



Autobiographical Narrative: the teaching experience at YAE Prison in Boa Vista-Roraima

ARTICLE

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Abstract

The article discusses the Youth and Adult Education program at the State School Professora Crisotelma Francisca de Brito Gomes, located within the Monte Cristo Agricultural Penitentiary and the male and female jails in Boa Vista, RR. This initiative results from technical cooperation between the State Secretariat of Justice and Citizenship and the State Secretariat of Education and Sports. Our goal is to critically reflect on the teaching experience in prison-based Youth and Adult Education. Through the analysis of this experience, we have identified the importance of specialized, continuous training for educators operating within the prison system. We employed qualitative methodologies, including documentary research and autobiographical narrative. Our findings indicate that the legal framework governing Prison Education in Brazil, and particularly in Roraima, underscores the necessity of fostering educational processes within this context to reclaim education as a public policy right.

Keywords: Prison Education. YAE. Autobiographical Narrative.

Narrativa autobiográfica: a vivência docente na EJA prisional em Boa Vista-RR

Resumo

O artigo aborda a modalidade Educação de Jovens e Adultos na Escola Estadual Professora Crisotelma Francisca de Brito Gomes, dentro da Penitenciária Agrícola de Monte Cristo e nas Cadeias Feminina e Masculina, em Boa Vista/RR. Esse sistema advém de uma cooperação técnica entre a Secretaria de Estado da Justiça e Cidadania e Secretaria de Estado da Educação e Desporto. Nosso objetivo é fazer uma reflexão crítica da vivência docente na EJA prisional. A análise dessa experiência nos levou a perceber a importância de formação continuada específica para os professores que atuam no sistema prisional. Utilizamos as metodologias da pesquisa documental e da narrativa autobiográfica, de cunho qualitativo. Percebemos que o recorte do marco legal sobre a Educação do Sistema Prisional no Brasil e em Roraima reforça a importância de se promover o processo educativo neste ambiente a fim de resgatar o direito à educação escolar enquanto política pública.

Palavras-chaves: Educação Prisional. EJA. Narrativa Autobiográfica.





1 Introduction

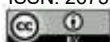
2 The educational process within the framework of Youth and Adult Education (EJA – Educação de Jovens e Adultos) in the penitentiary system remains largely unfamiliar to educators, likely due to the lack of discussions on this specific context in teacher training programs at Brazilian universities.

For this reason, this study is particularly relevant, as it brings attention to a topic that is still rarely debated in academic settings. Thus, our objective is to critically reflect on the teaching experience in prison-based EJA through documentary research and autobiographical narrative, both of which follow a qualitative approach, thereby shedding light on teaching practices within the prison environment.

The origin of this discussion lies in the professional experience of the first author of this study, who worked as a Portuguese Language teacher at the Monte Cristo Agricultural Penitentiary (PAMC – Penitenciária Agrícola de Monte Cristo). To teach in a prison setting, it was necessary to acquire knowledge about legal matters (legislation, security protocols, technical cooperation) as well as to develop appropriate didactic and pedagogical strategies to engage with the cultural background of both male and female students. Although security protocols imposed certain restrictions, overcoming the limitations of that reality became both an invitation and a challenge in every encounter with the incarcerated students.

Thus, the reflections presented here are based on professional experience between 2016 and 2022 in Youth and Adult Education within the Prison System. The study begins with a brief legal overview of the provision of this educational modality in Brazil and in the state of Roraima.

In the second section, we discuss the State School of the Prison System Professora Crisotelma Francisca de Brito Gomes, presenting the context in which the school was established and its physical characteristics, as well as the role of Youth and Adult Education (EJA – Educação de Jovens e Adultos) within the Common National





Curriculum Base (BNCC – Base Nacional Comum Curricular) and the Curricular Document of Roraima (DCRR – Documento Curricular de Roraima).

Finally, in *Memories and Reflections on My Teaching Experience*, I draw on turning-point moments (Josso, 2006), or watershed moments, which allow for the identification of formative suggestions for teacher training institutions. The goal is to reduce overly romanticized theoretical analyses of teaching work.

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2 Methodology

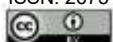
In this study, we employ documentary research and autobiographical narrative methodologies, both of which follow a qualitative approach. Their main characteristics include the historical-social context experienced by the researcher as the appropriate environment for data collection, along with field notes, photographs, and other instruments (Gabriel, 2011).

