by pointing out the importance of the pedagogical debate around what to read, what is presented in schools, or in public places where collections are provided, for the reading public. He draws attention to the processes of appropriation of the meanings of what is read, of what is offered for reading practice. In other words, he signals the focus on problematizing the various reading practices that are put into circulation in society.

### **Reading and experiences**

The practice of reading, from this perspective, is understood as a significant process of producing meanings “that requires the reader to establish complex relationships between what he/she decodes and the different types of knowledge stored in his/her memory throughout his/her experiences” (Cafiero, 2005, p. 16, our translation). For the author, when reading, the subject not only decodes a literal translation of the text, but also resignifies new meanings based on life experiences and reading of the world.

Kleiman (2002) emphasizes that reading is a practice constructed from other texts and readings. In this case, the reader mobilizes beliefs, values and cultures that constitute his or her own identity, since the experience with other readings becomes essential in the formation of new meanings. This practice represents a relationship of social, political, historical and cultural

aspects that permeate the formation of individuals, since “the more textual knowledge the reader has, the greater his or her exposure to all types of text, the easier his or her understanding will be” (Kleiman, 2002, p. 20, our translation).

When we understand reading as a historical and social activity, we recognize and value the various processes constructed and mobilized around reading as a discursive and dialogical production (Bakhtin, 2011). According to the author, the discursive production of language is materialized from the relationship between text and contexts, since the statement is formed by a set of (extra)linguistic elements mobilized by the reader/listener and “[...] is focused not only on its object, but also on the discourse of the other about this object” (Bakhtin, 2011, p. 320, our translation). For Kramer (1998, p. 24, our translation):

Reading, then, is not the sum of the meaning of the words that make up a text, since the subtext and its context are what give it meaning. It requires prior knowledge, both linguistic and non-linguistic – both visual and non-visual information are important in reading the text.

Since the beginning of time, human beings have been reading about the world and their experiences; therefore, the act of reading is a social and cultural practice, since, throughout history, individuals have produced meanings about their own actions. Freire (2012, p. 9, our translation) explains that “reading the world precedes reading the word”, as an intimate process constructed by people, in the face of their experiences. In other words, we can say that the processes of production of meanings are mobilized and resignified by the individual based on their culture.

According to Koch and Elias (2006, p. 11, our translation), “reading is an activity that takes into account the reader’s experiences and knowledge”, that is, such practice cannot be thought of only as a technical activity of memorization and search for answers, as it requires the mobilization of various knowledge in its constitution as a historical-cultural action. Thus, the idea of truth presented by the classical and normative theory on reading is replaced by the relationship of production and reinvention of texts from a historical and social perspective where “reading is not only an abstract operation of intellection: it is putting the body into play, it is inscription in a space, a relationship with oneself or with the other” (Chartier, 2002, p. 70, our translation).

According to Chartier (2002), the practice of reading is not reduced to a merely intellectual activity, but rather inscribed in time and space, given that the reader leaves (in)direct traces in the social sphere. The production of meanings is constructed by the sum of the reader's experiences, which, in turn, are inserted into a context greater than the words indicated in



written artifacts. In its constitution, reading becomes an individual and collective action, as it is permeated by social and communicative relations between individuals.

Thinking about the practice of reading requires knowing readers in the relationship between time and space. Therefore, we seek to work with reading as a formative process intertwined with individual and collective memories, that is, we defend the idea of reading as an important activity in the formation of human beings and social interaction. We believe that reading is an essential activity in the construction of a fair and democratic society (Zilberman, 1991); therefore, we defend the need to also understand reading beyond the formal aspects of school and university.

During our studies, we have noticed the urgency of validating other reading practices constructed within society, whether they are produced within the scope of ordinary practices, in recipes, newspapers, magazines or even events such as historical and social phenomena. Through cultural history, we intend to understand the production of reading in the broadest sense of the term, by valuing strategies that involve the production of reading, as marginal or invisible contexts of singular practices of the ordinary man (*sic*) (Certeau, 1994). According to the author, despite the institutional structures formed in the relations of power and culture, individuals resignify knowledge and actions of everyday life by overcoming barriers imposed by a larger social system of exclusion and denial. In this regard:

Everyday life is what is given to us each day (or what we share), it presses on us day after day, it oppresses us, because there is an oppression of the present. Every day, in the morning, what we assume, upon waking, is the weight of life, the difficulty of living, or of living in this or another condition, with this fatigue, with this desire (Certeau, 1994, p. 31, our translation).

