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The Tutorial Education Program (PET) and the relationship of students with knowledge toward academic writing[1]

O Programa de Educação Tutorial (PET) e a relação de estudantes com o saber referente à escrita acadêmica

El Programa de Educación Tutorial (PET) y la relación de estudiantes con el saber concerniente a la escritura académica

Messiah Dieb[*]

ABSTRACT

This paper discusses dominant trends in the relationship of Tutorial Education Programs (PET) students with knowing how to write at a Brazilian federal university, to understand what mobilizes and gives meaning to this relationship toward academic literacy practices. The notions of relationship to knowledge of Charlot, the relationship to writing of Barré-De Miniac as well as the academic literacy model discussed by Lea and Street served as the theoretical basis for the analysis. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with 26 undergraduate students of different areas and disciplines, who participated in the Tutorial Education Program (PET). Three ideal types of relationship to knowledge involving writing process were identified, which allowed us to understand

the dominant trends in the relationship studied: basis for the future, supply of needs and participation mark.

Keywords: Relationship to Knowledge. Academic Literacy. Relationship to Writing.

RESUMO

O artigo discute tendências dominantes na relação de estudantes dos Programas de Educação Tutorial (PET) de uma universidade federal brasileira com o saber escrever, a fim de conhecer os móbeis e sentidos que configuram tal relação e os guiam na apropriação das práticas de letramento acadêmico. Apoia-se na abordagem da relação com o saber de Bernard Charlot e da relação com a escrita de Barré-de-Miniac, bem como no modelo dos letramentos acadêmicos discutido por Lea e Street. Foram realizadas entrevistas semiestruturadas com 26 estudantes de graduação e bolsistas do referido programa, sendo 12 do grupo de PET de Pedagogia e os outros 14 de vários cursos da mesma universidade. Três tipos ideais de relação com o saber escrever, formulados a partir dos posicionamentos dos estudantes sobre o aprender a escrever, permitiram identificar e analisar as tendências dominantes e, por conseguinte, os móbeis e sentidos que perpassam a referida relação: base para o futuro, suprimento de necessidades e marca de participação.

Palavras-Chave: Relação com o Saber. Letramento Acadêmico. Relação com a Escrita.

RESUMEN

Este trabajo discute las tendencias dominantes en la relación con el saber escribir de los estudiantes de Programas de Educación Tutorial (PET) de una universidad federal brasileña, con la finalidad de comprender los procesos de movilización y los significados que configuran esta relación con las prácticas de alfabetización académica. Las nociones de relación con el saber de Charlot, relación con la escritura de Barré-De Miniac y el modelo de alfabetización académica de Lea y Street sirvieron de base teórica para el análisis. Entrevistas semiestructuradas fueran realizadas con 26 estudiantes de pregrado que participaban del Programa de Educación Tutorial (PET) de diferentes áreas y disciplinas en la universidad referida. Se identificaron tres tipos ideales de relación con el saber escribir, lo que nos permitió comprender las tendencias dominantes en la relación estudiada: base para el futuro, provisión de necesidades y marca de participación.

Palabras-clave: Relación con el Saber. Alfabetización Académica. Relación con la Escritura.

Introduction

The Tutorial Education Program (PET) aims to support numerous academic activities through the integration between teaching, research and extension programs, aiming at the broad academic training of undergraduate students, based on interdisciplinarity, on individual and collective action by means of group work. Its tendency is to provide integration between different levels of training, as students from any semester throughout the undergraduate courses are able to participate. All of these activities are intrinsically related to the written production of academic text genres, considered as a fundamental requirement of good education. Therefore, the PET program shows itself as a broad context for reflection on learning how to write, since students enjoy not only opportunities to practice it collectively, but also the guidance of a more experienced partner: in this case, the tutor of the program, who will guide them in writing and publishing it.