Since this study is based on an autobiographical narrative, it was not necessary to obtain authorization from the first author or the institution, as the photographs used are either from a personal archive or in the public domain.

For the construction of this article, we used a time frame based on my teaching experience within the prison environment, covering the period from 2016 to 2022, detailed as follows: 2016 and 2017: Worked at the Men's Public Jail; 2018, 2019, 2020, and 2022: Worked at the Monte Cristo Agricultural Penitentiary (PAMC – Penitenciária Agrícola de Monte Cristo); 2021: Worked at the Women's Public Jail.

It is also important to highlight that the State School Professora Crisotelma Francisca de Brito Gomes has two annexes (classrooms) located outside the Monte Cristo Agricultural Penitentiary, specifically at the Men's Public Jail and the Women's Public Jail, both situated in urban areas — Centro and Asa Branca neighborhoods, respectively.

Regarding documentary research, we present a legal overview of the provision of Youth and Adult Education (EJA – Educação de Jovens e Adultos) in the prison system in Brazil and Roraima. As for school-specific aspects, all information is drawn from the





Pedagogical Project¹, which is made available to teachers via email, as well as from the National Secretariat for Penal Policies (SENAPPEN – Secretaria Nacional de Políticas Penais) website.

The autobiographical narrative allows for reflection on the educational reality and the overcoming of obstacles imposed by this context. It is important to emphasize that this article is not informative but rather narrative. To distinguish these terms, we rely on Marques and Satriano (2017, p. 382), who state: “Information is the transmission of some outlined data, ready to be reproduced, which can be presented by anyone. Narrative, on the other hand, is always under construction and inseparable from the narrator”.

The foundation of this narrative stems from the author's memories, photographs, records, and analysis of lesson plans, considering three distinct moments: planning (perspective); execution (reality); post-execution reflection (comparison between reality and initial perspective).

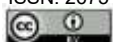
3 Results and Discussion

3.1 Prison Education in Brazil and Roraima – a legal framework

Before delving into the didactic-pedagogical issues and the teaching experience in the prison educational space, it is important to highlight the legal framework for the provision of education in the prison system, noting that this education is offered through the modality of Youth and Adult Education (Educação de Jovens e Adultos – EJA) for individuals in situations of deprivation of liberty. It is crucial to understand the Brazilian legislation that guarantees the right to education for this group.

Thus, school education for individuals deprived of liberty is established by the Penal Execution Law (Lei de Execução Penal – LEP) No. 7210, dated July 11, 1984, as educational assistance, as outlined in the following articles:

¹ The Pedagogical Project was approved by the State Council of Education (CEE/RR – Conselho Estadual de Educação de Roraima) in 2022.





Art. 17. Educational assistance shall include both school instruction and vocational training for the incarcerated and detained individuals.

Art. 18. Primary education shall be mandatory, integrated into the school system of the federative unit.

Art. 19. Vocational education shall be provided at the initiation or technical enhancement level.

Sole Paragraph. Female prisoners shall receive vocational education suitable to their condition.

[...]

Art. 21. In accordance with local conditions, each facility shall be equipped with a library for use by all categories of detainees, stocked with instructional, recreational, and educational books. (Brasil, 1984, Chap. II, Sec. V)

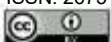
To implement this provision, an agreement was necessary between the Ministry of Justice and the Ministry of Education and Culture to develop joint efforts aimed at advancing education within the national prison system. The Ministry of Education and Culture (Ministério da Educação e Cultura – MEC) approved the Law of Guidelines and Bases (Lei de Diretrizes e Bases – LDB) No. 9394 on December 20, 1996, which included Youth and Adult Education (Educação de Jovens e Adultos – EJA) to address the population outside the regular age range for basic education, as outlined in Chapter II, Section V, Art. 37.

Art. 37. Youth and adult education shall be intended for those who did not have access to or continuity in elementary and secondary education at the appropriate age and shall serve as a tool for education and lifelong learning.

§ 1. The education systems shall ensure free educational opportunities for young people and adults who were unable to complete their studies at the regular age, considering the characteristics of the students, their interests, and their living and working conditions, through courses and exams.

