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**ACADEMIC LITERACY  
IN THE ENGINEERING  
COURSE OF A  
HIGHER EDUCATION  
INSTITUTION IN  
MONTES CLAROS (MG)**

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**Abstract:** In the context of linguistic studies, in recent decades, much has been said about the reading and writing skills of students enrolled in undergraduate and even postgraduate courses in Brazil. As the social communication practices, there is a need to understand the importance of academic literacy. This study aims to understand the promotion of literacy in the academic environment of “FIP Moc – Centro Universitário” (UNIFIP Moc) of engineering students. Therefore, it sought theoretical basis mainly in the works of Soares (2004), Street (2010), Kleiman (2008) and Carvalho (2013). The research presented here is justified as qualitative and exploratory. The study made it possible to understand the need to work on the skills and competences of the various textual genres that are part of the academic environment with the students, as some have difficulties when it comes to writing in compliance with the normative dictates of the academy.

**Keywords:** Reading. Writing. Academic Literacy. Engineering course.

## INTRODUCTION

Researchers such as Street (2010) and Soares (2004) have raised questions about the importance of academic literacy during university education. Research works, developed in the field of language, point out that most students present difficulties in appropriating the writing of academic texts, “such as the abstract, the review, the scientific article, the report, among others” (SILVA, 2019, p.2). These difficulties faced by academic students, most of the time, are based on the insertion of new discursive genres inherent to the academic environment, such as scientific articles, summaries and reviews, which become part of the productive life of students, both for the purpose of reading and comprehension as well as writing.

According to Carvalho (2013), even if the student has not had a good schooling with regard to the genres of academic writing, in the years of basic education, during his university education, depending on the curricular structure of the course, he has the possibility of becoming developed in relation to scientific writing and, thus, academic literacy is consolidated in the construction of the knowledge necessary for its formation.

According to Street (2010), it is the role of schools to develop their students’ literacy so that, in the future, they may know how to use writing and reading in the most varied social communication situations. Other authors, such as Soares (2004), define that the assumptions of literacy studies are recent and their emergence is due to the fact that reading and writing skills must overcome the domains inherent to the orthographic and alphabetic system, a fact that makes the person literate in a certain area of human knowledge.

It is important to point out that, in linguistic terms, being literate does not mean merely mastering the rules of writing and speaking, knowledge of the norms established by grammar. Literacy is to establish writing and reading links touched by the social context in which the subject is inserted.

For a dialectical support on academic literacy issues and the realities faced by university students regarding such an approach, we highlight in this research<sup>1</sup> the works of Soares (2004), Assolini and Tfouni (2006), Kleiman (2008), Street (2010), Bakhtin (2011) and Carvalho (2013). Regarding the construction of literacy, observing the use of textual genres in the academic domain, this work seeks Bakhtin’s (1997) concepts. With regard to writing in academic literacy practices, this work is based on Soares (2004) and Street (2010). All of this theoretical support consists of seeking to deepen the

1. Research approved by the Ethics Committee of Plataforma Brasil, registration number CAAE 28524720.7.0000.5109.

much-needed analysis of the confrontations in the construction of academic conditions that favor the implementation of practices that contribute to academic literacy and allow university students to insert themselves in the discursive genres of the academy in a more smooth and less traumatic,

One of the most important issues in relation to writing developed in the academic environment is the recognition of the textual genres that permeate this universe. Texts such as articles, summaries, reviews, essays and memoirs are part of this list of readings and writings that are required of students. Among the most recurrent genres in the academic domain are the article, the critical review, the simple summary and the extended summary. The article genre occupies a prominent space in academic production because it is linked to the reality of constant publication in scientific journals with the most varied qualifications, it is the vehicle in which information circulates more frequently, with regard to the development of science, for bringing what is latest when it comes to scientific advances. The other genres stand out for being valuable instruments of recurrent academic writing in the day-to-day activities in the classroom. In this last aspect, the critical review, the simple and the expanded summary stand out.

According to Carvalho (2013), the review is a textual genre that, due to its peculiarities of reading and writing, regarding the daily life of the academy, can be a good indication of the evidence of the student's academic literacy.

It is necessary to emphasize the importance of the teacher's role regarding the perceptive construction by students of academic textual genres. Encouraging the reading of such texts, proposing reading and debate activities in the classroom is a teaching prerogative and must be performed with an eye always on enhancing academic literacy. In the

development of these activities, texts such as articles, reviews, simple and expanded summaries become more familiar to students in their daily lives in academia and, thus, their academic literacy develops gradually. More critical and prepared subjects for reading and writing confrontations emerge from the moment when literacy practices and events become a proposal constantly developed in the university environment.