Based on these aspects, I became interested in studying the dominant trends in the PET students' relationship with writing to understand what mobilizes and gives meaning to this relationship, guiding them in the appropriation of the academic literacy practices experienced in such an environment. At the beginning of this research, my intention was to adjust the focus of the analysis only to the relationship of PET students of Pedagogy, maintained by the Faculty of Education of a Brazilian federal university. However, during the course of the research, the "petianos", as the students who make up the PET program are called, offered me the opportunity to get in touch with the PET students related to other courses of the same university, which I will discuss later in this text.

The approach to the relationship to knowledge and the relationship to writing

The approach to the relationship to knowledge (CHARLOT, 2000), developed from studies on the relationship of students from the Parisian periphery with knowledge and the school, opposes the idea of school failure, discussed in the 1970s and 1980s, as being the result of the reproduction of social classes, that is, of the students' sociocultural heritage. In contrast to

this idea, Charlot (2000) and the ESCOL (Education, Socialization and Local Collectivities) research team exposed that, even though the correlation between "social origin" and "school situation" is undeniable, it is necessary to consider that there are also failures with the learning of subjects from the more favored classes and considerable advances in the less affluent ones. Thus, the approach of the relationship to knowledge is an interesting perspective that focuses on the subject and its action in the world, being considered by its own author as the Sociology of the Subject.

In this sense, the researcher who adopts it seeks to understand the way "how the subject apprehends the world and, with that, how they build and transform themselves: an inseparably human, social and singular subject" (CHARLOT, 2005, p. 41). Based on these aspects, my interest turned to understanding not only the broader relationship to knowledge of the PET students, but also, and more specifically, their relationship with writing (BARRÉ-DE MINIAC, 2006), which is configured, in this work, as the appropriation of a fundamental activity in the context of higher education, which is the academic writing. I justify this interest by the fact that, in a society like ours, which has predominantly been organized around written language practices (BAUTIER, 1995) and, consequently, a written culture (LAHIRE, 1993), it is not enough that individuals build only superficial knowledge about this activity, but above all that they learn to perform it proficiently, that is, that they know how to write properly, whatever the context in which they find themselves.

For this reason, "knowing how to write" implies being literate, that is, being someone who has not only appropriated the syntactic and orthographic rules of their language, but especially someone who has understood the adequacy of the written language to the most varied contexts of its use. When presenting his arguments on the theory of the relationship to knowledge, Charlot (2000) states that for a subject to engage and develop an intellectual activity in the learning/appropriation of a certain knowledge, such as the one I am discussing now, it is necessary that they mobilize, or rather, it is necessary to find motives (good reasons) which impel them to "make use of themselves as a resource" for learning. However, for the subject to mobilize, they must find some meaning in developing such an activity, that is, they must attribute a value, an importance to it in their life. Therefore, as a university professor, I believe it is necessary to

reflect a little more on what we are offering our students, so that they mobilize themselves to engage in the academic writing activity, giving them a meaning that is not just that of fulfilling the university tasks.

After all, the mobilization for any activity resides and is enhanced in the gradual appropriation of certain domains of knowledge, which is justified because, as Bruner (1966, p. 118) also defends, we are always interested "in the subjects we dominate, [given that it is] difficult, in general, [to have] interest in an activity, unless we achieve a certain level of competence". In this perspective, the meaning we attribute to activities in which we show interest also involves the way we perceive ourselves when carrying them out, since "acquiring knowledge allows [the individuals] to ensure of [a] certain domain of the world in which [they] live, communicating with other beings and sharing the world with them, living certain experiences and thus becoming bigger, more self-assured, and more independent" (CHARLOT, 2000, p. 60). Therefore, this is a relevant aspect that deserves a very detailed discussion because, whatever is the genre of academic writing in which the texts are being produced, "knowing how to write for *peers is the main means of* [the researcher] *obtaining recognition in the area*" (MATTE; ARAÚJO, 2012, p. 107).

