

Meanings of formative processes for young women in Pedagogy: a biographical relationship with learning

Sentidos dos processos formativos para jovens mulheres da Pedagogia: relação biográfica com o aprender

Significados de los procesos formativos para las jóvenes en la Pedagogía: una relación biográfica con el aprender

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ABSTRACT

The article aims to discuss the methodological pathways and analyze the findings of a study on the meanings attributed to university education and the challenges experienced by young women enrolled in a Pedagogy program at a federal public university. Adopting a qualitative, socio-anthropological, and hermeneutic approach grounded in (auto)biographical research, the study combines the interpretation of data collected through questionnaires with the analysis of biographization processes, based on biographical interviews with two students in the final years of the program who participated in an outreach project developed as part of the study. The questionnaires reveal that employment, long commutes, and the limited availability of scholarships restrict the students' participation in formative activities beyond the classroom, although those who participate recognize their importance and value the opportunities for social interaction within the program. The interviews highlight formative processes shaped by social class and by gendered and racial power relations. The findings emphasize support networks, interpersonal bonds, and friendships at the university; the construction of identity and a sense of belonging through activities such as outreach, teaching assistantships, and involvement in research; and engagement with relevant academic content. The study concludes that, while the questionnaires reveal the material and social conditions that constrain or foster university education, the analysis of biographization processes shows how these conditions are experienced, interpreted, and resignified through the questions constructed by the students in

dialogue with academic repertoires, thereby constituting their biographical relationship with learning. The articulation of these procedures makes it possible to relate singular-social interpretations to shared conditions of existence, deepening the understanding of the formative processes investigated.

Keywords: Young college women; Formative processes; Biographical approach.

RESUMO

O artigo objetiva discutir os caminhos metodológicos e analisar achados de uma pesquisa sobre os sentidos atribuídos à formação universitária e os desafios vivenciados por jovens mulheres em um curso de Pedagogia de uma universidade pública federal. De abordagem qualitativa, socioantropológica e hermenêutica, filiada à pesquisa (auto)biográfica, articula a leitura de dados produzidos por meio de questionários à análise de processos de biografização, com base em entrevistas biográficas com duas estudantes dos últimos anos do curso, participantes de projeto de extensão desenvolvido no estudo. Os questionários revelam que o trabalho, os longos deslocamentos e a oferta reduzida de bolsas limitam a participação das estudantes em atividades formativas além da sala de aula, embora aquelas que participam reconheçam sua importância e valorizem os espaços de convivência no curso. As entrevistas evidenciam processos formativos atravessados pela classe social e pelas relações de poder de gênero e raça. Destacam-se redes de apoio, vínculos e amizades na universidade, a construção identitária e de pertencimento por meio de atividades como extensão, monitoria e inserção em pesquisas, e o contato com conteúdos acadêmicos relevantes. Conclui-se que, enquanto os questionários evidenciam as condições materiais e sociais que limitam ou favorecem a formação universitária, a análise dos processos de biografização revela como essas condições são vividas, interpretadas e ressignificadas a partir das questões construídas pelas estudantes, nos diálogos com os repertórios acadêmicos, constituindo-se sua relação biográfica com o aprender. A articulação desses procedimentos possibilita relacionar interpretações singulares-sociais com condições de existência compartilhadas, aprofundando a compreensão dos processos formativos pesquisados.

Palavras-chave: Jovens universitárias; Processos formativos; Enfoque biográfico.

RESUMEN

El artículo tiene como objetivo discutir los recorridos metodológicos y analizar los hallazgos de una investigación sobre los sentidos atribuidos a la formación universitaria y los desafíos vividos por mujeres jóvenes de una carrera de Pedagogía en una universidad pública federal. De enfoque cualitativo, socioantropológico y hermenéutico, y vinculada a la investigación (auto)biográfica, la investigación articula la lectura de los datos producidos mediante cuestionarios con el análisis de los procesos de biografización, a partir de entrevistas biográficas realizadas a dos estudiantes de los últimos años de la carrera, participantes de un proyecto de extensión desarrollado en el marco del estudio. Los cuestionarios revelan que el trabajo, los largos desplazamientos y la reducida oferta de becas limitan la participación de las estudiantes en actividades formativas más allá del aula, aunque

quienes participan reconocen su importancia y valoran los espacios de convivencia de la carrera. Las entrevistas evidencian procesos formativos atravesados por la clase social y por las relaciones de poder de género y raza. Se destacan las redes de apoyo, los vínculos y las amistades en la universidad; la construcción identitaria y del sentido de pertenencia mediante actividades como la extensión, la ayudantía y la incorporación a proyectos de investigación; y el contacto con contenidos académicos relevantes. Se concluye que, mientras los cuestionarios evidencian las condiciones materiales y sociales que limitan o favorecen la formación universitaria, el análisis de los procesos de biografización revela cómo estas condiciones son vividas, interpretadas y resignificadas a partir de las cuestiones construidas por las estudiantes en diálogo con los repertorios académicos, constituyendo así su relación biográfica con el aprender. La articulación de estos procedimientos permite relacionar interpretaciones singulares-sociales con condiciones de existencia compartidas, profundizando la comprensión de los procesos formativos investigados.