§ 2. The government shall enable and encourage access to and the retention of workers in school through integrated and complementary actions. (Brasil, 1996, p.32)

The provision of Youth and Adult Education (Educação de Jovens e Adultos – EJA) must comply with international agreements and treaties, as established by Resolution No. 2, dated May 19, 2010, regarding the National Guidelines for offering education to young people and adults in situations of deprivation of liberty in penal institutions.





Art. 2. Educational actions in contexts of deprivation of liberty must be based on the current educational legislation of the country, the Penal Execution Law (Lei de Execução Penal – LEP), international treaties signed by Brazil within the scope of human rights and deprivation of liberty policies, and must address the specificities of the different levels and modalities of education and teaching. These actions are extended to pretrial detainees, convicted individuals, ex-prisoners, and those serving security measures. (Brasil, 2010, p.2)

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On June 29, 2011, Law No. 12.433 was enacted, amending Article 126 of the Penal Execution Law (LEP) No. 7210, allowing for sentence remission through study or work, as outlined in the following paragraphs:

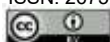
§ 1. The time counting mentioned in the main provision shall occur at the rate of: I - 1 (one) day of sentence for every 12 (twelve) hours of school attendance – primary, secondary, or vocational education, or higher education, or even professional requalification – divided, at minimum, into 3 (three) days; [...]

§ 5. The time to be remitted based on study hours will be increased by 1/3 (one third) in the case of completing primary, secondary, or higher education during the sentence, provided that it is certified by the competent education authority. (Brasil, 2011, p.2)

This LEP led to the creation of Decree No. 7.626/2011, which establishes the Strategic Education Plan within the Prison System, aiming to expand the provision of education and offer the rehabilitation of detainees through the EJA modality, along with other opportunities such as vocational education, technological education, and higher education.

In Roraima, education within the prison system is regulated by the Technical Cooperation Agreement No. 007/2007 between the State Department of Justice and Citizenship (SEJUC) and the State Department of Education and Sports (SEED); the former is responsible for penal execution and reintegration into the workforce, while the latter is responsible for providing school education.

In this context, by Decree No. 16.657-E/2014, the State Prison System School Professora Crisotelma Francisca de Brito Gomes was created, as outlined in the following articles:





- Art. 1. The State Prison System School Professora Crisotelma Francisca de Brito Gomes is created, located in the Monte Cristo community, in the municipality of Boa Vista, State of Roraima.
- Art. 2. The State Prison System School Professora Crisotelma Francisca de Brito Gomes will offer Basic Education in the Youth and Adult Education (EJA) modality – 1st, 2nd, and 3rd segments.
- Art. 3. The State Prison System School Professora Crisotelma Francisca de Brito Gomes will use the facilities of the Monte Cristo Agricultural Penitentiary.
- Art. 4. The expenses related to the creation of the State Prison System School Professora Crisotelma Francisca de Brito Gomes will be covered by the budgetary allocation of the State Department of Education and Sports.
- Art. 5. It will be the responsibility of the relevant bodies of the State Education System to provide, support, guide, coordinate, and supply the School Unit with human and material resources for its full operation. (Roraima, 2014, p. 1)

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Additionally, in the capital of Roraima, the school has two attached school environments: one operates at the Male Public Jail (Cadeia Pública Masculina – CPM) and the other at the Female Public Jail (Cadeia Pública Feminina – CPF). Each prison unit has a school infrastructure according to its possibilities, distributed as follows:

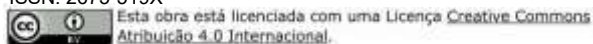
Table 1 – Structure of the State Prison System School Professora Crisotelma Francisca de Brito Gomes in each prison unit

Distribution of the school space	EESP Prof. Crisotelma F. de Brito Gomes (headquarters)	Annex: Male Public Jail (Cadeia Pública Masculina)	Annex: Female Public Jail (Cadeia Pública Feminina)
Secretary's Office	1	-	-
Classrooms	8	3	3
Student Restrooms	1	2	1
Urinals in the classroom	8	-	-
Library	-	-	-
Teacher's Room	1	1	1
Cafeteria	1	-	-

Source: Pedagogical Project of the School

According to the table above, and as De Carvalho and Guimarães (2013) point out, we ask:

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The question is: is school education organized within the prison system? Are classrooms, libraries, and working hours essential elements of the school? How would these be present in this space? After all, what kind of school is this? (De Carvalho; Guimarães, 2013, p.53)

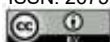
Although the spaces of the school and its annexes present limitations, the goal should remain to offer education for citizenship that enables "autonomy, freedom, otherness, and participation in the construction of a more humane and just society" (De Carvalho; Guimarães, 2013, p. 53). The school within the prison environment has responsibilities that go beyond the pedagogical aspect, including socialization and resocialization, significantly contributing to the dignified and autonomous reintegration of individuals into society (Onofre; Julião, 2013, p.62).