In other words, this implies that students need the appropriation of effective academic literacy practices (LEA; STREET, 2006). Even though the term academic literacy is perfectly plausible in the context of basic education schools, I emphasize the use of languages and genres of academic texts that are typified in the university context. In this direction, and in order to better position the understanding of this type of literacy, I take as a basis the perspective of Lea and Street (2006) on the literate practices developed in the university context, which, according to these authors, do not only translate the set of reading and writing skills that students need to deal with, but mainly the meanings, the identities under construction and the power and authority relations that constitute these social practices of language use. Therefore, my analysis proposition is that students develop a satisfactory relationship with academic writing practices when they are able to recognize themselves in such practices, to mobilize and attribute meaning to activities in which textual production indicates an efficient and effective interaction with their peers.

Research methodology

In order to understand the PET students' relationship to knowledge, and more particularly with academic writing, I worked with 26 subjects (12 from the Pedagogy PET group and 14 from various courses at a federal university). The courses, in addition to Pedagogy, were: Nursing (2), Pharmacy (1), Chemistry (2), Biological Sciences (4), Statistics (1), Chemical Engineering (1), Civil Engineering (1) and Electrical Engineering (2). As can be seen, this is a group of subjects with a very heterogeneous background, which makes it possible for the manifestation of differences, approximations and singularities among the students of these courses, both in relation to the tutoring work in the PET program and to the uses and learning to write that are fostered by these programs. The intention, consequently, was to analyze the feelings of these students in relation to the experience of receiving a PET scholarship, the changes and concerns in their relationship to writing, especially that concerning the genres of academic texts, as well as the possible relationships between the experiences with writing, which were constructed in the course of their school and university life histories.

Focused on this idea, I decided on a semi-structured interview, also known as a semi-directive or semi-open interview (TRIVIÑOS, 1987, p. 152). After deciding on the script of questions for the interview, I started to build an agenda with the subjects to carry them out. The agenda was built with alternate days and times, according to each one's time availability. Each interview was, in average, 50 minutes long, but some of them exceeded this time in view of *ad hoc questions* that were added due to requests for clarification and/or because of digressions that the subjects themselves made regarding their activities in the program. In the first two interviews, based on the subjects' answers, I became aware of a movement maintained by PET students called InterPET.

With the collaboration of the professors, this movement had the purpose of reflecting and deliberating on referrals and decisions on the collective actions of the PET groups, including other institutions of higher education in addition to the university where the research was being carried out. Considering that it could make the research more interesting and, perhaps, open up possible opportunities for comparison between the relationship to writing of students

from various courses, I was also interested in participating in the meetings of the InterPET movement. Led by the representatives of the Pedagogy PET program at InterPET, I started to attend the meetings in order to request their authorization and be able to expand the scope of the research.

In order to speed up the process, the idea of using digital technology resources came up, which was suggested by the general coordinator of InterPET, who provided me with the email address of a virtual group created by him containing the emails of all participants. When you send a message to that address, it lands in every student's email inbox. Thus, despite being a little apprehensive about the volume of information I could receive, I decided to accept the suggestion and make use of Google Docs, a digital tool that is currently well known for conducting research. With this possibility, and in order not to create any inconvenience to the students, I sent the script of questions already prepared by the application.

In total, 14 students from various courses responded. For the treatment and analysis of the data, I initially transcribed the recorded interviews, typing them into Word files, in the sequence in which they were carried out and coding them with the number of that sequence and the name of the course to which it referred. Before the data analysis itself, this transcription was read, more than once, with audio accompaniment, so that I could correct possible errors in the transcription. Then, together with the records of statements, facts and/or informal conversations, made during the group meetings and with the answers sent to me via Google Docs, which were already written and coded in the same way, I started the analysis process.