As a banal element of traditional history, everyday life permeates new meanings, silences, marks, identities, knowledge and cultures that, in turn, are thought of as axes of understanding a society. It also presents itself as a possibility of reading and interpreting a certain social phenomenon woven into the relationships between subjects, because “the banal, trivial, repetitive everyday life is part of another everyday life” (Pais, 2003, p.78, our translation).

In view of this, everyday practice is singular, plural, authentic and a reinterpretation of other practices produced in the fabric of society, with new meanings shared among subjects. Understanding human practices also leads us to think about the spaces where relationships between individuals are built, in which we focus on the context of public and private libraries

reinterpreted by (auto)biographical narratives of educators. But first, we discuss the library as a place of memory and education.

### **Experiences in the library**

Experiences built in the library in (in)formal settings mark a unique profile of readers throughout history and, specifically in the school environment, it presents itself as a significant space for the production of knowledge and preservation of cultures. In the meantime, the Manifesto for the School Library (IFLA/UNESCO, 2005) highlights the importance of this sector as cultural heritage and part of the educational process, as it plays a fundamental role in the education of students, by enabling the discovery of new knowledge and the formation of critical and participatory subjects in society.

For Fragoso (2009), the library is an active center that facilitates learning, as it plays an educational role in the relationship between teacher and student. It also plays a cultural role and becomes “a complement to formal education, by offering multiple reading possibilities and, in doing so, leading students to expand their knowledge and ideas about the world” (Fragoso, 2009, p. nn, our translation). Resuming Freire (2012), the library also has the social function of being a space for coexistence, for cultural exchanges, favoring the expansion of knowledge, diversifying the repertoires of those who frequent it.

From this perspective, the library represents part of the educational process, without being just a sacred place with collections on various topics or a place for punishments due to students' lack of discipline in educational institutions. To this end, Fragoso (2009) reaffirms the need for it to be a place for meetings, knowledge production and socialization among teachers, students and staff.

On the one hand, “the school library inserted in the educational context contributes to learning, training and social interaction” (Braga; Paula, 2014, p. 246, our translation). Despite this, the authors assert that such a place has not assumed the social role of a space for training in schools, since the concept of a place to store books is shared by users of educational institutions. In this context, Petit (2009, p. 31, our translation) argues that the ideal concept indicates a place where “children dream and that does not impose ideas, images or stories on them, but shows them possibilities and alternatives. These things will have a deep connection with their adult life later on”.

On the other hand, private libraries have significant potential in the formation of readers, especially because they present a specific profile of habits and lifestyle of the reader, for whom



“reading is primarily an act of freedom [...] the owner of the library has the power to decide which books will be part of his collection and, mainly, the reader has the freedom to choose what will be read” (Velloso, 2018, p. 2008, our translation). In this context, the theorist postulates that the organization of a private library is permeated by the owner's intentions and represents the tastes of the types of reading and texts marked in his trajectory according to the historical, political, social and cultural context.

The practice of organizing private libraries from an elitist/bourgeois perspective aimed to preserve and have access to the dominant culture, since “the dream of a library bringing together all accumulated knowledge, all books ever written, has permeated the history of Western civilization” (Chartier, 2002, p. 67, our translation). In this sense, Costa and Napoleone (2017, p. 1, our translation) observe that a private collection “has its own discourse, being able to show the worldview, interests and values of its collector” and demonstrates a relationship of affection and belonging, production of identities and appreciation of the owner’s life story.

Whether through a public library in school/university contexts, or in private institutions located in domestic spaces, we see that the practice of reading and the presence of books encompass life stories marked by challenges and possibilities in understanding the identity processes of the subjects involved in these places. Ultimately, “the book allows us to recover the feeling of our own continuation and the ability to establish ties with the world” (Petit, 2013, p. 79, our translation).