In 2023, according to data from the National Secretariat for Penal Policies (Secretaria Nacional de Políticas Penais – Senappen), Roraima had a prison population of 3,094 people in closed custody. By June 2023, the school had 442 detainees, distributed across the prison units, as shown in the table below:

Table 2 – Students enrolled by prison unit/2023 in Boa Vista/RR.

BASE YEAR 2023	EESP Prof. ^a Crisotelma F. de Brito Gomes (headquarters)	Annex: Male Public Jail	Annex: Female Public Jail	Total enrollment by Educational Stage
Literacy	-	11	-	11
Elementary Education I and II	175	114	27	340
Secondary Education	93	-	22	118
Higher Education	-	-	-	-
Technical Course	-	-	-	-
TOTAL	268	125	49	442

Source: SENAPPEN/Prison Statistics





If we compare the number of reeducandos (detainees enrolled in educational programs) who are accessing education and, consequently, the right to sentence remission, we will realize that more "investments and actions are needed to enable everyone's active participation in educational activities offered in the prison space" (Vieira, 2013, p.95).

It is important to clarify that individuals deprived of liberty, when regularly enrolled in school, are called "reeducandos". To facilitate enrollment, the school, with the help of the teaching staff, follows this procedure: visits to the cells to screen those who wish to study; this screening leads to a list with the names of the prospective "reeducandos". This list is then sent to the prison unit's administration, which has criteria for determining who is eligible to study.

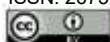
3.2 State School Professora Crisotelma Francisca de Brito Gomes and Me

To work effectively in a unique school environment such as the one in question, the teacher must adopt a routine guided by safety protocols. Regarding this, Onofre and Julião emphasize that:

Because it is a space with its own characteristics, governed by specific rules and regulations that prioritize maintaining the order established by the prison system, the teacher must familiarize themselves with these practices (which are not typically covered in their initial training), making the process of adaptation necessary, as outlined by the National Guidelines. (Onofre; Julião 2013, p. 62)

The 2013 National Curriculum Guidelines for Basic Education, stemming from Resolution CNE No. 2, dated May 19, 2010, which addresses the National Guidelines for offering education to young people and adults in situations of deprivation of liberty in penal institutions, states:

In many cases, the activities conducted by schools are disqualified and threatened, depending almost daily on approvals [...]. Excessive concern for security often prevents any teaching creativity: showing films, inviting speakers, conducting research, and organizing collective activities are, in many penal institutions, nearly impossible tasks. (Brasil, 2013, p. 326)





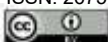
In this context, teachers must adjust their behavior and both personal and professional conduct within the school and classroom. They must also adjust their lesson plans. For example, the 2024 Teaching Plan specifies that teachers should work on the following skill:

(EM13LP18) Use text, photo, video, and audio editing software, as well as collaborative tools and environments, to create texts and multisemiotic productions with diverse purposes, exploring available resources and effects and adopting collaborative writing practices, collective knowledge construction, and project development. (Roraima, 2024, p. 8)

However, in the prison school environment, the development of such skills is hindered by the limitations imposed by the prison system, which overburdens the teacher to develop daily teaching and learning strategies, while educational books and virtual platforms already offer a wide range of teaching methodologies that facilitate effective knowledge acquisition.

Within this scenario, there is also the responsibility for school materials. The number of “reeducandos” regularly enrolled in a class determines the exact number of school supplies, referred to as the personal kit (which includes a notebook, a pencil, and an eraser), and the teacher has a single sharpener to attend to all “reeducandos” in the class. The activities outlined in the lesson plan must be carried out in the classroom—introduction of content, explanation, activity, and correction. At the end of the class, the kits must be collected by the teacher.