Data analysis was committed to the description of dominant trends in the students' relationship to the writing activity, through which I sought to illustrate the meanings inherent to this relationship, especially with regard to its learning and its use. Alongside individualized and fundamental dimensions of the students' relationship to writing, which are involved in the construction of three *ideal types* of this relationship (CHARLOT, 2000), I sought to demonstrate everyday situations of their performances as PET scholarship holders from the reports provided in the interviews. Each dominant tendency, represented by one of the *ideal types*, particularly involves the place that is attributed to students' knowledge (their ways of interpreting writing) and was established in order to

understand the relationship to knowledge and writing of the subjects in general, not of each subject in particular. Finally, the real names of the studied subjects were omitted in the presentation and discussion of the data, below, as a way of protecting their identities.

Dominant trends in students' relationship to how to write

I will now present the three dominant trends that were identified in the data and with which it is possible to characterize the relationship to knowledge on how to write among the students investigated within the PET program. For this, I present such trends through the concept of *ideal type*, which was proposed by Max Weber and has already been widely used in research dealing with the relationship to knowledge, notably those that are in tune with the perspective of the studies carried out by Charlot (2000) and their collaborators in the ESCOL team. According to Charlot (2001, p. 24), "the ideal type is not a category: it is constructed from a set of elements placed in relation, while the category is defined from criteria of pertinence or non-relationship to this category". Thus, in our case, each *ideal type* will correspond to an activity of the students related to the practice of writing, for which they have established a reason, a goal and a purpose that are quite specific and highly singular.

All *ideal types* of relationships to knowing how to write have an internal coherence, that is, a dominant trend that differentiates them from each other, making it impossible to directly describe the investigated reality, since they are abstract constructions made by the researcher, which allow them, in a very productive way, to interpret this reality (CARDOSO, 2009). Therefore, one of the possible and recommended procedures is to relate each of the subjects participating in the research to each of the three *ideal types*, as shown in the table below.

TABLE 1 – ASSOCIATION OF SUBJECTS TO *IDEAL TYPES* (OR DOMINANT TRENDS IN RELATION TO KNOWING HOW TO WRITE IN THE PET CONTEXT)

PET students	*ideal type* nr. 1 Basis for the future	*ideal type* nr. 2 Supply of needs	*ideal type* nr. 3 Participation mark
Claudia - Pedagogy	X	X	
Rachel - Pedagogy	X		X
Vanessa - Pedagogy	X		X
Erika – Pedagogy		X	
Gabriele - Pedagogy		X	
Marcos - Pedagogy		X	X
Regina - Pedagogy	X		X
Teresa – Pedagogy	X	X	
Virginia - Pedagogy	X		
Larissa - Pedagogy	X	X	
Livia – Pedagogy	X		X
Clarice - Pedagogy	X		X
Yojana - Nursing	X	X	
Saduk – Civil Engineering	X		
Felix – Chemistry	X	X	
Freud – Biological Sciences	X	X	
Zara – Statistics	X	X	
Zuila – Biological Sciences	X	X	
Iris – Electrical Engineering	X	X	
Messi – Chemistry		X	
Lua – Nursing	X	X	
Kilderi – Biological Sciences	X	X	
Zico – Chemical Engineering	X	X	
Hoyt – Electrical Engineering		X	
Gaia – Biological Sciences		X	
Tina – Pharmacy	X	X	

SOURCE: Adapted from Cardoso (2009, p. 610).

From the table presented, it is possible to visualize the students' identification with the constructed *ideal types*. Each student can be considered as the closest or farthest representative of a certain *ideal type* without, however, failing to share more than one dominant trend in the relationship to writing (BARRÉ-DE MINIAC, 2006). This occurs because the *ideal type* is not empirically captured in reality, given that it is always an abstract construction of the researcher. In this sense, by exposing the examples of dominant trends identified in the subjects' statements, it is possible to verify the students' repetition in the other *ideal types*.

Based on a quick visualization, what immediately draws attention is that students in the Pedagogy course are more evenly distributed among the three dominant trends of the relationship to writing, identified in the data. Meanwhile, the students in the other areas, predominantly from the sciences known as natural and exact, identify themselves almost exclusively with just two of these *ideal types*. This may mean the Pedagogy students have a relationship to writing marked by a multiplicity of meanings and altered objectives, as opposed to the other students whose relationship to writing tends to be more homogeneous, perhaps due to their more technical than pedagogical training. Despite this interpretation, I must assure that the analysis is not limited to the processes that I will now present, but it can begin with them and engender other interpretations, regardless of the reference of each analyst.