The choice of analyzing the academic literacy of engineering students arose from observations made based on this researcher's experience as a professor at "FIP Moc-Centro Universitário" (UNIFIP Moc) for over a decade. Throughout this period, we observed that the academics had incipient reading and writing skills, with difficulties in the development of pedagogical activities in the university context. We believe that, when the student is already in higher education, in addition to their personal experiences, carried over from childhood in the most varied forms of literacy, it has to be taken into account whether this student is also developing in terms of writing and reading in the new academic and scientific discursive domain in which it is inserted. Therefore, it is essential that the IHE (Institution of Higher Education) develop activities that encourage these skills in the student in higher education.

In conducting our pedagogical practices in higher education institutions in the municipality of Montes Claros (Mg), we noticed that students have difficulties when asked to exercise their reading and writing skills. According to the observations made in relation to reading and writing difficulties in the academic domain, we seek, through this present work, to respond to the following problem-situation: academics in engineering courses have knowledge and skills that contribute to the proficient development of academic reading and writing.

This question arises from the moment when it is noticed that undergraduate students from the engineering course, at UNIFIP MOC, present difficulties in relation to the writing and reading of scientific texts, such as articles, reviews and summaries, of this new discursive domain. Many of the students, in addition to not having contact with these types of texts prior to graduation, during basic education, also carry their own reading and writing lags that are shown to promote a “suffering” to the student due to the difficulties they will encounter to carry out the activities of writing and reading in the academy.

## **LITERACY AND LITERACY IN BRAZILIAN EDUCATION**

We started this chapter with some questions that have been frequent in the most diverse Brazilian educational scenarios: What is literacy? What is literacy? Answering these questions is important because they translate the theoretical-methodological knowledge developed by teachers in educational institutions.

For a better understanding of these assumptions, we will present concepts and data based on research work in the educational area that reflect on the importance of literacy and literacy as factors of human relevance for the promotion of subjects as the social entities.

### **LITERACY AND LITERACY: CONVERGENCES AND DIVERGENCES**

As the social communication practices, the definitions of literacy and literacy emerge. Literacy corresponds to the appropriation of the linguistic code, whereas literacy corresponds to the ability to know how to use writing, speaking and reading in different social contexts.

Therefore, being literate does not necessarily mean that the individual is

literate. Literacy has a consolidation process based on the literacy practices to which the subject is exposed. Therefore, thinking about literacy practices becomes fundamental for the good handling of writing and speech in everyday life. However, it is salutary that these two processes be analyzed from their particularities. According to Soares (2004, p.97):

(...) it is necessary to recognize that literacy – understood as the acquisition of the conventional writing system – differs from literacy – understood as the development of behaviors and skills for the competent use of reading and writing in social practices: they are distinguished both in relation to the objects of knowledge and in relation to the cognitive and linguistic processes of learning and, therefore, also of teaching these different objects. This fact explains why it is convenient to distinguish between the two processes. On the other hand, it is also necessary to recognize that, although distinct, literacy and literacy are interdependent and inseparable: literacy only makes sense when developed in the context of social practices of reading and writing and through these practices, that is, in a context of literacy and through literacy activities; this, in turn, can only develop depending on and through learning the writing system (SOARES, 2004, p.97).

For this author, as previously mentioned, the two processes differ, however, they are interdependent, the literate, to have broad and unrestricted appropriation of lexical forms, needs to know how to use them in their social practice. Developing literacy processes without taking into account the subject's literacy is a pedagogical mistake that is established in the teaching-learning process.

In other countries, such as the United States, the dichotomization between literacy and literacy does not exist, since it is understood that being literate, by nature, is already literate. However, in Brazil, this separation process is felt, because in terms

of teaching methods that have been applied throughout the country's educational history, it was understood that first the child is taught to read and write, only then that teaches him to make social use of writing and reading, thus appearing the separation between literacy and literacy.

This dichotomous thought of literacy and literacy was strongly influenced by the use of textbooks which, until the 1980s, only aimed to teach the specificities of reading and writing, with reference to literacy methods and processes.

This separation begins to be debated in Brazil from the 1980s onwards, when there will be an explosion of studies about literacy as a practice to be thought of as a more concrete form of social use of writing and language. According to Soares (2004, p. 06), "In developed countries, or in the First World, the social practices of reading and writing assume the nature of a relevant problem". In other words, it is necessary to understand literacy as a need in training and not just as a teaching or training accessory.