Palabras clave: Jóvenes universitarias; Procesos formativos; Enfoque biográfico.

Introductionⁱ

The article seeks to discuss the methodological pathways and analyze findings from a study on the meanings of formative processes for young women in a Pedagogy program, combining the reading of data produced through questionnaires with the analysis of “biographization” processes, based on biographical interviews with two students in the final years of the program, participants in an outreach project associated with the researchⁱⁱⁱⁱ.

University education is conceived as self-formation (Reis, 2025a), as a critical and authorial appropriation, through which the students’ repertoires of knowledges and questions enter into dialogue, resist, are deepened, and/or are re-signified, based on the cultural and social activities and practices experienced in academic life, in contrast to conceptions of formation as internalization of knowledge (Lessa et al., 2019) or instrumental formation, whose principles currently predominate in Pedagogy programs (Souza, 2024). Dialogical and reflective procedures are proposed in order to research this dimension of university education. Therefore, the objective is to study the biographical relationship with learning, understood as how present issues, built in the articulations between different knowledges, relate to academic content, relationships, and affects that mobilize the person to engage in certain formative processes (Reis, 2024; Reis, Charlot, 2025).

Although there are studies on university students and their formative processes (Moraes, 2017; Fleig; Bolzan, 2017; Sá; Monici; Conceição, 2022), gaps remain as to how they articulate and resignify academic experiences and knowledges built in other spaces, permeated by markers of class, gender, and race. The study contributes to this discussion by addressing issues related to the relationships between structural

challenges that affect the persistence and the singular-social modes of appropriating the formative processes experienced.

With a qualitative, socio-anthropological, and hermeneutic approach (Paillé and Mucchielli, 2018), the study adopts (auto)biographical research (Delory-Momberger, 2024; Passeggi, 2021; Souza, 2023) and favors the analysis of self-narratives produced through reflective procedures. In these procedures, participants experience processes of biographization, through which they give form to their lived experiences, in different languages, such as oral and written languages (Delory-Momberger, 2024). Knowledge is understood as situated, interpretive, and produced in the relationship between participants and researchers. From this perspective, the very participants undergo different processes of biographization throughout the research (Reis, 2025a). By narrating their stories, they configure and reconfigure lived experience (Ricoeur, 2010), interpret the social world based on the places they inhabit, the social and cultural practices they experience, the knowledge they mobilize, and the power relations that permeate their experiences. These processes can contribute to the self-formation of the participants by enabling the articulation, resignification, and identification of issues that challenge them. The singular social dimensions of the analyzed narratives, considering the theoretical framework, contribute to understanding ways of signifying a given context and modes of appropriation of the formative processes experienced.

The research was conducted in three stages: an exploratory study, with 90 questionnaires, aimed at contextualizing the theme, with the participation of students from the seventh and eighth semesters of the program; group meetings, formalized as an outreach project, with the participation of ten students over one year; and ten biographical research interviews, with young female students of the program, three of whom also participated in the group meetings, in the outreach project, as part of the research^{iv}.

In this article, the choice was for an in-depth analysis of the narratives of two of the ten participants of the outreach project, intentionally selected due to their participation in the different research stages and the richness of the materials produced. This choice enabled following the construction of meanings in successive reflective situations: in the collective reflections carried out in the outreach project and in the subsequent revisit and reconfiguration of these experiences during the biographical interviews. Without intended statistical representativeness, the two trajectories are understood as singular configurations of lived experience that, when articulated with issues recurring in the body of materials, provides a deeper understanding of the social conditions, power relations, and formative processes present in the researched context.

In the analyses, social markers of difference, such as gender, race, and class, are understood as historical and socially constructed categories that organize power relations, ways of life, and inequalities. These markers are understood as dimensions

that structure social and cultural experiences, influencing both the production of meanings and the forms of representation and belonging (Hall, 2006). These categories operate both in the realm of social representations and in the production of social realities, by structuring identities, hierarchies, and processes of subalternization (Schwarcz, 2024). The analysis of these differences considers their articulation with power relations, showing how social experiences, especially those of women, are informed by historical and cultural inequalities. From this perspective, race, gender, and class constitute interconnected systems of domination (hooks, 2013) and, therefore, are used in the article as analytical tools to understand the meanings the students attributed to their narrative processes.

Initially, the concepts that ground the research are presented, followed by a brief exposition of the methodological design. Next, the questionnaire results are described, with the objective of contextualizing the study. Subsequently, we analyzed two narratives from the biographical research interviews with young women, who also participated in the group research procedure: the outreach project. Thus, the article focuses on interpretations of “biographization” processes produced by participants, who shape their lived experiences by articulating the knowledge learned in university life with knowledge from other social spaces.

Theoretical-methodological principles for studying the meanings of formative processes

According to Bernard Charlot (2000), we build our relationship with the world, with others, and with ourselves (relationship with knowledge) based on the meanings attributed to the activities we experience^v. Thus, engaging in formative situations is an always unfinished process. It means mobilizing oneself towards something that has meaning and value for the learner. From a broader perspective, this meaning can be understood by its capacity to produce reflexivity about lived experiences, broadening the reading of reality, as proposed by Paulo Freire (1987), which we call self-formation.