It is worth noting that, although all students have interesting statements about the aspects analyzed in the three *ideal types*, the statements shown below are representative in relation to the other students. Not presenting all statements does not cause harm to this text, since many of them would only serve to reinforce the demonstration of the dominant trends analyzed. Finally, the space limits in this text were also decisive for the selection of the statements that are analyzed here, without prejudice to their purposes, as already mentioned.

Basis for the future

In this first *ideal type*, the students identified with it are those who entered the PET program with the expectation of walking a path "with no return" to the future, having the learning of academic writing as a guide. The future, in this case, is a symbolic element used to designate desired situations, quite different and ranging from meeting, in the short term, the demands of the PET program

and the various disciplines of the undergraduate course, including the course conclusion work (TCC), to those of medium and long-term, such as entering a postgraduate program, continuing with their studies, and the resulting job opportunities. Therefore, in this context, learning to write means preparing and providing oneself with conditions that will allow one to be in the academic world in the future, enjoying the same benefits enjoyed by those who preceded them academically and professionally.

> The PET program demands that I write academic writing, right? It demands a lot from me for academic writing, this research issue, because, before I got here, I didn't publish, … it was just the works of the discipline and that's it! But, the PET program, it compels you to set up extension projects, that you write articles for publications in events, because it is necessary and it is also required. Here, we already had the possibility, right? I wasn't there yet, but the boys have already written a book with the tutor. So, … I already work on this issue of Portuguese, writing, right? Cohesion … things like that, I am already more careful because it is an obligation of the scholarship. (Regina - Pedagogy).

> I learn to write to meet the requirements of the course and of the PET program and because learning academic writing is important for someone who wants to enter the job market. (Iris – Electrical Engineering).

From these statements, it is possible to infer that in the *ideal type* under analysis, writing, as an object of knowledge in itself, is not only in the focus of the subjects' desire, since it is seen as an instrument of social ascension, both in the academic area and in the future professional situations. The dominant tendency is that this relationship to writing is more marked by utilitarian aspects than by the desire for proficiency in this activity, although the desire is also present to some extent.

> Academic writing is important both in graduation, for the production of academic work, and in daily and future professional life. (Lua - Nursing).

> The reason I want to learn academic writing is because I really enjoy reading and writing, so it's not something I'm forced to do. I've always really enjoyed writing. But the PET program motivates me more because I always want to produce new works and want to be at the level of other students here at PET, who are at more advanced levels than I am, mainly due to their textual production time. So, I always try to keep up… that's one more reason: competition itself. (Claudia - Pedagogy).

Therefore, the greater importance of learning to write lies in achieving certain personal goals and in fulfilling the tasks of the scholarship with dedication, adjustment to the obligations and commitments signaled in the future by the program, depending on the accountability that is due to its supporting bodies.

A relevant aspect to be highlighted is present in both Regina's and Claudia's statements: the requirement and the possibility of publication. According to these students, the PET program requires them to produce papers to be presented and published in scientific events as part of their duties as a scholarship holder. In this sense, those who have not yet gone through this experience see themselves somewhat distant from the colleagues who are chronologically ahead. Thus, driven by the desire to belong to the group, they find themselves impelled to learn to write, following the molds of formal writing in the Portuguese language, which, according to them, demands all the diligence and attention of those who, even having already been selected, are still "competing" to guarantee their place in that space of relationships.

Furthermore, speaking more specifically of the Pedagogy PET program, the fact that the students have already published a book, under the encouragement and chance given by the tutor, makes Regina and Claudia wish, in a short period of time, to participate in this same experience. After all, their statements allow us to infer that learning and practicing academic writing just to meet the course subjects does not legitimize their identity as a PET scholarship holder. It takes more than that, given the fact that being in a program like this, in which learning to write becomes a means for academic and professional progress, represents an open door to the future. Thus, the program, the tutor, the colleagues and the other professors of the course denote, for these students, sources of mobilization for learning to write that will lead them along the path of the desired future.

