

Literary literature in pedagogy courses: where is EJA?

Literatura literária em cursos de pedagogia: cadê a EJA?

Literatura literaria en los cursos de pedagogía: ¿dónde está la EJA?

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ABSTRACT

This paper presents data from a documental and bibliographic study that analyzes the offering of specific courses related to literary literature in the field of youth and adult education (EJA) in the curricula of three public universities located in the states of Mato Grosso do Sul, Paraná and São Paulo. The courses do not present, in their Political-Pedagogical Projects, specific subjects whose titles refer directly or nominally to EJA or its target audience. The vast majority do not address the issue of young people and adults in the disciplines related to literary literature. This implies a gap in terms of literary literature in the training of pedagogues. Pedagogy, as far as teaching in school education is concerned, legally qualifies students to act also in EJA, which has curricular specificities, including in terms of contents and methodologies, due to the age groups covered by this modality.

Keywords: Literary Literature. Reader Training. Teacher Training. Youth and Adult Education.

RESUMO

Apresentam-se, neste texto, dados resultantes de estudo documental e bibliográfico que analisa o oferecimento de disciplinas específicas relacionadas à literatura literária na área de conhecimento da educação de jovens e adultos (EJA), nas matrizes curriculares dos cursos de três universidades públicas localizadas nos estados de Mato Grosso do Sul, Paraná e São Paulo. Os cursos não apresentam nos Projetos Político-Pedagógicos disciplinas específicas cujos títulos remetam direta ou nominalmente à EJA ou ao seu público-alvo. A ampla maioria não aborda nas disciplinas relacionadas à literatura literária a questão dos jovens e adultos. Isso implica uma lacuna em termos de literatura literária na formação dos pedagogos. A pedagogia, no que tange à docência na educação escolar, habilita legalmente para a atuação também na EJA, que tem especificidades curriculares mesmo em termos de conteúdos e metodologias, dadas as faixas etárias abrangidas por essa modalidade.

Palavras-chave: Literatura Literária. Formação de Leitores. Formação de Professores. Educação de Jovens e Adultos.

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RESUMEN

Este trabajo presenta datos de un estudio documental y bibliográfico que analiza la oferta de disciplinas específicas relacionadas con la literatura literaria en el área de Educación de Jóvenes y Adultos (EJA) en los currículos de los cursos de tres universidades públicas ubicadas en los estados de Mato Grosso do Sul, Paraná y São Paulo. Los cursos no presentan en sus Proyectos Político-Pedagógicos temas específicos cuyos títulos se refieran directa o nominalmente a la EJA o a su público objetivo. La gran mayoría no aborda en las disciplinas relacionadas con la literatura el tema de los jóvenes y adultos. Esto implica un vacío en cuanto a la literatura literaria en la formación de pedagogos. La pedagogía, en lo que se refiere a la enseñanza en la educación escolar, habilita legalmente para actuar también en la EJA, que tiene especificidades curriculares, incluso en términos de contenidos y metodologías, debido a los grupos de edad abarcados por esta modalidad.

Palabras clave: Literatura. Formación de Lectores. Formación de Profesores. Educación de Jóvenes y Adultos.

INTRODUCTION

The potential of literary literature — also referred to as literature in this article — for the process of human education has been emphasized by various authors, particularly Antonio Candido, a leading Brazilian figure on this subject. Leal and Silva (2022), based on Candido's understanding, affirm that literature can play a number of roles in human life, including an educational function:

In its educational function, literature educates like life itself. Because it is based on reality, literature acts as an instrument of education, for the formation of man, not according to official pedagogy, as an appendix of moral and civic instruction or, even, as in manuals of virtues and good conduct, but carrying within itself both good and evil and acting in an unpredictable way in the formation of man, it humanizes in a profound sense, because it makes one live. (Leal and Silva, 2022, p. 280)

Literature plays an important role in youth and adult education (YAE), as it provides opportunities for students to engage in a critical and reflective reading that can contribute to their cultural and personal education. Literary literature, in particular, can be a valuable tool for YAE, since it addresses issues that are relevant to society, such as human relationships, identity, cultural diversity and other social issues. By reading literary works, YAE students can connect with different realities and points of view, broadening their horizons and developing their capacity for understanding and critical reflection.

In addition, literary literature can help develop the linguistic competence of YAE students, helping to improve their writing and oral expression. By reading and analyzing literary texts, students can improve their vocabulary, their understanding of grammatical structures and their ability to interpret different forms of language.

Another important contribution of literature to youth and adult education is the development of critical thinking. By reading and reflecting on different literary works, students are challenged to think about complex issues and form their own points of view about them. This can help form conscious citizens who are capable of analyzing and questioning information they receive, and of taking positions on social issues in the political, economic and cultural spheres.