According to Delory-Momberger (2024), the meanings of formative processes are constructed from the biographical capital that each person appropriates in their life and formation trajectory, understood as a stock of available knowledge, according to Alfred Schutz (1979). These biographical capitals are interpreted to provide answers, foster or resignify questions that arise in each person’s relationships with the world, with others, and with themselves: a process we call the biographical relationship with learning. These questions make sense when they find resonance in this biographical capital, which can expand or resignify it. From this perspective, certain relevant academic content (Reis, Melin, 2025) and significant experiences in university life can favor self-recognition processes, as well as the feeling of being recognized by others, or, conversely, can generate feelings of not belonging and of inability to learn.

It is considered important to also identify how asymmetrical class, gender, and race relations permeate the lives and formative processes of young women, Pedagogy students, both in relation to the conditions for participating in social and cultural

activities and practices provided in university life and whether academic knowledge dialogues or not with their questions and in the process of constructing their relationship with teaching. It is also understood that certain formative processes can enable learnings with resonance (Rosa, 2019), combining criticality and sensitivity, which can favor the appropriation of knowledge due to their capacity to affect and touch learners. According to the author, resonance is contrary to alienation in the world, which leaves people invisible and silenced.

Based on these principles^{vi}, in addition to conducting an exploratory study through a questionnaire, with the participation of ninety students, for characterizing the group and initially addressing the theme, the research was centered on group meetings and biographical interviews, which favored biographization processes (Delory-Momberger, 2024), through which the participants gave shape and meaning to the experiences lived in the different times and spaces of university life, articulating knowledges, feelings, and issues raised.

These reflective spaces, conceived as research-formation in the terms of Josso (2010), are simultaneously formative and producer of knowledge for the studies. The constructed materials enable the identification of the singular-social dimension of biographization processes, that is, the predominant issues in each trajectory, resulting from the articulations between the knowledge constituted throughout life and formation and those mobilized in the university experience, as well as the resonances of theoretical references, affects, and sociabilities experienced, as a biographical relationship with learning (Reis, 2024; Reis, Charlot, 2025). Also observed are the socially shared themes, which permeate the set of findings, analyzed in the light of the theoretical framework adopted in the research.

The procedures performed were:

1. *Group meetings set up as an outreach project (research-formation), called: "Youth and the meanings of university life: on the pathways of student engagement,"* with ten female participants, in addition to one male monitor and one female monitor, with the general objective of "[...] *creating possibilities for reflection on themes involving youth and university life with a view to expanding the possibilities for engagement with initial and continuing education in the scope of Pedagogy*" (Felix; Silva-Silva, Reis, 2025, p. 103), our translation, it was a space for dialogue, mediated by pedagogical workshops with the production of poems, mandalas, and other activities, which provided individual reflections on the proposed themes. These reflections were shared in groups and fostered the construction of posts with narrative texts, with images and other modes of expression on individual *blogs*. It is understood that each of the moments of reflection, both individual and collective, provided biographization processes, with reflective resignifications and distancing from the formative processes experienced^{vii}.

2. *Biographical research interviews in education* (Delory-Momberger, 2024; Reis, 2025a) are individual interviews, in which the activity

of narrating is triggered by present-day questions, posed by the researcher, enabling the biographization process, which is not limited to telling stories but provides the involvement of those who participate in it, aiming to rethink and reconfigure lived experience. Some outreach project participants were also included in the interviews.

As it is simultaneously a space for formation and for the production of research materials, the outreach project presents some limitations, with methodological specificities that require consideration. Constituted from intentionally reflective situations, mediated by the researchers, the narrated experiences can be influenced by the established relationships. The researchers participate in the process of constructing narratives and in their interpretation. One of the principles of this type of research is that materials are not an immediate and transparent expression of experiences, but as situated and co-constructed narratives, produced under specific relational, institutional, and temporal conditions.

Some elements of the context in which the research was conducted

The exploratory study with 90 students from the seventh and eighth semesters used a questionnaire with 57 questions (Reis, 2025b). Most participants are young single women, aged up to 29 years, especially aged between 21 and 25 years, which is consistent with the national results from the Anísio Teixeira National Institute for Educational Studies and Research (INEP) (Brasil, 2024). In gender profile, 73 were women and 14 were men, including one trans man and one non-binary person, confirming the female predominance in the program. Regarding racial self-declaration, 42 identified as Brown/mixed-race, 17 as Black, 30 as White, and one person as Yellow. In socioeconomic terms, 63 students had a household income of up to two minimum monthly wages.

A large part worked more than 20 hours weekly (70%) and 55 made daily commutes longer than one hour. In addition, 33 were the first in the family to be admitted to higher education. The majority attended primary education in public schools (59) and 35 entered university through affirmative action quotas. Daily stays at the university were up to five hours for 70% of the participants. Among the students, 53 did not participate in academic programs; the others received scholarships for permanence, teaching initiation, research, teaching assistantship, or other modes, indicating limited access to opportunities for expanding academic experience.