Before addressing the narrative on pedagogical practices, it is necessary to pause and understand the Roraima Curriculum Document (DCRR 2019 and 2021) considering the National Common Curricular Base (BNCC). The BNCC introduced the replacement of terms like “contents” with “objects of knowledge,” linked to specific skills within the competencies of each curriculum component (subject) or area of knowledge. These competencies are, in turn, related to the general competencies defined by the BNCC, which establishes the common base to be worked on across the entire national





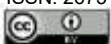
territory. The DCRR, stemming from the BNCC, ratifies the common base and adds regional and local aspects to the diverse parts.

In my teaching experience in the Portuguese Language curriculum component, after six years of teaching at the Prison System School, the routine of lesson planning, although simplified, was stimulating. Access to the list of contents allowed for a semester-based plan of what would be taught to the “reeducandos”, with few alterations. Additionally, the lesson plan required not only the content but also the lesson’s objectives, the learning objectives, the methodology, the expected teaching resources, and the assessment. Despite the restrictions imposed by the context, it was possible to visualize the results at the end of each term and semester. Moreover, the initial training, still in high school (teaching program), prepared me to carry out the teacher’s duties in the classroom, regardless of the school environment.

Since the implementation of the DCRR and the creation of the Semester Teaching Plan (PES) made available by the State Secretariat of Education and Sports (SEED), I encountered some difficulties with the understanding of new terms, the lack of content visualization, the absence of learning objectives, and the structure of the new Teaching Plan model, which defines what should be worked on during each semester in the EJA in the state education network.

The Semester Teaching Plan (PES), a reference document for the EJA modality in the state education network, follows the same structure used in the Annual Teaching Plan (PEA), with the only distinction being its division into just two terms. This structure of the PES overburdens both the teacher and the student, as it requires them to develop, in six months, the same skills required in the PEA of Regular Education.

However, we acknowledge the efforts of the SEED (Secretariat of Education) in providing ongoing training for the teaching staff of the state education network. Nevertheless, these training sessions have not effectively addressed my doubts regarding the educational process for individuals in the prison system. In this regard, I observe that the trainers also face theoretical and methodological limitations concerning the teaching and learning process within the prison system. For example, they have not





presented more effective strategies for replacing tools and digital resources, as the previously mentioned skill requires, without compromising the learning experience for the individuals being reeducated.

For those working within the confines of the prison system, as is my case, following the prescribed planning as established is an unfeasible task, since the skills outlined are not always in line with the pedagogical limitations imposed by the environment. This requires additional effort, commitment, and responsibility in adapting lesson plans and developing teaching practices.

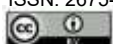
Within the prison system, specifically in the Prison System School, two state departments work together but with different perspectives. While the Department of Public Security aims to maintain order and discipline among inmates, the Department of Education focuses on the teaching and learning process. According to Onofre,

[...] this education occurs in a peculiar space, where two opposing logics are at play concerning what rehabilitation means: the fundamental principle of education, which is inherently transformative, and the prison culture, which seeks to adapt the individual to the prison environment. [...] We are faced with a paradoxical situation, and one of the challenges to be addressed is finding paths to develop emancipatory education in a space historically marked by a culture of oppression and full of contradictions: one isolates to (re)socialize, one punishes to reeducate. (Onofre, 2015, p. 240)

Between these two bodies, the teacher is at a disadvantage in the teaching and learning process, particularly in terms of methodological procedures and the selection or creation of teaching resources that support the learning of those being reeducated. For example, the screening of films or documentaries is only allowed with prior authorization, and extracurricular activities are not permitted. Furthermore, the teacher must restrict access to any external information, such as sports, news, or political content. This reality keeps both the teacher and the pedagogical planning within the traditional pedagogy framework. Professionally, I feel limited in my duties; however, personally, I understand both sides.

3.3 Memories and Reflections on My Teaching Experience

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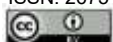
When I was assigned to teach Portuguese Language to the high school classes at the State School Professora Crisotelma Francisca de Brito Gomes, the lessons were held exclusively in the Men's Public Prison, using half of a covered sports court. This space, besides serving as a school, was also used for the inmates' daily sunbath. The classroom was improvised; wherever there was space to set up the whiteboard, it was considered a classroom.

