Public policies in teacher education: analysis of research on gender identities in education

ARTICLE

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Abstract
This article aimed to analyze issues of gender identities in academic research that discuss Public Policies on sexuality and the insertion of homoaffective people in the Brazilian educational context. The Theoretical Foundation is housed in the field of applied language studies, with an interface between teacher literacy and human rights. The Methodology is of the documentary type with a qualitative approach, considering the subjective content in the treatment of data. The results reveal the representation of the figure of the homosexual person as a social actor resistant to a culture of oppression and prejudice, differentiating the idea of access from the perception of permanence in the educational scope.
Keywords: Human Rights. Teacher Literacy. Public Policy.

1 Introduction
Discussions on gender identities have gained a lot of ground in the context of academic research. It is a subject of interest to all areas of human knowledge, especially
in the Human Sciences, which strive to understand the contours provided by this theme. In this respect, we can understand that investigative points on gender issues deal with various prisms, from their relationship with various social domains, to conceptions of self-knowledge and identification of their socio-pragmatic role (LOURO, 2007; BUTLER, 2003; BUTLER, 1997).

In this sense, we are understanding discussions on gender from an interdisciplinary perspective, considering the need to mobilize diverse human knowledge so that it is possible to make a satisfactory reading of the object of research. Thus, we agree with Fazenda (2008) in understanding interdisciplinarity as a basic point for understanding the asymmetrical social relations constituted from a point of investigation.

In this context, Public Policy (PP) emerges as an area of human knowledge, which has considerable interest in issues related to gender identity in education. One example is the quotas for homosexual people to enter higher education, especially those who identify as “trans”. However, there is still a dense discussion about this, in the sense of the discrepancy between access and permanence in the PP sphere (SARTORI, 2022; ALVES; ROSSI, 2020; CADEMARTORI; GRUBBA, 2012).

The aim of this article is to analyze issues of gender identities in academic research that discusses PP on sexuality and the inclusion of homosexual people in the Brazilian educational context. We understand the term “identities” from the idea of a cultural mosaic, based on the notion of something fluid, socially and psychologically constructed, devoid of a purely biological view (FABRÍCIO, 2017; MAHER; 2007; MOITA LOPES, 2003).

The theoretical basis lies in the field of applied language studies, with an interface between teacher literacy and human rights. In this case, we present a proposal for an interdisciplinary discussion, based on the principle of non-fragmentation of human thought (KLEIMAN, 2013; MOREIRA, 2008; MOITA LOPES, 2003).

The methodology is of the documentary type with a qualitative approach, considering the subjective content in the treatment of the data. In this respect, we understand that the methodological path is the key to understanding the procedures for processing research data (PEREIRA; ANGELOCCI, 2021; BORTONI-RICARDO, 2008;
SEVERINO, 2007). For this reason, we established criteria for cutting out the corpus, in order to enable a satisfactory analysis process.

Given these assumptions, it is possible to present the following research problem: How are questions about gender identities discussed in academic research in the fields of PP, taking into account aspects of the inclusion of homosexual trans people in the Brazilian educational context?

2 Literature review

The Bibliographical Review of this article is housed in the interface between literacy studies in Applied Linguistics and human rights from an interdisciplinary movement. However, the latter is not understood here as a discipline of national curriculum policies. We are understanding human rights as a theoretical-methodological perspective capable of helping us to understand human behavior from a given social perspective, as Moita Lopes (2006) and Moreira (2008) state.

For this reason, greater emphasis will be placed on literacy studies, understood as a macro philosophical stance for the development of the path of analysis we propose. In other words, it is a comprehensive approach to the treatment of data, as it captures discursive aspects such as linguistic-ideological marks (STREET, 1984).

In the field of education, teachers need to pay attention to the literacy practices mentioned by Street (1984), considering language as a multimodal instrument. This, in turn, helps us to think of literacy as a continuous practice in human relations. In this sense, Moreira (2008) endorses that this critical development occurs “through an open dialogue with the students and a critical analysis of reality itself, in favor of the autonomy of the students and the educator himself” (p. 105).

The critical stance to which we are referring converges with the words of Moreira (2008) when he proposes that “criticality […] is the ability of the student and the educator to critically reflect on the reality in which they are inserted, making it possible to verify, understand and intervene to transform it” (p. 105).
In this work, we start from the idea of literacy as a social practice that generates meaning, helping us to understand specific situations of linguistic use. These, in turn, are cultural in nature and their meaning is associated with their respective context of use. Thus, we understand that PPs are, in fact, examples of the manifestation of academic literacy, as they reverberate demands arising from social behavior.

In this case, literacy studies help us to understand social demands through the reading that human beings tend to develop in the face of behavioral relationships. Therefore, language in use points to different perspectives of analysis and is therefore plurisignificant (KLEIMAN, 2007; KLEIMAN, 2008; KLEIMAN, 2009; SOARES, 2000; GONÇALVES; PINHEIRO, 2011).