This desired future is presented in a very explicit and particularized way both in Iris's and Lua's statements, the latter being expanded and dynamic in possibilities. Entering the job market feeling prepared seems to be what the Electrical Engineering student wants, whose basis for this preparation lies in the appropriation of academic writing. In the same direction, but with a broader position, the Nursing student talks about the importance of writing not only for the professional scope, but also for their own everyday life. These ways of understanding writing are in line with the students' experiences prior

to taking part in the PET program, since the relationship to writing, as well as the relationship to knowledge, is inserted in the life history of these subjects.

The aim is to build up a varied knowledge base about writing, which can be seen as the means used to carry out future social practices and which can supposedly only be performed by those who have mastered this knowledge. In this way, meeting the program upcoming tasks and course requirements as well as starting a graduate program and the job market are seen as several faces of a project for the future that awaits them and for which they need to be well-prepared. Therefore, the role of teachers is to assist in meeting such expectations, regardless of writing as a learning element.

Supply of needs

In this second *ideal type*, a large number of students who were associated with the previous type participate, as well. The basic difference between the two is that, while in the first type, the students expect to learn a lot in the context of the program, in this second *ideal type*, the dominant tendency is the transfer of previously appropriated knowledge about writing to meet the students' obligations as PET scholarship holders. These obligations end up generating other needs in relation to the uses of writing, which are not met in undergraduate courses and continue not to be met by actions planned in the program.

This is largely due to the "hidden" aspects of literacy, which, according to Brian Street (1984), have to do with teaching, because, as it happens in elementary school, the university also requires some tasks from students for which it provides little guidance and/or follow-up, even when it comes to scholarship students, as is the case of the PET program. The result is that the subjects see their performance in the program reduced only to the fulfillment of bureaucratic tasks. Therefore, they do not feel that they are learning much about the uses of writing as scholarship holders, that is, through the guidance they need as part of a tutorial education program.

As a consequence, and as a form of "survival" in the program, they end up using knowledge that was built in other situations, either by themselves or by colleagues who preceded them.

> I was literate outside of school. When I arrived at school, I already knew how to read and write. So much so that I didn't even do, at the time, ... I skipped the alphabetization classes. In the same way, the PET program, it has a peculiarity, at least for me! In this sense, I can say that the PET program did not add anything to my sense of writing, just the demand for me to write more, but, in terms of training, for me to learn at the PET program... I didn't have it! As I said, I already came with the baggage of writing technical reports from elsewhere and then I applied it here. That one, from academic reports elsewhere, I applied here. So, within the program, I don't feel there's any writing training, any axis of things like that. (Tereza - Pedagogy).

As we can see in Tereza's statement, her relationship to writing, especially with the production of texts in the genres demanded by the program, does not seem to change due to the fact that she is a scholarship holder. Like the other students who associate themselves with this *ideal type*, Tereza categorically states that a possible collaboration of the PET program in her training as an author of technical and/or academic texts may be in the fact it demands they write more, but the program is not providing opportunities for better and more meaningful writing, according to her own demanding standards. Therefore, to meet this demand, there seems to be no corresponding training action that has added knowledge about the uses of writing beyond those that she has already acquired.

This feeling of few additions to knowledge about writing in the PET program seems to make a bridge, in a way, with early literate experiences built by subjects associated with this *ideal type*, mainly in comparison to their school peers in childhood.

> I started dating very early and my mother was very strict, you know? […] Then, she would say: "You will only go out to date at night if you leave an essay done!". So, you know, that conditioned me. So, for me to date, I had to leave a text, writing, copy, anything... I think, in a way, this influenced me, and as I had a diary, then, I wrote the story of my boyfriends, I still have it today. I think this was a teenager thing, and all, but it helped me a lot to develop the introduction, conclusion, development and such. So, I started writing very early, like at twelve years old I already used to write, but it developed much more at school, right? So, I didn't have much trouble writing at school. (Erika - Pedagogy).