Literary literature in YAE can help students to become more empathetic, that is, to develop the ability to put themselves in other people's shoes, recognizing differences and cultural diversity. In this way, literature can also contribute to the formation of citizens who are more critical, reflective and committed to building a fairer and more equal society.

From this perspective, literary literature, in addition to being a component of the basic education curriculum, is fundamental to the humanization of students from an early age, extending to youth and adults who, for a personal or social reason, have not been able to not complete their compulsory schooling at the time considered ideal or determined by the current legislation. This makes literature essential to YAE, as an important modality of Brazilian school education.

The Brazilian Guidelines and Bases of Education Law (LDBEN) (Brasil, 1996), when addressing Youth and Adult Education, states that:

Art. 37: Education for youth and adults will be aimed at those who have not had access to or continued studies in primary and secondary education at the proper age and will be an instrument for education and lifelong learning.

§ Paragraph 1: Education systems shall provide free educational opportunities for youth and adults who were unable to study at the regular age, suitable educational opportunities considering the characteristics of the students, their interests, and living and working conditions, by means of courses and exams.

YAE — in the face of the structural problems of Brazilian society, especially illiteracy — has been a historical demand of sectors of Brazilian society, especially organizations of educators and students who operate from a critical perspective and who are dedicated to raising the school cultural capital of the working classes, especially the most precarious fractions who have historically been neglected by educational policies of the Brazilian state.

However, the Brazilian state has historically made efforts to avoid the responsibility of providing school education to this population segment, especially the financial burden of this type of education. Some segments of the population were or are more affected by the impacts of this *modus operandi* of the Brazilian state, especially people from rural areas, who, considering the relevant specificities, also include Indigenous peoples and *quilombola* residents, who have singularities in terms of contextualized education (Moraes, 2021; Souza-Chaloba and Moraes, 2022).

According to Bezerra and Santana (2011, p. 94),

Youth and adult education (YAE) is a very unique type of education, given the aspirations and experiences of the students who go through it, precisely young people and adults, as the name itself mentions. Therefore, when we propose to discuss this issue, we are also facing very serious and obvious philosophical and sociological questions, which permeate the entire pedagogical sphere from end to end. The very existence of YAE as a substitute for primary and secondary education for students who did not have access to these forms of education during their childhood and adolescence reveals the fact that this portion of the population was somehow excluded from basic education due to socio-economic conditions that go beyond individual will.

More than three decades since the enactment of the Federal Constitution (Brasil, 1988) and more than two decades since the passage of the LDBEN, several problems continue to permeate Brazilian education in terms of the schooling of the target public of YAE.

Federal legislation formally guarantees the right to this modality, but in practical terms there are numerous adverse conditions, due, among other factors, to the attitudes or specificities of various

federal entities and their educational systems, as well as the *choices* made by institutions for teacher education. These adverse conditions have repercussions on the curricula of teacher certification courses, including pedagogy, the subject of this text.

With regard to the YAE, the particularities of the different curricular matrices of courses at the various higher education institutions in Brazil stand out. There are courses that, for various reasons, do not offer specific classes related to YAE. On the other hand, there are pedagogy institutions and courses that understand the specificities and relevance of YAE and include specific and compulsory classes related to this modality in their curricula. Some courses offer classes related to YAE, but they are optional. There are also courses that do not offer specific classes, but do address YAE in a specific or transversal way in other classes. The courses that are the subject of this study exemplify aspects of these variations.

The curricula of these courses somehow reflect the disputes surrounding school education — at all its levels, stages and modalities — which, as Cury (1997) points out, is a kind of “sounding board” of society. The curricula of teacher education courses are also the objects of political, economic and cultural disputes involving, in conjunction or in isolation, the local, regional, national and transnational dimensions, including as a result of directives from international entities such as the World Bank and the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD). These disputes tend to be exacerbated by various circumstantial factors marked by the intensification of neoliberal policies and the internationalization of curricula, which are becoming increasingly guided by a market logic and an emphasis on the competences and skills currently required of workers by the leading sectors of the production system (Apple, 1989; Loureiro, 2010; Freitas, 2012; Dal Ri, 2020; Frigotto, 2021). This affects the space allocated to certain curricular components, including literary literature and YAE.

In this context, the question arises: what is the space for YAE and its target public in courses related to literary literature in the curricula of the pedagogy courses of the public universities surveyed?

This is a documentary and bibliographic study, with an exploratory and eminently qualitative approach. Its main documentary sources are the Political-Pedagogical Projects (PP or Project/s) of the courses mentioned, as well as federal legislation and the academic-scientific bibliography on the issue.