### **Methodological path**

The study was anchored in (auto)biographical research, in line with the narratives of educators, which “do not merely describe reality, they produce individual and collective knowledge and, in the case of teachers, enhance movements of reflection on their own experiences, theories and practices” (Bragança, 2008, p. 75, our translation). For the author, the reflections promoted in (auto)biographical studies allow teachers to mobilize diverse knowledge from their own experiences as axes of interpretation, review and validation of trajectories woven throughout their life history. They also allow the resumption of new readings of experiences not as they actually happened, but resignified in meanings in the past, present and future.

In the words of Delory-Momberger (2008, p. 37, our translation), “[...] it is the narrative that makes us the character of our own life; it is the narrative, in short, that gives our life a story:

we do not make the narrative of our life because we have a story; we have a story because we make the narrative of our life”. The author points out that the production of the life narrative not only describes a certain fact, but also reverberates singular processes of the experiences of the subjects as narrators and protagonists of the narrated event.

Instead of requiring a synchronous understanding of facts and events, (auto)biographical research requires a non-linear reading, which “[...] requires a retrospective and prospective look [...] as an activity of critical self-interpretation and awareness of the social, historical and cultural relativity of the references internalized by the subject [...]” (Josso, 2004, p. 60, our translation). In the investigative path, we developed bibliographic and documentary research to expand our reflections on the topic through books, articles, theses and dissertations, in addition to official documents.

Four professors working in undergraduate courses at the Federal University of Tocantins (UFT) – Arraias *Campus*, took part in the study, according to the following selection criteria: being a tenured professor, working in undergraduate courses and being available to participate in the research. According to the availability of the participants, data collection took place through narrative interviews – two in person and the others *online*.

We recorded the interviews on a *smartphone and* computer recorder, as well as on a *Drive* via the Google Meet platform, and transcribed them later, according to the principles of life story research and after signing the Informed Consent Form (ICF). The data were analyzed based on an interpretative reading, to capture the meanings attributed by the teachers to the library in the training itineraries, “[...] in the understanding of the conceptions we have, of the influences we suffer, and in this sense, it can be a generator of awareness, of a re-signification of the lived experience” (Bragança, 2008, p. 76, our translation).

It is worth noting that the research was approved by the Human Research Ethics Committee (CEP) under protocol (CAAE 74741823.0.0000.8142), in accordance with technical and scientific protocols. To identify and preserve the personal data of the study collaborators, we assigned them pseudonyms, referring to female writers of Brazilian literature (Adélia Prado, Cora Coralina, Clarice Lispector and Cecília Meireles). Adélia Prado has a PhD in Education; Cora Coralina, a PhD in Education; Clarice Lispector, a PhD in Mathematics; and Cecília Meireles, a PhD in Arts. At the time of the study, these teachers were between 40 and 50 years old, and their professional experience varied from 10 to 20 years in teaching.

## Narratives of the self: meanings of the school library

The narratives of the teacher trainers indicate formative singularities regarding the experiences in the library space. We found that the presence of such a space also represented a symbolic atmosphere of power and emancipation in the training paths as readers. When narrating about herself, teacher Adélia Prado reported that the school library became part of the formative itinerary only in the final years of Elementary School, but only as a place to conduct research: *“From fifth to eighth grade, there was a library at school, but with the books that teachers generally did not use, we used the library to do schoolwork. There was a stage there, it was a beautiful library”* (Adélia Prado, 2023).

This situation was also highlighted in the narrative of teacher Cora Coralina, who emphasized the absence of a library in the school curriculum. According to her, the first time she accessed a library was in a municipal library that operated in the home of a teacher from her hometown. The significant presence of this sector in an educational establishment was characterized by the collection of books that were kept in the classroom: *“Each classroom had a cabinet and the books were kept inside. We couldn't even take the book home, and the book we used was from the school itself”* (Cora Coralina, 2023).