Regarding professional integration, 37 students were already working in the education field, mainly as hired staff or interns. Regarding extracurricular studies, most dedicated up to six hours per week. Situations of prejudice were reported by 14 participants, involving episodes of fatphobia, homophobia, and racism.

The open-ended questions on the questionnaire were answered by some of the

students, resulting in 38 accounts on memorable experiences and 32 suggestions for improvement for the program. Supervised internships were the most cited formative experiences, followed by teaching promotion, outreach, and undergraduate research programs. Teachers, subjects, study groups, and social gatherings were also mentioned as important spaces for socialization and support. Notably, the places of greatest well-being on *campus* included the classroom, the library, the cafeteria, and the social areas (Reis, 2025b).

Despite the prevalence of positive accounts, three students reported feelings of discomfort or not belonging. A notable case was that of a student mother who, after explaining that she would need to leave class to attend to her child, heard from the teacher that “*only those who can, should attend university.*” This episode shows power relations and gender inequalities still present in the university setting, especially in the case of young mothers who face difficulties in reconciling motherhood and studies (Reis, 2025b).

Analytical framework for materials produced in the research, emphasizing the biographical research interviews

Delory-Momberger (2024) proposes the analysis of the biographical research interview, drawing inspiration from the procedures of “[...] case reconstruction, developed within the scope of Ulrich Oevermann’s objective hermeneutics and narrative analysis approaches, developed from Fritz Schutze’s works” (Delory-Momberger, 2024, p. 190, our translation). “Narrative analysis consists in a constant back-and-forth movement progressively enriching itself between the structures of narration and the structures of experience” (Delory-Momberger, 2024, p. 191, our translation). Thus, the researcher is part of the object they study (Delory-Momberger, 2014).

The interviews are guided by three or four thematic axes that function as narrative invitations. After transcription, the questions are omitted and textualization is carried out, in which the narrative is reorganized into a continuous text, preserving the atmosphere of orality, the participant’s style, and their vocabulary (Kondratiuk, 2024). The analysis of the interviews occurs in two dimensions that articulate: the singular-social dimension of the biographization process and the dimension of socially shared themes (Reis, 2025a).

The “singular-social dimension of the biographization process” occurs through the various readings of the textualized interview (Reis, 2025a). The material is organized into units that articulate temporal and thematic connections. The analysis of each interview identifies the vital tone and mobilizes the analytical categories of “recurring motifs” and “biographical management of motifs,” according to the theoretical framework of Delory-Momberger (2014, 2024).

The motifs show themes or questions that structure the interpretation of lived

experience and express significant concerns, challenges, and questions. While the biographical management of motifs shows how the participant negotiates such questions with personal and collective resources and with socio-structural conditions, allowing the identification of mobilized knowledges, ways of addressing situations. At the end of the interpretive process of each interview, there emerge the identification of the “biographical relationship with learning” (Reis, 2024; Reis, Charlot, 2025), understood as how the present questions of each person, as singular-social constructions permeated by knowledges, affects, and relationships, produce engagements in relation to certain formative processes.

The second dimension of the analysis, called the “dimension of socially shared themes,” occurs through the identification of recurring meanings and themes in the set of research findings, analyzed in the light of the theoretical frameworks that ground the study (Reis, 2025a).

Analysis of two biographical research interviews with young students who also participated in the outreach course^{viii}

Ten biographical research interviews were conducted with young female students in the final semesters of the Pedagogy program, with the central question being to narrate the significant formative processes experienced at the university and in other spaces. The constructed narratives allowed the participants to carry out a work of configuration and reconfiguration of lived experience, according to Ricoeur (2010), enabling the identification of biographical capitals (Schutz, 1979) mobilized to interpret the research questions, as well as to apprehend dialogues between knowledges, concerns, and questions that are produced in the articulations between the formative processes valued in the program and in other spaces. However, due to the page limit of the article, it presents only the analyses of the interviews of two young women who participated in the activities of the outreach project, whose dense material shows indications of this process, which we call their biographical relationship with learning (Reis, 2024; Reis, Charlot, 2025).

Analysis of the singular-social dimension of the biographization process for Luíza

The narrative of Luíza, a 22-year-old, married, childless, night-student, presents as a vital tone or theme: “the tension between religion and academic culture in her self-formation.” This theme permeates the narrative, also being the main present question that leads her to address the meanings of university education.

Her family is composed of her mother and three siblings, having had her entire school trajectory in the public education system. She identifies as Christian and underscores religion as a guiding element for values and choices in her life. She notes: “[...] I am a Christian person. [...] That orients many things in my life.”

The following can be identified as recurring themes or motifs: material and symbolic challenges for engaging in university formative processes; significant formative processes; ambiguous meanings about youth experiences and outreach projects as part of research: listening and belonging; self-formation: broadening of the meanings of Pedagogy. The following ways are how she faces such questions, within the context in which she is included, as a biographical management of motifs: husband support; building a network of friends; participation in other formative spaces beyond the classroom, such as in the Institutional Program for Undergraduate Research Scholarships (PIBIC); the outreach group; and knowledges acquired in certain courses.