This is an important topic, as it has a direct bearing on the realization of the right to contextualized education for the target public of YAE. The institutions selected are three state, multi-campus, public universities, from three Brazilian states, each from a different region: Mato Grosso do Sul (Midwest), Paraná (South), and São Paulo (Southeast).

The projects were retrieved from the Internet on July 3, 2022. However, with regard to the pedagogy course project at University C, a new search was carried out on August 27, 2022, because on the first date only one document was retrieved, “Ordinance No. 172/21-SETI”, which was insufficient for the purposes of this study. This situation implies that there may have been changes in progress or made after the projects for these courses were recovered. An indication of the relevance of this caveat is the statement on the cover of the project found from University C: “Request for renewal of course recognition [...]”.

Having presented the introductory aspects, the results and discussions of the data resulting from this study are presented below.

YOUTH AND ADULT EDUCATION IN COURSES RELATED TO LITERARY LITERATURE

This topic presents some aspects of the results of this study, based on the stipulated objective. Only courses whose titles contain terms that directly or nominally refer to YAE or its target audience were considered.¹

1 There was one exception to this criterion, explained in section 1.1.

THE CASE OF UNIVERSITY A²

University A offers pedagogy courses at four university campuses, and in a distance education course. These campuses are in the state of Mato Grosso do Sul. No specific classes relating to literary literature for YAE were identified in this institution's courses. Except for a mention — presented below — in the course project at one of the university campuses, the classes related to literary literature at this university do not address the public or the modality in question. Chart 1 shows data on the courses at this university.

Chart 1 – Classes related to literary literature aimed at young people and/or adults in pedagogy courses at University A.

University Unit	Classes related to YAE (not specific to literature)	Classes related to literary literature	Specific classes related to literary literature for youth or adults	Mention of youth or adults in classes related to literary literature
A1	Yes	Not available	Not available	Yes*
A2	Yes	Yes	Not available	Not available
EaD	Yes	Yes	Not available	Not available
A3	Yes	Yes	Not available	Not available
A4	Yes	Yes	Not available	Not available

Source: prepared by the authors (2023), based on data from documents.

YAE: youth and adult education; *even though this class did not fit the stipulated methodological criteria, it was considered relevant to mention it, due to the configuration of this course, especially with regard to the “Cultural Itineraries” subjects (I, II, III and IV), which transversally cover themes related to various subjects; EaD: distance education.

In the case of the course at Unit A1, there is a class entitled “Cultural Itineraries IV”, which is part of the Deepening and Diversification Core and has a load of 68 hours. Its syllabus reads as follows:

Syllabus: Artistic languages and literature in the educational context, in school and non-school spaces. Conceptions of teaching art and literature in early childhood education and in the early years of primary school that contemplate making, appreciating and reflecting, as a cultural and historical product.

Objectives: To reflect on the role of art and literature in the education of children, *youth and adults*. To analyze the conceptions of art in its various languages and of literature in early childhood education and in the early years of primary school. To learn about pedagogical practices that encourage and value making, appreciating and reflecting on different cultural manifestations. (UEMS/Campo Grande, p. 69-70, emphasis added)

From the point of view of this study, it is a relevant difference that this campus considers the specificities of young people and adults in this subject.

THE CASE OF UNIVERSITY B

University B offers pedagogy courses on six campuses, hereafter referred to as Campus B1, Campus B2, Campus B3, Campus B4, Campus B5 and Campus B6. With the exception of Campus

² Categorization adopted to preserve the identity of the institutions, considering that the problem discussed in the research is not localized, but concerns how pedagogy courses are organized. This data can be accessed in the PP of the courses analyzed, listed in the References.

B4, the projects for the other courses at this university do not include the syllabuses for the classes, which makes it impossible to access their theoretical and practical details. The course projects of this institution do not include any specific classes related to literary literature for YAE. In the case of the only class related to literary literature whose syllabus is included in the Project, there is no mention of the target audience of YAE. Chart 2 shows the data relating to this university's courses.

Chart 2 – Classes related to literary literature aimed at youth and adults in the pedagogy courses at University B.

Campus	Classes related to YAE (not specific to literature)	Classes related to literary literature	Specific classes related to literary literature for youth and adults	Mention of youth and adults in classes related to literary literature
B1	Not available	Yes	Not available	There is no menu in the PP
B2	Yes	Yes	Not available	There is no menu in the PP
B3	Yes	Yes	Not available	There is no menu in the PP
B4	Not available	Yes	Not available	Not available
B5	Yes	Yes	Not available	There is no menu in the PP
B6	Not available	Yes	Not available	There is no menu in the PP

Source: prepared by the authors (2023), based on documentary data.
 YAE: youth and adult education; PP: political-pedagogical project.