In addition to presenting these identity marks, the teacher recalled the meaning of the public library in her life: *“it was the first place I had access to sit in a reading environment and say that I was visiting a place where we go to read. Then, she ended up getting sick and it closed”* (Cora Coralina, 2023). In this memorial exercise, the teacher demonstrated the idea of welcoming in the face of experiences woven in the library space, unlike the experiences shared in the school library in the classroom. Clarice Lispector, when narrating about the presence of the library, revealed the meaning of this educational sector according to the experiences built in the institution where she graduated in basic education: *“in my school, since it was a private school, there was a good library too; however, you have more restricted access, and besides, my school was far from my house”* (Clarice Lispector, 2023). In this case, the teacher's memories portrayed the school library as a sacred place restricted to the educational group, despite being well-structured and cozy: *“it also had a section for teaching materials [...], it was locked away, but I remember lots of maps in the library”* (Clarice Lispector, 2023).

In turn, Cecília Meireles emphasized reporting aspects of her experiences at the school where she attended elementary school. In this institution run by nuns, the library and reading were present in the teachers' pedagogical practices, which constituted a space for training and socialization:

[...] we would go to the library to read and then there were the little mattresses. We could take the book home, but we would read, each one would take the book they wanted there. We would go through the shelves and all the books were available, unlike some libraries I found, including in Campinas, where some directors prohibited students from accessing them because “the book is new, it will spoil”. There was no such thing there; we would just spoil it (Cecília Meireles, 2023, our translation).

In view of the above, the discourses signaled the place occupied by the school library in the memories of students. In the reports, we identified representations of this sector as a restricted or welcoming place, due to the approach of significant marks to think about this place in the narratives of themselves. In addition, the process of remembrance allowed the teachers to reflect on the meanings produced about the library in their trajectories, as Cecília Meireles states:

*I am very proud. Ever since I started this school, when the nuns took us to the big library, they would say: “this is the biggest library in the Paraíba Valley”. I felt like I was in Alexandria, I swear to you! When I arrived at [ sic ] Unicamp, where I went to college among the libraries, I said: “wow, this is my little Alexandria”* (Cecília Meireles, 2023, our translation).

Despite the teachers’ singularities, we found evidence to reflect on and analyze the paths taken by the school library throughout educational history, as well as the importance of this place in the formation of the student reader. On the one hand, in both previous narratives, we recognize the lack of investment in promoting a policy for this sector in educational institutions; on the other hand, we detected the encouragement of library use by private institutions, which suggests the fragility of a broad policy for the formation of readers in the country.

### The place of the private library

When talking about the library, the trainers revealed the influence of private libraries on their trajectories as spaces of memories in the formative paths, as indicated by Adélia Prado: “in my trajectory, I met these people who opened doors for me, opened their libraries for me, made donations to me and introduced me to authors” (Adélia Prado, 2023).

Study experiences allowed the teacher access to a wide universe of private libraries, such as the library belonging to researcher Anne Marie Chartier and those of other professors at the Federal University of Minas Gerais (UFMG), where she studied from her undergraduate studies to her doctorate: “I have spectacular books that she gave me as first editions by authors

*who sent the books to her with a dedication, and then I am extremely jealous of my books”* (Adélia Prado, 2023).

In the case of her own private library, the teacher reported that she has obtained works from other collections: *“I am still developing as a reader, I still want to have many books”* (Adélia Prado, 2023). Meanwhile, Cora Coralina emphasized the importance of this type of library, due to the visits of publishers to the schools where she had worked: *“we had to give this feedback and it was good because it was a time when, even though it was mandatory, we bought books, we updated our personal library, which I think is important”* (Cora Coralina, 2023). In this way, she builds her private library based on the experience she gained with the first library in her life history, as reported elsewhere.

Clarice Lispector recounted experiences in her uncle's private library, which influenced her own development as a reader: *“You entered the library from there, it was as if it were his office, and then he had custom-made furniture all the way to the top, a treasure”* (Clarice Lispector, 2023). This library was represented by the trainer as a place of status and access to knowledge, in which the events recalled left her emotional:

*My uncle's library was like a reference, which I may still have today, to have in my house, but today, with this digital thing, it may not make as much sense, but it is a reference of something I wanted to have in my house, of beauty. It is even a reference of power, of admiration for my uncle's intellectuality* (Clarice Lispector, 2023, our translation).