1. Material and symbolic challenges faced for engaging in the formative processes of the Pedagogy program

The recurring themes or motifs include material challenges faced in the Pedagogy program: commute difficulties, socioeconomic challenges to remain in the program. These motifs are articulated with her life trajectory. Her “single” mother and “family provider” encouraged her children to study to overcome social class difficulties. Luíza, in turn, also sought to escape the predestination of the women in her family, who would forgo their life projects to care for the elderly and sick. Therefore, the social class and gender challenges mobilized Luíza to continue her studies, opting for a Pedagogy program, considered a safe course to enter the job market. As biographical management of these motifs, we identified the husband’s support in relation to studies, helping with transportation, routine organization, and acquisition of necessary equipment for studies. This support, according to her, constitutes an affective, material, and symbolic sustenance network, which favors the continuity of her university trajectory. Thus, her case presents issues experienced by other young women in the research, that is; how inequalities in material living conditions impact the possibilities of academic, social, and cultural practices. The research collaborator also notes that, by establishing bonds with people with whom she feels comfortable talking, sharing difficulties, and asking for help, the university experience becomes more positive.

Another recurring motif concerns the symbolic challenge referring to fears of not being accepted in the academic culture due to her religiosity. Despite explaining that most teachers are respectful, she extensively recounts a negative situation that marked her formative process. It refers to a class in which the teacher discussed a text about conservatism.

Who considers themselves conservative in this room? [...] Why do you consider yourselves conservative? These people went on to explain: ‘Look, I consider myself conservative because the idea of conservatism is tied to Christianity. [...] Depending on the teacher's conduct, we are afraid of what to say, we are ashamed to take a stance by saying, for example, that we are Christian [...]. It seems that from the moment a person calls themselves Christian, they are completely discredited.

She narrates about a tense climate that was established in the classroom, especially due to the debate between her colleagues and the teacher. In this context, there is a fear of not being accepted or understood in the academic culture, marked, in her perception, by values, debates, and positions that may clash with her beliefs. The emphasis in this episode narrated by the student seems to show a tension between the “Christian” values that anchor her “choices” and positions at the university and in life, with the dimension of “conservatism” discussed in the classroom.

It is understood that in formative processes, classroom moments of questioning, which confront the students' biographical capital, interpreting students about their values and beliefs, are also productive, such as, for example, in this case, by challenging lifestyles and values previously established by students, such as the “Christian” discursive position.

Thus, the attribution of formative meanings can produce multiple modes of processing learnings about the issue. One of these modes can be the interpellation of the student to reposition themselves in relation to the questions presented in the classroom or to undertake the attempt to establish themselves as subjects in the face of the religious discourse. According to Foucault (2017, p. 205), morality is “[...] a set of values and rules of action that are recommended to individuals through the intermediary of various prescriptive agencies,” including religion. Foucault (1984, p. 34, our translation) designated the relationship of subjects to moral conduct as “morality of behaviors.” In this relationship, it is necessary that subjects produce themselves in relation to moral prescriptions, assimilating these rules as a reference. That is, the “morality of behaviors” is “the way by which individuals establish their relationship with [the] rule” (Foucault, 1984, p. 34, our translation) and “recognize themselves as bound by the obligation to put it into practice” (Foucault, 1984, p. 35, our translation).

2. Formative processes considered significant in the program

The student notes, among the formative processes that marked her journey in the program, the courses that articulate theoretical discussions with pedagogical practice, such as Psychopedagogical Foundations, Didactics, and Educational Management. These allow student engagement with school knowledge (Charlot, 2000), valuing methodologies that favor dialogue, text discussion, author systematization, and the relation between theory and practice. In contrast, she points out that courses perceived as fragmented or disorganized hinder the construction of meaning and the feeling of learning. Another significant formative process was her entry into the Undergraduate Research Program (PIBIC), considered one of the most remarkable experiences in her university journey.

The PIBIC gave me encouragement because I was afraid of not getting a space, of not feeling

like I belonged. I got excited because I had the chance. [...]. When I was admitted to the PIBIC to study formative spaces, I was excited because I started to make links with the reflections I already had from the different formative spaces, and from the absence of some formative spaces.

The entry into PIBIC can be analyzed as a biographical management of motifs because the student begins to feel a sense of belonging to the academic culture, overcoming the fear of not being accepted due to her religiosity, as well as strengthening the desire to continue her studies in a master's program. Her reflections note the experiences in PIBIC as learnings with resonance (Rosa, 2019), affecting her significantly by providing self-recognition as a university student. The issue of the fear of not being accepted in university life due to her religiosity is revisited, therefore, in another way. Her participation in PIBIC, the main federal program for undergraduate research scholarships—highly competitive and which is only granted to a portion of undergraduate students in Brazilian universities—seems to indicate that the Christian religion does not necessarily constitute an obstacle to the student's integration into the academic and scientific field of the university.

3. Outreach project as part of research: listening and belonging

Participation in the outreach course represented an important formative experience for Luíza, contributing to changes in her relationship with the university and with other students. She reports that initially she was not interested in participating in outreach activities, mainly because she considered herself a shy person and believed that these spaces would require much exposure and interaction. However, upon joining the group, she began to perceive the environment as a welcoming space for dialogue and sharing experiences.