In the case of Campus B4, issues related to the target audience of YAE are addressed in different classes in the course.

THE CASE OF UNIVERSITY C

At University C, pedagogy courses are offered at five campuses, C1, C2, C3, C4 and C5. No specific classes relating to literary literature for YAE were identified in the course projects at this university. Furthermore, the classes relating to literary literature do not address this target audience. Chart 3 below shows data on the pedagogy courses at this institution.

In the case of Campuses C1, C3 and C5, some topics relating to YAE are dealt with in various classes.

PRESENCE AND ABSENCE OF YOUTH AND ADULT EDUCATION IN THE CURRICULA OF THE COURSES EXAMINED

None of the courses mentioned in the Projects include specific classes related to literary literature whose titles directly or nominally refer to YEA. In addition, the vast majority of the projects retrieved do not mention the target public of YAE in the classes related to literary literature.

With regard to the mention of youth or adults, as pointed out in topic 1.1, the exception is a pedagogy course at Campus A1 of University A, which refers to these segments in the syllabus of a class called "Cultural Itineraries IV". It should be reiterated that, in the case of University B, with the exception of Campus B4, the other projects do not contain the syllabuses for the classes.

Chart 3 – Classes related to literary literature aimed at youth and adults in pedagogy courses at University C.

Campus	Classes related to YAE (not specific to literature)	Classes related to literary literature	Specific classes related to literary literature for youth and adults	Mention of youth and adults in classes related to literary literature
C1	Not available	Yes	Not available	Not available
C2	Yes	Not available	Not available	Not available
C3	Not available	Not available	Not available	Not available
C4	Yes	Yes	Not available	Not available
C5	Not available	Yes	Not available	Not available

Source: prepared by the authors (2023), based on documentary data.
YAE: youth and adults education.

Also due to the size limit of this article, the data gathered are presented below, choosing University B as the main focus of examination. It should be noted, however, that with the exception of a few specific aspects that are duly identified, most of the arguments presented extend to Universities A and C.

Analysis of the data in Chart 2 reveals a discrepancy between the various campuses of University B in terms of the classes offered on the theme of YAE, with one of them, Campus B3, offering an optional class; at two campuses, B2 and B5, YAE classes are compulsory; and finally, at the other campuses, B1, B4 and B6, the projects do not mention any specific classes in this field of education.

Of course, this diversity of conceptions in the projects is primarily related to article 207 of the Federal Constitution, which determines the didactic-scientific autonomy of universities, and to related legislation, especially the LDBEN. However, it is a fact that, despite the relevance of these legal provisions for the sovereignty of the processes of production and dissemination of knowledge, some issues of great social, academic and political scope, as is the central object of this investigation, may be neglected or not completely and strictly observe legal guidelines. For this reason, the process of training youth and adult educators must consider that:

The school for the education of young people and adults, therefore, is both a place where cultures clash (the greatest effect of which is often a kind of ‘domestication’ of the members of groups with little or no schooling, in the sense of conforming them to a dominant pattern of intellectual functioning) and, like any situation of social interaction, a place where singularities meet. (Oliveira, 2001, p. 41)

Thus, it is important to consider the cultural diversity and specificity of YAE in the process of educating YAE teachers, not just in pedagogy courses, but in all teacher certification ones. Academic action to strengthen the trend towards consolidating this field of knowledge as a vast area of theoretical reflection (Arroyo, 2001) cannot neglect the importance of literary literature for the development of theoretical, critical and reflective thinking:

The most progressive path is not to institutionalize the YAE as a type of primary and secondary education, but as a type of education that has advanced in conceptions of education and human formation that can be enriching for the education of children and adolescents, especially those from low-income sectors who attend public schools. (Arroyo, 2001, p. 13)

The author highlights the perspectives on YAE that have emerged within social and popular movements, which have had a strong influence on the limits and possibilities of popular education within the network of the state, which administers the economic surplus. If we look closely at the broad movement involving this area of knowledge, we see that YAE teachers have been incorporating a variety of texts into their practices, but this cannot be said of the different ways of reading. The model is so strongly ingrained in everyday practice that many teachers say that it is important to read, but that it is equally important to learn to interpret and understand a text, as if these activities were not inherent to the act of reading itself. They emphasize the importance of students participating in reading circles, reading newspapers and magazines about life in general, socio-cultural identity, work, art, popular songs, religion, folklore, in short, the culture of the people, but also literary literature. To be committed to a diversity of genres is to be committed to the plurality and diversity of socio-cultural practices surrounding these genres.