Here, we reflect on teachers’ literacy from their perspectives on Brazilian educational PP, based on aspects linked to gender identities. In this way, literacy is seen in this work from the perspective of applied language studies, especially when they advance discussions on gender identities.

In this sense, by problematizing the literacy practices of peripheral social groups within a historical context, we are looking for mechanisms to give social voices to people who have been silenced for a lifetime. Thus, we take into account that peripheral knowledge must be added to other knowledge, which provides man with a system posture (KLEIMAN, 2013).

As we are focusing on the social position occupied by homosexual people, the emphasis here is on the academic literacy model created by Léa and Street (2006), who seek to problematize perceptions of gender in education from a specific social context, semiotized here in the academic research considered as data in this article. Therefore, academic literacy can help us to develop a posture of critical reflection on the issue mentioned here.

Liberali (2003) advocates the training of more critical teachers, in which the practice of asking questions is seen as a measure of confrontation between what is crystallized and what is emerging. The author proposes that critical reflection "involves the participants in a discourse that is organized in an argumentative way, oriented towards questioning, based
on social, political and cultural aspects, the actions and the reasons on which they are based” (LIBERALI et al., 2003, p. 105).

As far as human rights are concerned, we believe that they can help us to map macro situations, identified in the context of the discussions held in the investigative context of the analysis data. In other words, human rights are being mobilized here as a sociopragmatic platform, as they help us understand what could guarantee the social well-being of the social actors involved in the methodological scope of the investigations listed in Chart 01 (SARTORI, 2022; ALVES; ROSSI, 2020; CADEMARTORI; GRUBBA, 2012).

Finally, it is in our interest to propose an efficient theoretical path for discursive capture, as well as for the linguistic materialization of the data itself. In this sense, we believe that this theoretical path can help to satisfactorily answer the research question raised in the introduction to this article, which, in turn, can help to break this work down into other equally valid theoretical paths.

3 Methodology

The methodology of this research is of the documentary type with a qualitative approach. In this way, we understand that the methodological path is, in fact, a basic procedure for understanding the data analysis, which is proposed based on the methodological tactics mobilized by the researcher (PEREIRA; ANGELOCCI, 2021; SEVERINO, 2007).

Documentary research is characterized by analyzing documents capable of semioticizing social and behavioral aspects of a given reality from a specific time and space. It is also characterized by providing research data that has not yet been subjected to scientific analytical and descriptive treatment (PEREIRA; ANGELOCCI, 2021; SEVERINO, 2007).

In this research, we understand as documents the academic-scientific productions that, in some way, problematize issues linked to gender identities under some aspect linked to PP in the context of education. In other words, the theses and dissertations, understood
here as objects of analysis and academic treatment, mean an interweaving of social discourses located within a moment of academic discussion on the subject.

The qualitative approach is understood as an analytical tendency with regard to research data. It is therefore characterized by a subjective look at the construction of meanings, since its criteria can match the researcher's theoretical perception, which requires the construction of rigid criteria, which enable the systematization of meanings to be constructed (PEREIRA; ANGELOCCI, 2021; BORTONI-RICARDO, 2008; SEVERINO, 2007).

This research therefore sought to establish time and space criteria to enable a qualitative reading of the data based on the rigor of scientific research. Thus, we carried out a systematic survey of theses and dissertations in the catalog of the Coordination for the Improvement of Higher Education Personnel (CAPES). The intention was to map research carried out at master's and doctoral level between 2010 and 2020, in order to help us understand the adherence of this theme in the context of stricto sensu postgraduate studies.

To this end, we have listed these criteria in Table 01, through which it was possible to collect and choose the data.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Institution</th>
<th>Semantic Aspects</th>
<th>Year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Camargo</td>
<td>Reviewing the margins: The (self) representation of homosexual characters in short stories by Caio Fernando Abreu</td>
<td>Thesis</td>
<td>UnB</td>
<td>Aspects of reader education based on the construction of meanings in literary texts.</td>
<td>2010</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Castro</td>
<td>Representations of Gender Identities and Sexuality in the Discourses of Early Childhood Education Teachers</td>
<td>Dissertation</td>
<td>UNICAMP</td>
<td>Silencing identities in early childhood education in Campinas based on teacher discourse.</td>
<td>2010</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
(Non)Subjectivation in the School Environment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Castro</th>
<th>Stories of in/exclusion at school: semiotic analysis of the life and educational histories of homosexual academics at UFT</th>
<th>Thesis</th>
<th>UFT</th>
<th>Life story as a way of understanding the permanence of homosexuals in higher education.</th>
<th>2018</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sartori</td>
<td>Education, Human Rights and Homophobic Violence in the School Environment: The Managers' Conception</td>
<td>Dissertation</td>
<td>USCS</td>
<td>School administrators' views on the permanence of homosexual students in the school's domains</td>
<td>2020</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Authors.