On the first class of the school year, for the final years of elementary education in the EJA (Youth and Adult Education) program, there was an introduction of the teacher and the "reeducandos". I planned a dynamic activity with chocolate bonbons. The bonbons were passed to whoever was going to introduce themselves and share their expectations and difficulties regarding the Portuguese Language subject. The purpose of this activity was to foster interaction between the "reeducandos" and me.

However, before entering the school, I was informed that I had to leave all the items I intended to use in my car, such as my cellphone, computer, USB drive, and bonbons. It was at that moment that I realized the teaching materials had to be discarded, leaving me with only my notebook and colored markers for the whiteboard. This situation, combined with the school's structure, left me impressed, and I thought about how challenging it would be to teach in the prison EJA setting.

In the classroom, after my introduction, their first question to me was whether I was afraid. I looked at them and replied, "No, I'm not afraid. I could teach at any school in the state. Being here was my choice." In silence, we formed a circle, and everyone briefly introduced themselves, sharing only their name and age. In this class, just like me, they also had no materials. Improvising a plan B, I asked if they had any doubts about the Portuguese Language. They asked for clarification on the word "agente," which they phrased like this (in other words): "Teacher, if I write a letter to a woman, how should I write the word 'a gente' without confusing it with 'agente' (the prison officer)?"

This question gave me the opportunity to teach about Semantics, focusing on homonymous and paronymous words. For example: the word **a gente** (separated) refers





to "us," while **agente** (together) refers to the professional. Another example, related to their reality, was the difference between "cela" and "sela." When the "s" sound is voiced, it refers to the noun "sela," as in "sela de cavalo". For some, this was a reinforcement; for others, it was a discovery. Over the course of the lessons, they brought up examples in search of the correct meaning or simply to demonstrate their knowledge of the subject in their cells.

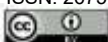
From this experience, I found myself at home reflecting on the need to deconstruct the ingrained idea of lesson planning that had worked so well for years in teaching at the so-called "free" schools.

[...] In this group, the processes of action-reflection-action are experienced dialectically by the teachers as they relate theory and practice. The teaching-learning process is also shaped as a learning experience for the teaching profession itself. In this group, in the interactions between students-student, student-teacher, and student-content, there are methodological strategies and educational conceptions that go beyond the promotion of the acquisition of systematic knowledge by the students.

In the educational process that the student experiences, there is also the learning of the teaching profession, although at this moment it occurs as an informal learning process. (Gabriel, 2011, p.160)

As a teacher in the EJA (Youth and Adult Education) program within the Prison System, my first deconstruction involved methodology and, consequently, the teaching resources. Taking advantage of their interest in certain content, I gradually began connecting it to "less pleasant topics." I had to search for textbooks, which were acquired through donations from other schools, usually books with expired expiration dates. The supplementary books were provided by the Department of Student Support (DAE), a sector of the SEED (Secretariat of Education).

Despite all the challenges, it was possible to carry out satisfactory pedagogical work. Activities such as organizing a poetry reading event (sarau) allowed the "reeducandos" to express their feelings about life and family through poetry and music. The theatrical plays composed by them reinforced, in writing, the knowledge worked on during our lessons. Their performance, to varying degrees, enabled and continues to enable their approval in the National Exam for Certification of Competencies for Youth





and Adults in Detention or under Socioeducational Measures that Include Deprivation of Liberty (ENCEJA-PPL) and the National High School Exam for Prison Inmates and Youth in Socioeducational Systems (ENEM-PPL).

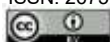
These first two years working as a Portuguese Language teacher in the men's public prison made me realize that, despite the unfavorable environment and conditions, the work done has a significant impact on the lives of these men. This became evident, for example, when, after a visit day or a seven-day break, they returned telling me how they had helped their children with their schoolwork, often related to the same content they were learning. Additionally, through written productions in various genres, they expressed their life experiences, dreams, and expectations for life after leaving the prison system.

Figure 1 - Classroom of the Men's Public Prison (2016)



Source: Roraima em Tempo Online Newspaper.

In my third year of teaching in the prison EJA program, I was assigned to teach at the school's main location, situated within the Monte Cristo Agricultural Penitentiary. There were several impactful aspects of this new teaching environment, including the classroom setup, which was divided by a metal grid, separating the teacher's space from that of the "reeducandos". The improvised urinals inside the classrooms, the handcuffs





hanging from the bars, and the presence of prison officers in the hallways and sometimes even inside the classroom, were all notable features of this setting.