In keeping with Arroyo's (2001) understanding, the defense of literary literature is necessary given that YAE involves a legitimizing radicalism, which seems fundamental not only to guarantee the public and subjective right that is inherent to it, but to establish a real and effective model of popular education. From one perspective, this is because literary literature responds to a universal need to expand opportunities for humanization, and because it contributes to the search for a form of mental organization as a liberation from chaos, denialism, obscurantism and intolerance. From another perspective, this is because of literary literature's function as a conscious instrument for interpreting reality, and unmasking social inequalities and inequities.

This understanding of access to literary literature as an instrument that can contribute to citizenship education, particularly if this prerogative is treated as an inalienable right that has yet to be conquered by Brazilian society as a whole, seems to be the explanation for the presence of specific classes related to literary literature in the pedagogy courses at all University B campuses. However, a detailed analysis of the curricular matrices of these courses, in general, reveals that they are fragmented, despite efforts to overcome the problem, which must be acknowledged, and that the approach to the subject in question is diluted in other disciplines of the course, hindering the specificity of the work in YAE.

The problem being examined is old and chronic. To deal with it, either it is considered that pedagogy undergraduates have mastered the contents of basic education, including those related to literary literature or the issue is addressed in specific classes related to the dissemination of literary thought, or as an appendix to classes in methodology and teaching practice related to this area of knowledge.

All of University B's pedagogy courses seem to consider the second option based on a decision by the State Education Council (CEE) defined within the scope of CEE Deliberation No. 111/2012, article 4, item I, which stipulates that teacher certification courses should have "600 hours dedicated to *reviewing and enriching* the curricular content of primary and secondary education" (São Paulo, 2012, emphasis added). This legal provision was amended by EEC Resolution 154/2017 (São Paulo, 2017) which, in addition to recognizing the gap in undergraduates' basic education, seeks to expand actions to overcome the pedagogical problem under discussion by attempting to maximize the scope of Practices as Curricular Components (PCC).

According to these deliberations, education in pedagogy, and in teacher accreditation courses in general, cannot disregard the specificity of YAE, and should establish a dual relationship between theory and practice, to make explicit the necessary didactic mediations of a class with specific content, and provide scientific experience at the interfaces of real life and teaching, in a transdisciplinary approach. This should take the form of teaching projects, in experiences aimed at solving pedagogical problems, and observing cases, experiences or situations through which future

teachers can broaden their understanding of the content to be taught, developing their ability to select, organize, represent and adapt to the cognitive capacities of the students.

For this reason, although not registered in the projects of the pedagogy courses analyzed, all the campuses of University B have been developing a YAE Program since 2001, with the institution's own funding, in which students with scholarships teach classes in the initial schooling of young people and adults, under the technical-pedagogical guidance of teachers from all fields of knowledge.

In addition, there has been an interdisciplinary YAE project linked to the PIBID/CAPES/MEC/UNESP Program for six years. In the case of Campus B3, the optional YAE class is taught by these advisors together, given the specificities of their education, to enrich the teacher education process, linking theory and practice and promoting integration with graduate studies, either by linking up with these professionals or by offering a specific YAE class in the Graduate Program in Education (PPGE).

This effort to broaden the educational spectrum, given the fragmentation of the pedagogy curriculum in particular, can be supported by including university extension in the curriculum, thus broadening dialogue with society and oxygenating teacher education. At University B, this was scheduled to begin in 2023, after institutional complications delayed its formal establishment. The idea of including university extension in the curriculum is not recent; and stems from laws passed after the civil-military dictatorship ended, and implemented under National Education Plans. It is a fundamental element for enriching the curriculum by establishing a dialogical relationship with society, especially with primary schools.

If these invariants of education explain the lack of specific subjects related to literary literature aimed at YAE, or the lack of mention of young people and adults in subjects related to literary literature in University B's course projects, more research is needed about the scope and effectiveness of this way of conceiving the organization of teaching programs, whether in pedagogy or in teacher accreditation courses in general. Policies to keep students in school must also be put in place to guarantee the effective participation of undergraduates in this didactic-pedagogical movement, otherwise education will not be significantly transformed. The reality in teacher certification courses is that a vast contingent of students need to study while also struggling for survival, conducting internships, and taking part in university extension activities in the few spare hours they have during the school term.

Finally, it appears to us that literary education that seeks to broaden the scope of forms of reading cannot be postponed, guiding the trajectory of reading that has been limited to the experience of the students towards reading that is historical and transformative because it incorporates new elements to be discovered through the mediation of teachers. An evolution from approaching a text as a mere transposition of the natural world of everyday reading in the teacher education process to an equally educational approach, but a reading that is more cultural and aesthetic, which recognizes the fictional and critical-reflective character of literary literature. For this reason, it is transformative.