The group fostered in the student a sense of belonging to the university, especially upon realizing that her insecurities and doubts were similar to those of other classmates. Luíza notes: *"The outreach course gradually helped me with this sense of belonging, to the university. I had a lot of that fear, and then the research group, in general, entering PIBIC and then the outreach group, were fundamental in that sense."* Thus, the outreach experience is reported as a formative space with resonance (Rosa, 2019), valued for contributing toward strengthening her confidence in her potential as a university student.

In her narrative, Luíza presents indications of her biographical relationship with learning, permeated by questions that involve the recognition of herself as belonging to the university, placing in dialogue and/or tension the repertoires coming from her religiosity, from certain school contents, as well as those noted as having resonance, both through experiences in PIBIC and in the outreach project.

Analysis of the singular-social dimension of the biographization process for Amanda

At the beginning of the interview, Amanda notes as recurring motif her relation between studies and anxiety, and revisits this theme in other parts of the interview. This question can be considered as one of the indications of her biographical relationship with learning (Reis, 2024; Reis, Charlot, 2025).

Since she entered university, Amanda recognizes that she has undergone profound transformations in her personal and academic formation. The university experience contributed to her broadened reading of the world (Freire, 1987), providing changes in her way of thinking, relating, and understanding herself and the context in which she lives the world. During this journey, she began therapy after a referral from the psychologist of the Dean's Office for University Extension and Outreach (PROEX), a process that significantly impacted her way of dealing with anxiety and different life situations.

During the interview period, Amanda was 23 years old and in the final stretch of her program, with only her Final Course Project (TCC) left to complete. She worked as a PAE (School Support Professional) assistant for a child with autism, in early childhood education. The vital tone or the major theme that permeates her entire narrative refers to "the place of university formation in the recognition of her social condition and as a Black woman, overcoming shyness and anxiety, through engagement in formative activities."

She starts the conversation by stating she is a shy person, who lives with an anxiety disorder, which influenced her experience when she entered the Pedagogy program. She explains that, after finishing high school in São Paulo, she moved to Alagoas with her family and, in that context, went through the university admission process. She opted for Pedagogy as a possible alternative, also influenced by comments from people close to her who highlighted her patience and profile for teaching.

The recurring motifs are: experience at university as a locus for self-formation; the significant place of built friendship bonds; university contributions to her mental health; the strengthening of identity construction through program learnings for self-formation and for teaching. The pursuit of new challenges, such as teaching assistantship, to overcome shyness and anxiety is presented as the biographical management of motifs, as well as the possibility of therapy, provided at the university.

1. Experience at university as a locus of self-formation

In addition to noting that her relationship with studies is marked by anxiety, Amanda presents as a recurring motif the formative experiences lived. These experiences, according to her, nurture her engagement in university life, her modes of relating to the world, to others, and to herself.

She considers the Teaching Profession course, attended in the very first

semester, as memorable. From then on, she begins to question the romanticized view of teaching, often constructed by films and the idea of vocation. At that moment, she realized the program would have a more theoretical and critical approach than she initially imagined, which, instead of alienating her, sparked her interest and admiration for academic discussions. Throughout the first semesters, Amanda began to get involved in various activities beyond the classroom, such as the Brazilian Sign Language (Libras) course and other academic initiatives.

She explains that, in the second semester, her interest in the program's fundamentals intensified, especially in courses related to educational psychology, sociology, and philosophy, which broadened her understanding of educational processes. She notes in her account that academic contents provided reflective distancing, resignifying her relationship with the profession (Charlot, 2000). An important milestone in her journey was her participation in the teaching assistantship program, which began in the third semester, initially motivated by financial need and the encouragement of a friend.

I always see the teaching assistantship as a very important milestone in my process of developing skills as a student and as a teacher. In the teaching assistantship, I learned how to study better. I understood how the teacher planned. This also greatly improved my individual journey as a student, not to mention other projects I participated in.

That experience contributed significantly to the development of academic and personal skills, such as public speaking, producing scientific papers, participating in events, and understanding the process of teaching planning and evaluation. She presents reflections on university activities that are significant for understanding the specific logics of learning in the academic world (Charlot, 2000).

Amanda's drive to overcome her fears by engaging with the program's activities is identified as biographical management of motifs. Despite her shyness and anxiety, Amanda managed to overcome important challenges, such as presenting her first work at the university's Teaching Assistantship Seminar, an experience that marked her initiation in academic production.

In addition to teaching assistantship, Amanda also participated in outreach projects and other academic activities, such as the hospital pedagogy project and the Early Childhood Stimulation Program (PEP). These experiences broadened her participation in university life and reinforced her relationships within the university.

She also notes her participation in the last two outreach projects in which she engaged. One of them, the outreach course called "Counter-Colonial Routes of Community Education," had major importance in Amanda's formative journey by providing moments for reflection on education beyond the limits of the Pedagogy program. Differently from other activities focused on the development of practical skills, this project is noted for promoting discussions, meetings, and collective processes for building materials that encouraged thinking about other ways of educating, engaging in dialogue with different communities, knowledges, and educational practices.

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In this project, we had conversations, we had meetings, we had moments of building materials, and all of them were about thinking beyond the pedagogy program, thinking about other ways of doing education, of working with other communities, with other knowledges.