This teacher described experiences in another library, more specifically in a public space in his hometown, which also represented a more significant bias towards the memories of a school library. After all, there was even a competition among his siblings to see who could read the most books, and his aunt demanded a recount of the readings done during that period:

*It was long, and the shelves were very high, but there was a section with lots of children's books that were lower down. I remember reading, reading, reading and there were always more books! I always found other things and there was a single, long table [...] the days when we would read in the library we would sit there, or if we were going to do some work, because it was very much in the city center* (Clarice Lispector, 2023, our translation).

Similarly, Cecília Meireles recalled experiences in a private library in the family home, as well as other places with the same characteristics and frequented throughout her life, such as her grandfather's library. According to the participant, after the death of this family member, no one was interested in the books there. The teacher's account echoed the happiness of

inheriting the library, especially in view of the collection of texts in Latin and classical literature. In addition, she recounted the experience with another private library where she lived:

*In the city of Lorena, there was a man named Olavo. He had a private library with very rare, wonderful books, and he rented them out, it was a book rental, [...] you didn't even know what book you wanted, and he would walk around the shelves with us and tell us about the books; depending on the book, the price would be different (Cecília Meireles, 2023, our translation).*

In these discourses about private libraries, we noticed that this place became a constituent element of the research participants' identities as readers. We visualized characteristics of the library as part of a certain social group and that demarcate processes of marginalization, since the possibility of having a private library is almost non-existent for the population with low economic power, which configures a social memory of the power of reading. Despite the structural limitations in the formation of readers' memories, we find, in an excerpt from Clarice's narrative, a unique view of access to book culture in the organization of a private library:

*He didn't have a library like my other uncle, but he made a bookshelf with many books in the hallway of the house, and my mother bought some of these books [...] my mother also bought books, then the booksellers would come to the houses, but it was very expensive, like an encyclopedia, but they found a way, they bought some things. Our bookshelf was bought ready-made, it was simpler, but it had access to books, and I remember her buying a collection. She still has these books to this day, I think (Clarice Lispector, 2023, our translation).*

Once again, the excerpts from this topic revealed how the narrative process of oneself represents characteristics of other memories shared among reading teachers. Not only reading practices emerged, but also the singular and plural perspective of practices constructed in various contexts. In other words, we made explicit intersubjective marks that permeate the training of reading teachers in the relationship between space and time, which goes beyond the dimension of reading only in the school and academic field to interpret reading practices as an everyday activity.

### **The library in the work context**

The participants' socialized narratives also pointed to the use of the library in the context of professional practices. In this context, particularities and meanings emerged regarding the



possibilities and challenges of educating student readers in the library space, in light of contemporary digital changes. The teachers' memorialistic exercise also pointed to the critical, creative, and aesthetic potential of the library as a place in the education of readers. Adélia, when referring to the library context in work activities, highlighted her work in the library of a college of application at the university where she had studied, where she mobilized and recalled the services offered by the sector during the period of the entrance exam at the institution.

In her memoirs, she explained that there was an incentive from library administrators to invest in the institution's collections, with a view to offering a better-quality service to users:

*When the books arrived, the librarian showed them to me and said to me: 'Adélia, it's not for reading now, I can't lend it to you, it's a priority for students who are going to take the entrance exam, but, in the gaps, sit there in the corner so you can read'. It's very beautiful (Adélia Prado, 2023, our translation).*

The aforementioned teacher also recalled her work experiences at the educational institution located in a peripheral region of Belo Horizonte, Minas Gerais, where she carried out significant activities:

*I took the children to the library once a week [...]. This person who was responsible for the library read a literary text to them and it was for the whole class, we were super interested in reading the texts" (Adélia Prado, 2023, our translation).*

In turn, Cecília Meireles explained the work activities carried out in libraries as a teacher, when integrating the Arts and Literature components. She sought to relate an epic event experienced as a storyteller in the library space, where she carried out a project:

*[...] each story will produce a reaction. I remember a striking situation: the teachers took their students to the library to tell them the story, and then I told the story of Hansel and Gretel. I put, inside a velvet bag, a real chicken foot, from a chicken, I got it from the butchers, but then I decorated the chicken's toes, I put a ring on them (Cecília Meireles, 2023, our translation).*

As seen above, the teacher encourages us to think of the library as a place of magic and creativity, especially in the organization of a thematic space for the books covered. In the other reports from the teachers, we did not notice the use of such a sector in their professional practices during basic education, however, the memories included evidence of encouraging reading in pedagogical actions.