As observed by the author's voice, there was a greater need to seek a better understanding of literacy as a more appropriate way to name writing socialization practices. It was noticed that the concept of literacy alone was not enough for the new educational and social demands, that the subject must have cognitive skills that would enable him as a user of written and spoken language.

With regard to literacy, it is important that educational practices take into account the growing need to create teaching methods that broaden students' horizons in the social practices of reading and writing. It is necessary to think of the school as a place where concepts are not only taught, but which encourages students to know how to use writing and reading in different social communication situations.

According to Soares (2004),

it is necessary to recognize the possibility and need to promote reconciliation between these two dimensions of written language learning, integrating literacy and literacy, without losing, however, the specificity of each of these processes (SOARES, 2004, p.15).

Neglecting such a conciliation between literacy and literacy is not a viable pedagogical path, since those most affected by this non-conciliation are always the students, who, many times, because they are literate, assume they are literate. Educational institutions have a real concern with training students broadly in these two areas, there can be no pedagogical conformism when one of these two educational matrices is not well worked on in education. It is important that teaching practices, especially those involving reading and writing, encourage the broadening of literacy horizons, which have literacy as one of their concerns in relation to the formation of students. Modernly, literacy, according to the understanding of scholars on the subject, such as Soares (2004) and Street (2010), can be understood as a factor of social emancipation and, policy.

The term literacy comes from the need to establish a relationship between knowing how to read and write and, at the same time, knowing how to make social use of writing and reading. A literate person is one who has appropriated the language codes, developed skills regarding the act of reading and writing. To be literate, a person needs to be competent in the use of writing and reading in social practices. These two concepts are important in the social promotion of the individual, who increasingly needs the tools inherent in reading and writing to better fit into the modern and increasingly technological society.

According to Tfouni (2010), the term literacy arises from the awareness of creating a broader designation than the concept established by the literate person, in the words of the aforementioned author, literacy would be a broader view of reading and writing guided by a social amplitude. Kleiman (2008) also emphasizes that literacy comes as a pedagogical concept based on observing “the social impact of writing” and not just mastering language resources, as literacy is defined.

Since the advent of the term literacy, in the 1980s, in Brazil, there has been a need to implement, in the teaching of schools across the country, from basic to higher education, educational practices that would enable people to socially use writing, speech and reading. Therefore, there is a need for teachers, pedagogues and advocates of quality education to develop a clear perception of what the concept of literacy really represents and its approximations in relation to the literacy process. Let us see, then, a definition given by Kleiman (2008, p.18), who says that “[...] we can define literacy today as a set of social practices that use writing, as a symbolic system, and as a technology, in specific contexts, for specific purposes”.

It is seen that the term is complex and has many nuances that go beyond the mere domains of the classroom, as can be seen in the words of Grando (2012),

literacy would be a set of practices with specific objectives and in specific contexts, involving writing. The school, in turn, would be just one literacy agency, among many others, and would carry out just a few literacy practices (GRANDO, 2012, p.05).

Therefore, it is important for schools to rethink their practices, because what is seen, even in the 21st century, is that the school is still understood as a place for memorizing formulas and concepts, which do not have

a direct application in the reality in which students are enrolled. This detached view of reality distances educational teachings from the assumptions of literacy, which take into account that not only memorization of writing and reading concepts are important, but what is done with them socially, that is, how to transpose learning into language into an everyday and effective social application.

In an analysis of the etymological origin of the term literacy, Soares (2009) defines that literacy comes from the English Literacy, which, from the Latin *littera*, designates letter. In the words of the author, “[...] literacy is ‘the condition of being literate’ – giving the word, ‘literate’, a different meaning from the one it has had in Portuguese” (SOARES, 2009, p. 35).

In the Portuguese-linguistic conception, the literate would be the person versed in the letters and those who did not have such domain would be illiterate. However, what Soares (2009) analyzes is that, in fact, literate would be the individual who not only appropriated the writing code, but knows how to use it properly in the most diverse social conditions. However, it still remains in the understanding of many professors that the development of literacy skills is associated only with the mastery of writing norms, of the standard language.