In short, Table 01 systematizes the academic research used as research data in this article. These are studies defended at different higher education institutions between 2010 and 2020, at master's (dissertations) and doctoral (theses) level. We believe that the time frame of 10 years is efficient in terms of the development of discussions on gender identities and sexuality, based on the principle that, in a decade, we hope that the debates will have matured and, as a result, be able to keep up with the evolution of society itself.

4 Results and Discussion

In this topic, we present an analysis of the excerpts taken from the academic research listed in Table 01. To do this, we tried to consider the environment from which the fragment was taken. We believe that this can help in the construction of meanings and thus contribute to a more consistent analysis of the corpus as a whole. The excerpts are made up of the research extract, followed by its respective author, year and page.

Excerpt 01 was taken from research carried out by Camargo (2010), in which the author investigates the representation of homosexual characters in Caio Fernando Abreu's literature. The following fragment was included in the context of the theoretical discussion of the research, in which the author discussed the voices of literary theory with regard to the importance of the construction of gay identity in literary texts.
Excerpt 01
There is a consensus among literary critics that the perspective adopted by Caio Fernando Abreu in relation to gay identity has made a valuable cultural and political contribution to this community both inside and outside Brazil (CAMARGO, 2010, p. 15).

According to the excerpt above, there seems to be a consensus among theorists of literature as a science about the importance of engaging gay characters so that aspects of their identity can be constructed. In this sense, there is ideological reinforcement among theorists about the role of gender identity construction in order to favor the development of reading practice, which remains politically oriented.

From the point of view of literacy, the development of reading procedures characterizes reading PPs, which are delineated from the student's social sphere as a reader. Therefore, it is a linguistic advance, as well as an ideological one, based on the premise that it presents catalyzing capacities in terms of understanding social spheres that go beyond the walls of the school (MOREIRA, 2008; KLEIMAN, 2007).

Excerpt 02 was taken from research carried out by Castro (2010), in which the author problematizes gender issues in early childhood education. The following fragment was contemplated at the time of the theoretical discussion, in which the author relativized the relationship between school and the perception of gender identities in the context of education in the municipality of Campinas, state of São Paulo.

Excerpt 02
School is the first social context in which children participate, outside the home, in which gender and sexual identities are legitimized or contested (CASTRO, 2010, p. 56).

According to the excerpt above, the school plays a key role in the construction of the student as a citizen, and is therefore strongly responsible for creating perceptions about gender identities, even outside the school domains. In this sense, the school is given social importance as an ideological apparatus, since it operates in the social and cognitive construction of the subjects involved.
However, from a discursive point of view, the speech transposed above does not seem to be something effectively guaranteed by the school, based on the premise that it does not seem to actively manifest itself on the subject. This, in turn, illustrates a kind of disengagement on the part of the school, especially with regard to early childhood education, in the context of discussing gender identities. This can contribute, albeit indirectly, to the symbolic construction of sexuality as taboo, from the student’s childhood (FABRÍCIO, 2017; BUTLER, 1997).

Excerpt 03 was taken from the research developed by Araújo (2011), in which the author investigates sexuality and gender identities from the school curriculum, in a reality mapped in the state of Tocantins. The following fragment was included in the context of the research analysis, in which the researcher seeks to construct meanings based on the interactional dynamics identified in the context of the investigation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Excerpt 03</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>There is a lot of resistance to showing sympathy for homosexuals, and simply getting close in interpersonal relationships can be interpreted as adherence to this gender identity (ARAÚJO, 2011, p. 125).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

According to the excerpt above, there is significant resistance in the school context to approaching homosexuals. This is because it brings up the idea that such a stance could include so-called "straight" actors in the same circle as students who identify as homosexual. This, in turn, can represent an adhesion between different gender identities.

In the field of applied language studies, this seems to represent strong remnants of a historically hegemonic culture, in which gender identities are still burdened by discourses of contempt and repulsion. In this case, we need to take identities into account here as instruments for voicing the voices of underprivileged social actors, as they carry the stigma of social groups left on the margins throughout their social construction (KLEIMAN, 2013; MOITA LOPES, 2006).

Excerpt 04 was taken from the research carried out by Castro (2018), in which the author investigates the life stories of homosexual students at the Federal University of
Tocantins (UFT), adopting the permanence of these people as a motivating premise for the treatment of the data. The following fragment was included in the context of the research’s theoretical discussion, in which the researcher reflects on the dissonance between theory, governed by constitutional precepts, and practice, full of segregating discourses.