The meanings mentioned by the trainers in relation to the library in the training of academics also stand out. For the teachers, the social and cultural place of this sector has lost meaning for students, in the face of digital books and texts available in environments on the Internet. In the reports, it was noticeable that the teachers were concerned about the effective use of the library in the training of students in higher education, when they highlighted reflections on the library at the university, mainly with regard to the function of promoting recreational spaces to awaken the interest of students with regard to an important place in their educational trajectories.

In Adélia's narrative, it was pointed out that student participation in academic library activities has become almost non-existent. According to her, many of them do not demonstrate a vision of the relevance of this sector in their education, given that most of them do not have registration in the libraries to enjoy the spaces and their educational possibilities: *“for some, it is as if it were a space, a superfluous place. We have such a beautiful, well-established library on campus and some do not make this foray.”* (Adélia Prado, 2023). This fact was also reported by the other trainers in the research.

Cora Coralina states that academics only go to the library during periods when they need to write their research project for their Final Course Work (TCC), in addition to criticizing other professors for not being regular users of the institution's library:

*Our colleague from the library says that few teachers have a routine of visiting the library, because I went there with the students, we used that space [...] and the students said: “look, how cool”. There are students who live at the door of the institution and do not go to the library to study* (Cora Coralina, 2023, our translation).

Participant Clarice Lispector also expressed concerns about the use of the library at the institution: *“we have a pleasant, air-conditioned, quiet library, it was supposed to be a place full of people to study, because we can't complain about the physical structure”* (Clarice Lispector, 2023). In this case, she argued that, at the time of the research, there was no incentive from UFT for students to use the university library, which had become an obsolete place, unlike when she was a student.

When she mentions the university library in her memoirs, Cecília Meireles describes some elements that can help overcome the challenges related to students' lack of interest in higher education, particularly in controlling excessive cell phone use in the institution. She explains that this place needs to be attractive and spark the imagination of the reader/user: *“let's*

*lie down in the library, on the beanbag chair, and just read. Cell phones are outside, no one is going to bring their cell phones in here, no; it's just the book, and I think that this beauty comes about through experience.*" In another part of the story, the professor stated, *verbatim*:

*You are in the library, reading Fernando Pessoa with a little sea music in the background. I think there has to be a fantasy, a beauty, a poetry in the experience; otherwise, it stays only here in the mind, our body forgets that it exists, I think it is too utopian [...]. We can even take a diffuser to the library, put a little orange scent there to talk about Eça de Queirós, "As cidades e as serras", with the aroma of orange (Cecília Meireles, 2023, our translation).*

In this excerpt, we can see that the interviewee agrees with the same view as the other teachers in the research about the library as a place of memories and education. They did not say that they neglect the presence of digital library collections in the education of academics, but they emphasized the essential nature of dialogue with reading practices in the physical library, as a place of thoughts, dreams and journeys through reading activities. Therefore, despite the technological advances related to digital books and archives, it is pertinent to problematize the place of the physical or digital library in contemporary society, especially in the education of readers. It is worth noting that each subject perceives and attributes meanings to educational situations based on the realities experienced.

### **Some considerations**

The narratives of the trainers presented singular and plural elements of their memories about the library, whose experiences woven into the research reaffirmed the meaning attributed by the teachers to this sector in their life stories. Individual and collective memories were also constructed that, when woven into this work, allowed us to think about the place of libraries in the educational paths. In these fragments, we found identity processes of the teachers as readers, of the places and times experienced in their educational paths as symbolic and affective resources. Each memory shared in the research represented marks of a journey permeated by overcoming, doubts and possibilities, mainly regarding the relationship between reading and society.

Furthermore, the study highlighted the place that libraries have taken on in professional practices, especially in the context of university teaching, with teachers being concerned about the future of physical libraries in the eyes of students. We have shown that this sector cannot be considered a sacred and restricted place, but rather that its access should be expanded and

reading practices democratized in order to create a fair and egalitarian society. Thus, we confirm the importance of listening to library users, teachers and staff, with the aim of thinking about the new directions for these places in contemporary society, from intimate spaces to public places.

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