> I don't remember very well, but I know that I learned it early on because my mother, being a teacher, always taught me at home, which helped me to be ahead of my classmates. (Iris – Electrical Engineering).

In these statements, the students talk about how they learned to write. They mention the fact that they learned about writing without this learning necessarily being linked to the traditional exercise of student tasks. Therefore, they did not become users of writing following the usual stages that the school had to offer, even occurring, as in the case of Tereza, the "waiver" of a quite usual stage of school life that is the grade or year of literacy.

When considering, with Charlot (2000), that learning involves a simultaneous process of hominization, socialization and singularization of the subject, I can infer that the precocity of the learning reported above brought to these students, in their childhood, many conflicts in the school environment. I say this because the traditional experience, in the vast majority of schools, is one that results from the attempt to homogenize knowledge, even with all the advances we have already achieved in the educational field. The representations about what it is to teach and learn at school still put us in front of many discussions that can be produced from the denomination of programs such as PAIC (Alphabetization Program at the Right Age), initially elaborated in the state of Ceará and currently extended to the entire national territory as PNAIC (National Pact for Literacy at the Right Age). Therefore, if learning is a process that socializes us, but also makes us unique, the question to be discussed, and which I do not appropriately develop here, would be: what is the right age to teach a child to read and write?

At school, the knowledge of reading and writing that these students had "surplus", compared to their classmates, may have made this environment a meaningless and unattractive place for them, since much of what there was to be taught had already been learned, at least as far as encoding and decoding the symbols of alphabetic writing was concerned. All they perhaps least wanted was to play the role of the professional student, in which listening attentively to the teacher and correctly performing school assignments would be the thermometer for the "success" they were already familiar with. Thus, I conclude that, upon arriving at school with a reasonable command of reading and writing, the above students, albeit for different reasons, must have felt as displaced in that environment as they might have felt in relation to the PET context.

Participation mark

Students associated with this third *ideal type* position themselves in relation to writing as an intellectual content whose appropriation gives them immense enjoyment and satisfaction for the achievements that can be accomplished with it. One of these achievements is to eternalize their passage through the world and mark their participation in the history they are building in this world, satisfying the eternal need of human beings to communicate with each other and to leave a record of their existence. As we know, man has, since the prehistory times, sought to do this in several ways, from the emission of sounds through sending smoke signals to reaching durable marks on cave walls. In this sense, knowing how to write, for these subjects, implies an activity driven by the desire to explore their personal possibilities, seeking to better understand the environment from which and for which they are communicating, occupying a subjective position within themselves (CHARLOT, 2000).

What the students say about writing, that is, their opinions and attitudes about this activity (BARRÉ-DE MINIAC, 2006), is not directly related to the procedures and actions carried out in the process of appropriating knowing how to write, but it translates, above all, what is important to them in terms of "learning to write". Therefore, the meaning of learning lies in the use of writing as an "object of knowledge", with the student being a subject aware of their achievements and advances within this process.

> I have been researching the issue of African-based religions. So, you know, ... one of the reasons that led me to research this is because these religions are of oral tradition and there is little record, right? So, I seek to learn to write … for my academic future and also in this bias of what I have been producing today, in the sense of my faith. Due to the need to have this academic record of this tradition, which is oral and which is the foundation of the country. Also, I have a daughter whose mother studies at home, she has a mother who writes at home. So, I learn so that my writings can serve as a reference for her one day. … Where I want to go, I need to write, I can't write anyway, I have to write as best I can. So, writing for me will always be a challenge. I'm not going to say that I already know how to write, but I'm learning, right? I also realize that, with each passing day, my texts get better, I'm not talking about length, I'm talking about content. I'm talking about the appropriation of what I've been writing. And that's it! (Livia - Pedagogy).