This formative process, according to Amanda, affected her in the sense of formation with resonance, according to Rosa (2019). The project contributed, according to her, to a process of reflection on other modes of relating to her formation, fostering new perspectives.

2. The significant place of built friendship bonds

A recurring motif for Amanda refers to the construction of her friendship network, after arriving alone from another state, through engagement in the different activities of university life.

Reflecting on her journey, Amanda notes the importance of the relationships built at university, especially with colleagues and teachers, which were fundamental to her involvement in academic projects and activities. These experiences also contributed to the development of tactics for dealing with anxiety and to strengthening her confidence in occupying formation and discussion spaces at the university.

4. Outreach project related to research: affective and reflective view on university experiences

The outreach project carried out as part of this research was one of those cited by Amanda as significant in her formation. She explains that, unlike other academic experiences, more focused on analysis or skill development, this project provided a space for expression and reflection on university experiences, including emotional and subjective dimensions. She notes the construction of the blog and the production of the mandala, which was inserted into the blog. Amanda explains: “[...] Another memorable activity was the mandala, because it was possible to systematize the entire process in a small drawing and without words.”

Some blog posts, according to her, were inspired by the project meetings, moments of collective sharing, and personal reflections on issues such as the university strike, poem writing, and even everyday experiences in the university setting. Thus, the project allowed Amanda to view the university from a more affective and reflective perspective, valuing the sharing of experiences and the construction of meanings about her formation.

3. Strengthening identity construction through university learnings for self-

formation and for teaching

Another fundamental theme, as a recurring motif in Amanda's formative processes, was her process of understanding herself in the world and in her relationships at university, especially as a Black woman from a working-class family.

I developed class consciousness here within the university, even though I was always poor, my parents always had a good financial condition, we were never rich, but we had a stable financial condition. I didn't feel like I belonged anywhere, and when I got to university, I managed to, so I am here. I started having other experiences, then I discovered myself as a Black woman. In therapy, I also discovered issues about my sexuality, I discovered that I was bisexual and several other issues.

Throughout the program, especially in discussions in the course Pedagogical Research and Practice 2 – Gender Relations and Ethnic-Racial Diversities, Amanda began to reflect on her experiences and recognize herself as a Black woman. Academic texts and debates, such as those by Nilma Lino Gomes (2008), on Black hair and identity, awakened memories and reflections on previous experiences, contributing to this process of self-recognition, of self-naming, as a woman and as a Black person.

In the interview, Amanda says that, through the different formative processes experienced at the university, she began to recognize herself as a Black woman. She notes a process of self-construction as a Black woman through the attribution of meanings to educational processes at the university. This movement can be understood based on the reflections of bell hooks (2013), who notes the role of questioning knowledge in transforming perceptions of oneself and of the world. In this sense, the university setting can become a place for questioning social hierarchies and developing new ways of understanding life itself.

Furthermore, the university broadened her social awareness and class consciousness, helping her to better understand her social position and the experiences that marked her trajectory. In this process, she also began to reflect on aspects of her personal life, such as her religiosity and sexuality, recognizing herself as a bisexual person. Thus, it is possible to identify experiences that are permeated by processes of criticality (Freire, 1987) and resonance (Rosa, 2019). These processes involve the power to let oneself be affected by the formative process. Thus, Amanda names as class consciousness; it is a constitutive part of the university formation and that also produces an effect on her activity as a teacher and how she recognizes herself in the world, as a Black, working-class, and bisexual woman.

Finally, Amanda notes that the university has profoundly transformed her relationships and her way of positioning herself in the world, which we call "self-formation." Today, she feels more secure to dialogue, build bonds, and occupy spaces that previously caused her insecurity, recognizing herself as a very different person

from the one who entered university. Thus, self-understanding through the social markers of race, gender, and social class produced another way for the student to position herself in the world: after her university experience, she feels more belonging and secure in occupying spaces.

Amanda's construction as a teacher is also a recurring motif in her narratives, related to self-recognition in relation to her social class condition and her identity construction as a Black woman. Her education had direct impacts on her relationship with teaching, especially through the recognition of her identity as a Black woman. In the interview, she cites the author Kabengele Munanga, whose theoretical production began to influence her pedagogical practice and her way of intervening in situations involving racial issues in everyday school routine. She says: "Kabengele Munanga opened doors for me to think about the construction of the idea of miscegenation in Brazil, of mixed-race people, of various issues. And so it was a very significant course for me to this day, so much so that I chose to be a teaching assistant."

She also explains that she identified the importance of racial representation and racial literacy in the school setting, as she is often the only Black adult in the classroom and, at times, she had to intervene in the very speech of the teacher to prevent the reproduction of racial stereotypes. Thus, Amanda emphasizes that her identity, as a Black woman from a working-class background, has direct influence on her teaching practice, making her more attentive to the inequalities and differences present in the educational setting.

The student's narrative presents how the experienced formative processes, permeated by knowledges, affects, and sensibilities, articulate, resignify her questions, also constructing new questions. Her biographical relationship with learning is marked by the process of self-recognition as a Black woman by challenging the "whitening ideology" present in the university, according to Lélia Gonzalez (2018, p. 171). This process provides a shift in relation to the rationality that hierarchizes knowledges and enables her to build new relationships with academic knowledge, anchored in her experience and racial, gender, and social class identity.