CURRICULUM: A FIELD OF DISPUTES

The presence and absence of these issues raises questions about the occurrence of consonances and mismatches between the prescribed curriculum and the actual curriculum. We offer some questions that seem pertinent — without the intention of answering them — to guide the exploration. Does the fact that literary literature is on a syllabus mean that what is prescribed is actually carried out? Does the fact that it is not included mean that the target public of YAE is not considered in these classes, or that it is, but only voluntarily, with the risk of a spontaneous approach that is incoherent? However, regardless of differences between the prescribed curriculum and the actual curriculum,

the fact that literary literature is not included, in addition to eliminating the formal obligation to address this issue, implies pedagogical and political positions that have various consequences, both individual and collective. To some extent, this corroborates, directly or indirectly, the maintenance of the historical social debt towards certain segments of the population who, throughout history, have been — and, with some nuances, continue to be — marginalized or excluded from the right to school education.

The lack of specific literary literature classes and the failure to address YAE in literature classes creates gaps in the education of teachers, if we consider the different audiences that graduates of pedagogy courses are legally qualified to teach. This is because certified teachers in Brazil are legally qualified to work in YAE, which has specific curricula, in terms of content and methodologies, due to the age of students and other singularities of the target public mentioned. However, the tendency is that, for known reasons, the curricula of pedagogy courses predominantly focus exclusively or as a priority on children who, according to current legislation, are at the ideal age for early childhood education and the initial years of primary education, thus neglecting the target audience of YAE. The results of this study exemplify this. One of the possible consequences of this is the risk that, due to a lack of theoretical and practical support, methodological strategies will be adopted that are childish and therefore incompatible with this audience.

Another pertinent question that should be explored is: what is the space for YAE in the various disciplines of pedagogy courses, especially in those which often tend to have children as their exclusive or priority focus, such as literacy, psychology, teaching methodologies, special education and internships?

As has been pointed out, some courses consider YAE in specific classes. Would it be more pertinent for YAE to be covered in various classes, regardless of whether or not there is a specific class for this modality, considering the limits of a single class to cover such a broad and complex issue?

The issue is complex and requires a more in-depth debate that goes beyond the limits of one article. However, we must consider that YAE undoubtedly represents, among the many demands of inclusive education, the one that covers the largest number of excluded people, and for decades has involved contingents of more than 11 million people who are absolute illiterates and some 40 million functional illiterates, figures that closely coincide with the young people and adults of the “neither-nor” generation,³ i.e. those who neither study nor work.

Thus, more than a technical-pedagogical decision, including a YAE class in a pedagogy course or any other teaching certification course is a political decision, given its specificity, as it involves various educational processes that influence professional qualification, community development, general education, and sustainability, in short, social, scientific and political development. Offering YAE is a step to proposing and developing alternative and innovative educational practices and curricular experiences, based on democratic values, cultural diversity and respect for human rights; thus contributing to a just society, and is attuned to cultural issues that are not restricted to the school environment.

Faced with the unfeasibility of offering specific YAE classes, due to disputes and the limits of the curriculum, would one alternative be, like some of the courses mentioned, to have YAE included within various classes in pedagogy courses? However, would transversality present problems, including a risk of only addressing the issue spontaneously, and therefore not guaranteeing that YAE issues would be addressed?

3 The “neither-nor” category needs to be problematized because, in a conservative sense, it slips into (self-) blaming people in this condition, thus disregarding broader social conditions.

In fact, YAE goes beyond the limits of a single class; it is a field of knowledge that requires flexible and diversified curricula and teaching programs, which are defined considering the needs and interests of excluded social groups, based on their historical and socio-cultural realities. This requires recognizing the knowledge they detain to lead them to the appropriation of systematically organized knowledge. But precisely because of this specificity, teacher education must recognize certain regularities and specific recurrences in scientific disciplines. In other words, a transversal and transdisciplinary approach must not break with the truth, regularity and relativity of each class; to the contrary, such an approach depends on these factors, since it enables articulations aimed at appropriating knowledge appropriate to paradigmatic transformations.

This is why the development of programs and projects to intervene in reality, such as the federal program of grants for student teachers (PIBID) and the pedagogical residency, are so relevant and up to date, justifying, for example, the concept of curricularization of university extension. These actions better configure the desired integration of knowledge related to the ideals of transversality and transdisciplinarity, articulating theory and practice and fulfilling the social function of the university established in the constitutional precept of inseparability between teaching, research and university extension. This is why it needs to be linked to effective policies to keep students in school to guarantee the effective participation of the majority of students.