> What we write is forever! It's... what? Plant a tree, write a book and have a child, right? I've already done all three. Come on! ... having to make another child, plant another tree and write another book. (Laughter). But this story of writing and writing a book was really cool! It's so impactful, because, like, I'm in a "state of grace" with this issue of the book that the PET program published with our work, because... the publication meant a series of other invitations for me. Like it or not, come on, I'm going to Bahia and I'm going to take about ten of those books to sell there. And say: "Hey, the article is here, guys"! There is a symbolic power in this!! (Marcos - Pedagogy).

From these statements, it is possible to strengthen the idea that taking part in the PET program meant a "watershed" in the academic literacy of these scholarship holders, because, perhaps before participating in the program, they never imagined that one day they would assert themselves as producers of academic texts, that is, as subjects who know how to write for this human sphere of communication and who are publicly recognized for it. This observation is justified because it is undeniable that there are many students who spend their entire graduation without experiencing any other academic experiences other than simply attending classes, taking tests and/or presenting seminars. From this perspective, it is not surprising that, when they are included in opportunities such as those offered by the PET program, they perceive qualitative advances in their literacy, such as those to which Lívia and Marcos clearly mention.

Still on this same point of discussion, and taking Lívia and Marcos's statements as a reference, another relevant aspect to be highlighted in the reports above has to do with the concrete experience of these scholarship holders being able to experience academic research, for which the mastery of writing is essential (MATTE; ARAÚJO, 2012). In the process of building scientific knowledge, materialized by research, there are many literacies inherent to this activity and which are configured as knowledge that Lívia and Marcos certainly had to learn, such as studying to appropriate the theoretical concepts related to their study topics, establishing questions and objectives for their research, learning to collect and analyze data, and finally writing and presenting articles as an academic expression of the systematization of their discoveries. Generally, most of these aspects help to compose a significant part of the profile or identity of those who find themselves in the academic universe. Therefore, the students associated with the *ideal type* under analysis, unanimously from the Pedagogy

course, reveal a representation of writing as a singular mark of their passage through the PET program and, consequently through the university, notably guided by the desire to participate in this identity construction as a researcher academic writer.

Final considerations

The *ideal types* of relationship to knowledge and writing, formulated from the students' positions on learning to write, allowed me to identify and analyze the dominant trends and, consequently, the motives and meanings that permeate the referred relationship. Thus, in the first of these *ideal types* (base for the future), the goal to be achieved by the students with learning to write is the creation of a range of varied knowledge about the act of writing at university, which can be considered as the means used for the realization of future social practices, which supposedly can only be carried out by those who have mastered this knowledge. In the second *ideal type* (supply of needs), the students associated with it aim to successfully perform the PET program tasks under their own responsibility, making use of the transfer of knowledge already appropriated about writing to meet their obligations and needs as scholarship holders of the program. Finally, in the last of the constructed *ideal types (*participation mark), the objective that guides learning about the uses of writing symbolizes the way students decide to write, what they want to write about and the way they make themselves available to write, since this learning is based on deeply personal experiences of the subjects and, therefore, the product that results from it always bears the mark of the desires that propelled it.

If literacy, as Bazerman (2007, p. 21) states, comprises "a matrix of complex cultural and social formations of modern society with which we respond to institutions, beliefs, groups of people located far from our daily lives and which encompass many more people than one can imagine", then it is our role, whether as a tutor in programs such as PET or, in my case, as a professor of disciplines that work directly with the teaching of writing, to help students prepare to give that response. However, it will become almost impossible to provide this help without knowing the relationship to the students' knowledge and writing, because it is through this relationship that we can seek to strengthen what mobilizes and gives meaning to the engagement of these subjects in the

process of writing and literacy appropriation demanded by this process. After all, when receiving important tasks from us, especially involving writing, students need to receive, along with this task, the guidance they need to succeed in the investments made during their accomplishment.

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