The dimension of the socially shared themes^{ix}

The second dimension of the analysis, called "socially shared themes" (Reis, 2025a), addresses issues that recurrently emerge in the study, notably: material conditions for permanence in the program, sociability and belonging, and the importance of formative processes for self-formation and for the relationship with teaching. It is identified that certain *studied contents and formative activities* resignify and broaden the questions that mobilize the students in their relationships with learning (Reis, 2024; Reis, Charlot, 2025).

The *material conditions for permanence* prove central for the participants,

mostly women from less favored socioeconomic contexts, appearing both in the questionnaires and biographical interviews. These aspects interfere with the possibilities of fully experiencing the formative processes of university life. Notably, the challenges include the long commute to university, as observed in the questionnaires and in the interview with Luíza. Most students work and dedicate a large part of their time to commuting, which can limit their engagement in the different formative dimensions of the program.

Another relevant theme is *sociability and belonging*, fundamental in the constitution of these young women as university students. The program's social gathering areas are valued in the questionnaires, and, in the narratives of Luíza and Amanda, building friendship bonds appears as an important element for the feeling of belonging to the university.

8 Final considerations

Based on the questionnaire results, it can be stated that Luíza and Amanda are part of the group of students with more possibility of participating in formative activities, beyond the classroom. According to them, the subjects, courses, outreach projects, and participation in teaching assistantship, the Institutional Program for Teaching Initiation Scholarships (PIBID), and PIBIC are significant in their journeys, favoring formative processes with reflectivity, criticality, and authorship, and new relationships with teaching.

It is noted that the outreach course is recognized as significant: for Amanda, it provided a more affective and reflective perspective on her university journey in constructing her identity processes; for Luíza, it contributed to increasing her self-confidence, fostering the sharing of experiences and the recognition of her belonging to the university. For both, academic contents acquire meaning when they dialogue with questions and experiences built in different social spaces, constituting their biographical relationship with learning (Reis, 2024; Reis, Charlot, 2025). This process expands their repertoires, provides self-understanding and understanding of the world, and participates in their constitution as students and teachers.

This process allows distanced reflection on their trajectories and experiences, with resonance (Rosa, 2019) for their relationship with knowledge (Charlot, 2000), contributing to self-formation, while expanding the modes of understanding the world, other people, and themselves. Thus, the studies begin to integrate their construction as young students, especially when they dialogue with their repertoire of knowledges and experiences, or "stock of knowledges," as proposed by Delory-Momberger (2024).

Thus, the study reaffirms the importance of ensuring material and symbolic conditions that enable young Pedagogy students to access the various formative processes that integrate university life, especially when these constitute spaces that favor reflectivity and criticality on questions built in the articulations and resignifications

of knowledges appropriated in different social spaces, in dialogue with the plurality of academic contents of the program.

It is concluded, on the theoretical plane, that the findings enable understanding university formation as a process in which contents, affects, sociability, and material conditions acquire meaning in light of the students' trajectories. From this perspective, it is not limited to the transmission of knowledge, but includes its appropriation, which also involves self-recognition, the construction of belonging, and repositioning in the face of power relations. Thus, Luíza and Amanda's experiences show that gender, race, and class constitute the very conditions of learning and permeate the self-construction as students and teachers.

Methodologically, the study shows the potential of the articulation between questionnaires, collective meetings, and biographical interviews. While questionnaires provide the contextualization of shared conditions, biographical procedures show how these conditions are experienced, interpreted, and negotiated in unique trajectories. Carrying out successive moments of biographization provides the reprocessing of experiences and strengthens the authorship of the participants, while requiring from the researchers a reflective stance in relation to the asymmetries and effects produced in the research relationship.

Within the institutional scope, the results indicate the need for material and symbolic permanence policies (Santos, 2009), combining financial support and effective conditions for academic participation, and promoting collective spaces for listening and support, without these initiatives replacing the institutional responsibility for tackling inequalities.

Considering these three dimensions, it can be stated that the originality of the study lies in showing how the questions constituted throughout the students' trajectories are constructed and resignified, as a biographical relationship with learning, which involves engagement in formative processes with resonance, dialogical, reflective, affective, with moments of sociability and possibilities for resignification of academic content (Reis, 2024; Reis, Charlot, 2025). Thus, following the same participants in successive reflective and formative situations enables the configuration and reconfiguration of the lived experiences, recognizing them as interpreters of their formation conditions and producers of knowledges about university experiences.

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Notes

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^{iv} Pseudonyms were used for participant anonymity.

^v This process occurs in three dimensions: epistemic, identity, and social relation with knowledge. See: (Charlot, 2000).

^{vi} See: (Reis, 2025; Reis and Melin, 2025).

^{vii} The work was inspired by the articulation between the “Workshop with reflective blogs” (Reis, 2023) and by another outreach project (Felix; Oliveira, 2020).

^{ix} The analytical deepening of the socially shared themes is not in the article, due to the page limit.