The curricula of teacher training courses are impacted by situational and structural factors in the political, economic and cultural spheres, and are therefore the subject of disputes within society. In addition, disputes also arise within departments, coordinating bodies, councils and other entities or deliberative bodies of courses, campuses and/or universities over the configurations of the curricular matrices of these courses.

With regard to the target public in question, the specificities of the curriculum that involve both content and methodologies stand out, including when it comes to the theme of literary literature aimed at YAE. This is because this audience includes groups or people with biopsychosocial, socioeconomic and ethnic-cultural singularities, which require the application of the principles of inclusive education. In certain cases, these imbrications refer to the interface between modalities of Brazilian school education, and to the interrelationship between stages and levels of education, which raise various challenges of a political, economic and cultural nature (Freitas and Campos, 2014; Barcellos *et al.*, 2020; Torres *et al.*, 2022).

It should be reiterated that the target audience of YAE is highly diverse, and presents singularities in various aspects such as the age of students, their school cultural capital, life histories, and ethnic-cultural, biopsychosocial, socioeconomic objectives or expectations towards schooling. In other words, YAE brings together people from various groups that have historically been neglected by the Brazilian state and who tend to have characteristics that make it difficult for them to remain in the school system and successfully complete compulsory schooling. This raises the question of the interface between education modalities, as well as intersectionality and intersectorality.

In relation to teaching content and methodologies, it is worth highlighting the strategic and important role of teacher mediation in the organization of lessons, to mobilize elements that help promote or enable students' need for knowledge and, consequently, motivation to study (Clarindo and Miller, 2016; Santana and Souto, 2020). To do this, it is essential to consider the pedagogical specificities of this public (Bezerra and Santana, 2011; Miguel and Ariosi, 2016).

Like other components of the school curriculum, literary literature is an academic-scientific field that has its own specificities and that requires teachers to appropriately master this knowledge, as well as the different levels, stages and modalities of teaching and its respective publics. Thus, specific

content related to this modality is necessary to provide future teachers with theoretical and practical foundations for the teaching profession.⁴

Silva (2008, p. 20), emphasizing the “responsibility and authority of the teacher” in the teaching administrative process, argues that “the teacher is a key element in the formation and growth of readers throughout schooling.” This author also highlights “the need to overcome the improvisation that has historically marked the teaching of reading in Brazilian schools” (Silva, 2008, p. 35). In this sense,

[h]istory, philosophy, politics and epistemology are the possible responses to the question that guides the issue of planning reading units. In fact, teachers need to bring with them experiences and convincing arguments about the value of reading in society, the motivations or primary needs that guide its mastery by new generations, the interests that are at stake in the formation of readers and, logically, about the elements that become dynamic when different types of reading practices take place. (Silva, 2008, p. 24)

Based on Silva’s (2008) arguments, we emphasize the importance of in-depth and comprehensive teacher education, which combines contributions from various disciplines, especially the field of educational foundations and teaching methodologies, which complement each other and provide essential support for pedagogical practice based on scientific principles.

It should be reiterated that access to and appropriation of mainly school and/or technical-scientific knowledge is a historical demand of more organized sectors of the working classes — such as social movements and collectives that operate with critical perspectives towards official education — both past and contemporary. These perspectives articulate self-organization, (self-)education and processes of resistance or struggles for citizenship rights, among other issues (Aguirre Rojas, 2018; Loureiro, 2018; 2019; Silva and Dal Ri, 2019; Barbosa, 2020).

In Brazil today, the most emblematic example of this is the effort made by the Landless Farm Workers’ Movement (MST) to teach all its members to read, including youth and adults. In the struggle against the “latifundium” of knowledge, this movement defends a broad conception of school education, which provides both technical-scientific knowledge and art and its languages. Several MST documents mention, directly or indirectly, the issue of YAE, and the importance of artistic and cultural manifestations, including literary literature (Silva, 2021; Silva *et al.*, 2022).⁵ In fact, based on what Barcellos *et al.* (2020) and Torres *et al.* (2015) point out, it should be noted that the MST is increasingly — without disregarding the centrality of social class — raising the issue of diversity or differences in documents related to the pedagogy of the movement, which refers to intersectionality and intersectorality, key categories for the design and implementation of educational policies aimed at the YAE public.

The gaps mentioned indicate that several challenges exist to achieving the YAE public’s right to contextualized education, as determined by federal legislation. These gaps tend to impact this segment’s right to literary literature, which has several implications, especially if one considers literature as a human right, as does Candido (2011).