**Excerpt 04**

Although there are constitutional guarantees that preserve respect for gender identities, the country’s legislation doesn’t seem to be producing the expected effects in the field of support and protection for the LGBTT community. In each life story we heard, we could feel the pain of those who told us about their journeys, suffering, segregation, anguish, humiliation and fears, which involved (re)constructing themselves. On the other hand, we could also feel the brilliance and joy of those who, for specific reasons, had the respect and support of family and friends when they assumed their gender identities (CASTRO, 2018, p. 15).

According to the excerpt above, there is a mismatch between what is proposed by the constitution and the realization of these rights in concrete interpersonal contexts. This mismatch, in turn, generates a series of fears on the part of the homosexual public in schools, due to the growing wave of homophobic violence in the formal institutional context.

According to human rights, this asymmetry violates the precepts guaranteed to the experience and well-being of educational PPs. This is because education is seen as a social good common to all human beings. This perspective cannot be limited to the dynamics of access, and is therefore projected onto the idea of permanence, which is often seen in a laconic way in the context of human practices (SARTORI, 2022; ALVES; ROSSI, 2020).

Excerpt 05 was taken from the research carried out by Sartori (2020), in which the author investigates the views of school managers regarding the permanence of trans students in the teaching and learning context. The following excerpt was included in the context of the theoretical discussion of the research in which Sartori (2020) reflects on the movements of the PP on the LGBT public, which does not seem to converge with the acceptance of the school community, mapped by the author.

**Excerpt 05**

Rev.Pemo, Fortaleza, v. 5, e10805, 2023
DOI: https://doi.org/10.47149/pemo.v5.e10805
https://revistas.uece.br/index.php/revpemo
ISSN: 2675-519X

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Even the guidelines defined and the resolutions resulting from the First Conference on LGBT Public Policies lack a more precise understanding of gender identity. Furthermore, it is important to emphasize that these are guidelines and, as such, their implementation varies according to political interest and local acceptance (SARTORI, 2020, p. 46).

According to the excerpt above, there is a certain omission in the guidelines of the First Conference on the PP of the LGBT public with regard to gender identity. This, in turn, opens up possibilities for social actions that undermine human rights as a premise for the social well-being of all people.

From the point of view of language studies, the gap between the aforementioned poles brings back the perception of asymmetry between social discourses, specifically with regard to gender identities. Like the previous study, there is a dissonance here between what is access and what is permanence for trans people in the educational environment. In this sense, the dynamics of social identities seem to be based on the logic of suleamento, as discussed by Moita Lopes (2006) and Kleiman (2013).

In summary, we can see that gender identities are dealt with in different ways in academic research. However, the dialogical perspective seems to unite these strands, considering the asymmetry between the act of granting access and the act of granting permanence to homosexual people in the context of formal Brazilian education, according to the PPs.

5 Final considerations

The understanding of gender identities is still quite fragmented. However, in the context of the research data, the idea of gender identities seems to prevail as a premise that is quite distant from the political aspects that govern the conception of Brazilian schools (SARTORI, 2020; CASTRO, 2018). As a result, issues related to intolerance and homophobic violence seem to be gaining ground, even though the emerging society seems to be aware of the consequences that this can cause, analyzing the support given by the governing laws.
In light of this, we revisit the research problem listed in the introduction to this article: How are questions about gender identities discussed in academic research in the fields of PP, taking into account aspects of the inclusion of homosexual trans people in the Brazilian educational context? We can say that this question has been answered throughout the analytical path we propose in this article, considering that the excerpts dealt with semioticize discursive practices that guide the perception of gender identities adopted in each piece of research.

The results reveal the representation of homosexuals as social actors resistant to a culture of oppression and prejudice, differentiating the idea of access from the perception of permanence in the educational sphere. This, in turn, reverberates the discourse of dissonance in inclusion policies, which are semiotized based on the asymmetry between what is said in theory and what is experienced in practice.

Based on this, we believe that there is a significant difference between the logic of access and the logic of the permanence of homosexual people in the practices of the PPs of Brazilian education, in any political aspect mobilized. In this sense, we can also state that this dissonance seems to diverge from the guidelines guaranteed by human rights, considering the non-welfare of homosexual people in institutional contexts of formal education (SARTORI, 2022).

With regard to literacy as a social practice, with an emphasis on the articulation with teacher training, we understand that the different perceptions of gender identities can reveal the plurality of the teacher's outlook, which takes on ephemeral contours. In other words, we can understand that there is a demand to improve teachers' points of view, which tends to seek measures of understanding about the subject (STREET, 1984).

It is hoped that this work can be inviting as regards the development of discussions on gender identities. As it is a genuinely interdisciplinary subject, we consider its debate to be efficient in terms of understanding post-modern social conjunctures, which can enable representative advances in science, especially in the Human Sciences.

References


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