Figure 2 – Classroom in PMAC (2019)



Source: G1 Roraima

Figure 3 – Classroom in PMAC (2023)



Source: Folha BV. Boa Vista.

These scenarios, both in the Men's Public Prison (attached) and in the penitentiary, are far from the idealized classroom I envisioned during my academic training. There is a real and concrete limitation to my ability to provide individualized pedagogical support (assistance, corrections, and answering questions). Based on Gabriel (2011), the definition of a reflective teacher is one who is aware of their actions and social function beyond their academic training, seeking to acquire new knowledge



through ongoing professional development to improve their practice. Gabriel further explains,

[...] The observation that this professionals makes of the context of their educational activities — the educational space — leads them to perceive it as a locus where change can be promoted and the relationship between the written word and lived experience can be established. These actions aim primarily at transforming practices that do not reflect the necessary seriousness that educational work demands. (Gabriel, 2011, p. 69)

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All this teaching experience helped to reframe my understanding of the teaching profession, theories, and my practice, deconstructing and reconstructing my pedagogical approach. It expanded the possibilities for adapting the pedagogical procedures that were so necessary for that environment and for those individuals who, when they are interested in studying, seek strategies to engage in the act of learning. A painful yet beautiful example was the writing of a text on an aluminum food tray lid using a piece of chicken bone, as seen in the excerpt of the review of the book *The Color Purple* by Alice Walker.

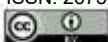




Figure 4 – Writing a text on an aluminum food tray lid



Fonte: Personal collection (2022)

According to Freire (1980, p.34), “for education to be valid, it must take into account the conditions in which a person lives in a particular place, moment, and context,” which should lead the teacher in the prison EJA program to consider any condition that fosters learning, considering the specificities of the prison educational environment.



4 Final considerations

The legal framework regarding Prison Education in Brazil and in Roraima reinforces the importance of promoting the educational process in this environment to restore the right to schooling as a public policy. Despite the bars that separate teachers from “reeducandos” and the handcuffs hanging on the walls, the class must take place.

Throughout my educational journey – both in teaching and in my undergraduate degree – there was never any discussion focused on Youth and Adult Education (EJA), especially EJA in the prison system. When I was assigned to the Prison System School to take the position of Portuguese Language teacher, I did not receive any specific training for this differentiated educational practice.

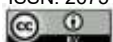
When I use the term “training for differentiated educational practice” in this school setting, I mean that I did not receive any information about the work environment, the rules to be followed, or the most appropriate planning. There were no guidelines regarding my appearance, considering dress code, footwear, makeup, or accessories. In fact, my new workplace, the Escola Estadual Professora Crisotelma Francisca de Brito Gomes, was new in every sense.

When I assert that both the teacher and the lesson plan may be oriented towards traditional pedagogy, I mean that it is not possible to address, from the perspective of active or innovative methodologies, the methodological suggestions present in the Semester Teaching Plan of SEED, neither fully nor by adapting them. Authors Vilar and Anjos argue that:

[...] The curriculum of EJA should encompass the different dimensions of human formation, which include the emotional and cognitive relationships and values inherent in social, political, and cultural knowledge. We believe that it is appropriate for EJA work that the curriculum is guided by the perspective of student diversity, culture, language, and knowledge, and should invariably include the idea that the content should address the analysis and discussion of diversities and differences among educational subjects. (Vilar; Anjos, 2014, p. 2)

It is questionable that the BNCC (National Common Curricular Base) does not present a specific curriculum proposal for Youth and Adult Education and its specificities,

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and that the DCRR (Roraima State Curricular Directions) follows the same path, leaving the EJA modality at the mercy of adaptations of a curricular document strictly intended for regular basic education.

Finally, this work reflects some thoughts arising from my personal and professional experiences, highlighting the pedagogical challenges in such a hostile environment as the prison. The act of educating in this place demands discussions, analyses, and in-depth studies aimed at promoting a humanizing education in the educational process of “reeducandos”, contributing to their resocialization and the reorganization of their lives after serving their sentences.

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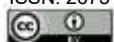
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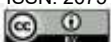
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