Teacher education is strategic for progress in achieving the YAE’s target public’s right to literary literature, not least because teacher certification courses play a key role in shaping the professional profile of future teachers, especially with regard to their repertoire of knowledge.

4 We do not agree with positions that present literature in a segmented and exclusive way for certain audiences, as if, for example, so-called children’s literature could not be enjoyed by other age groups.

5 The Zapatista Movement, which is active in Mexico, also values artistic and cultural manifestations — including literary literature — which are present in the daily life of the communities and gain privileged spaces on special occasions, such as commemorative dates and “Comparte”, an artistic festival promoted by the Zapatistas.

Literature in YAE is extremely important, as it can be a valuable tool for the cultural, social, personal and cognitive development of YAE students. This is because it helps to broaden horizons and develop critical reasoning, empathy and an understanding of different realities and perspectives.

However, in addition to the appropriation and enjoyment of literary literature for more personal purposes, YAE students can also act as promoters or mediators of reading for children in their social networks, especially within the family. It is also worth noting that it is not uncommon for YAE graduates to attend teacher education courses, especially in pedagogy, and that gaps in basic education tend to have repercussions in higher education, not least because, based on what Mortatti (2016), Leal and Silva (2022), and Torres *et al.* (2022) point out, there are necessary interrelationships between the different levels of education.

The Brazilian state's historical neglect of the target audience of YAE is worth noting, as well as the elitism and dualism that mark the history of Brazilian education. This has had negative impacts, especially for populations in rural areas, such as farmworkers, Indigenous peoples, *quilombola* residents and the most precarious fractions of the working classes, who tend to live outside urban perimeters or in peripheral areas, and who are further disadvantaged by the unavailability and poor functioning of public facilities for collective use, especially schools and libraries (Barcellos *et al.*, 2020; Moraes, 2021; Souza-Chaloba and Moraes, 2022).

Several challenges have persisted throughout the history of Brazilian education, especially at schools in the countryside, and at Indigenous and *quilombola* schools (Mubarac Sobrinho, Souza and Bettiol, 2017; Barcellos *et al.*, 2020; Pires and Novaes, 2020; Santana and Cohn, 2020; Souza-Chaloba and Moraes, 2022).

This has direct and indirect impacts on the target public of YAE, since rural territories in general have been neglected by the Brazilian state as school education became universal. This means that these territories have higher rates of illiterate people and those with low levels of schooling, which influences opportunities to access and enjoy literary literature. By not considering the YAE target public in their curricula, pedagogy courses, within their respective spheres, corroborate this situation.

FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

The pedagogy course projects mentioned above do not include specific classes related to literary literature whose titles contain terms that directly or nominally refer to YAE or its target public. Thus, based on the documents analyzed, the indications are that, with one exception, the courses in question — at least in terms of the prescribed curriculum — do not consider the specificities of YAE, a modality that has particularities in the teaching and learning process, both in terms of content and teaching methodologies. This could be due to several factors, especially disputes over the curricula of these courses.

Failure to consider the specificities of YAE in curriculums has a negative impact on this public's right to literary literature, which, as Candido (2011) argues, is a human right. Literary literature is relevant in many ways, especially in teacher certification courses, as teachers are key players in promoting reading and training readers. This is why it is important to have specific classes related to literary literature in these courses or, given the limits of the curricula, the pedagogical singularities of this public should at least be addressed in classes related to literary literature.

Teacher education is crucial for promoting reading and educating readers and, on a more intermediate level, for supporting reading mediators, storytellers, writers and new instructors of new readers. The absence, presence and configurations of these courses tend to impact, in different ways, on the right of the YAE target public to literary literature. This tends to have repercussions throughout the schooling process, due to the necessary interrelationship between the different levels, stages and modalities of school education.

YAE is a type of education aimed at people who did not have access to or did not complete basic education at the regular age. Classes related to literary literature play an important role in the cultural formation and expansion of the reading repertoire of students in this modality.

It is very important that pedagogy course curricula include specific classes concerning YAE that address pedagogical strategies and teaching methodologies appropriate for their target audience. These classes could include content related to literature, such as text analysis and the discussion of literary themes and genres.

Furthermore, even in classes that are not specific to YAE, it is important to address this modality, so that future educators are prepared to meet the demands of this public. In this way, literary literature can be approached as a form of inclusion and appreciation of cultural and social diversity, promoting the development of students' critical thinking and sensitivity. Therefore, it is essential that the curricula of pedagogy courses include classes that address YAE and literature as means for cultural enrichment and the education of critical and reflective citizens; in short, as a key to enhancing humanization, which includes literary literacy.

In view of the data collected, the initial question is worth returning to: where is YAE?

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