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

### METHOD

Gamboa (2003, p.65) states that “methods, from an epistemological point of view, must be understood as different ways of approaching reality”. Thus, the approach for the development of the investigation was the phenomenological one, a research approach created by Edmund Husserl, in the beginning of the 20th century, influenced by the dynamics of Plato’s and Descartes’ thought. This method consists in the search for a descriptive analysis



of the phenomenon itself, which surrounds the being in its own dynamics of existence. Phenomenology, as a research tool, dives into the subjectivity of an event or phenomenon that needs to be unveiled, revealed to the subjects through observation and description. According to Oliveira, Lopes and Diniz (2008),

The phenomenological description is fundamental, because our usual look does not allow us to evidence the phenomenon in itself. In this approach, the researcher considers his experience in his life world, an experience that is his own, allowing him to question the phenomenon he wants to understand (OLIVEIRA; LOPES; DINIZ, 2008, p.255).

The research presented here, according to the line of thought outlined above, is justified as qualitative or phenomenological, since the human experience can be understood in all its social dynamics in the most varied spaces and it is this aspect that guides the composition of this investigation work. The need to analyze the difficulties encountered by academics, with regard to reading and writing in the academic domain, and which literacy practices are built with students are reflected in this work from the thing itself: literacy.

Therefore, it is evident that the researcher who carries out his work in the phenomenological approach observes and analyzes the nature of the phenomenon that surrounds the research object. With reference to the more general objectives, the research was exploratory, as “it aims to provide greater familiarity with the problem, with a view to making it more explicit or to constitute hypotheses” (GIL, 2002, p.41), through bibliographic survey and data collection, with people who had a direct connection with the researched object, whose purpose is to deepen the knowledge related to the researched subject.

With regard to the instruments for data collection, a questionnaire was used via Google Forms with questions divided into three sections. In the first part of the questionnaire, consisting of nineteen questions, questions were raised about the reading practices of engineering students, mainly within the academic domain. Aspects related to vocabulary understanding, reading agility, interpretation and understanding of the themes seen in the text during reading were questioned. Aspects such as difficulties with scientific language and theoretical basis in the development of research during classes were also situations raised in this part of the questionnaire.

The second section questioned the students about their knowledge of textual modalities in terms of knowing how to distinguish narrative texts from dissertation texts from descriptive texts. In this second part, consisting of nineteen questions, students also answered questions about the importance of producing a text maintaining principles of cohesion and coherence, paragraphing and fidelity to the proposed theme.

Finally, in the third part of the questionnaire, questions were asked about UNIFIP Mocem's interdisciplinary project in relation to its importance as a promoter of academic literacy practices developed by the institution in the first four periods of the undergraduate engineering course.

The students answered questions that covered themes ranging from the type of methodologies used by the teachers in carrying out the activities of the interdisciplinary project to the improvement of reading and writing perceptions promoted by what is considered one of the great literacy practices triggered in the institution's environment. analyzed.

Data collection was carried out in the first half of 2020, in June, through a Google Forms electronic form with closed questions. This resource was used as a means of collecting data due to face-to-face classes, throughout Brazil, being suspended due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Students from different periods of the UNIFIPMoc engineering course answered the questionnaire, constituting a sample composed of thirty-seven students, twenty-five students in the first period, three students in the tenth period, who were adapting in the class, five students in the fifth period, also in the process of adaptation, and four students from the seventh period, also in the process of adaptation.

The choice of this class was due to the fact that it presents students from different periods of the engineering course, a fact that made it possible to observe the different perceptions of reading and writing throughout the course and if there is an evolution in relation to academic literacy.

## DATA PRESENTATION

The questionnaire applied to collect information, together with the students, is based on the curricular reference matrix prescribed for basic education in the Reference Curriculum<sup>2</sup>2019 of Minas Gerais and desired in the political pedagogical project of engineering courses.

Thus, the questionnaire was designed with the objective of identifying the students' perceptions about their reading and writing skills, as well as the practices developed at the university. The initial idea was to collect

2. Reference Curriculum of Minas Gerais, document prepared from the educational foundations set out in our Federal Constitution (CF/1988), in the Law of Guidelines and Bases of National Education (LDB 9394/96), in the National Education Plan (PNE/2014), in the National Common Curricular Base (BNCC/2017) and from the recognition and appreciation of the different peoples, cultures, territories and traditions existing in our state.

3. Resolution Number 5, of December 17, 2009, which establishes the National Curriculum Guidelines for Early Childhood Education. It defines in its Art. 9.º the pedagogical practices that make up the curriculum proposal for Early Childhood Education, which must have as guiding axes, in item III, the following action: to enable children to experience narratives, appreciation and interaction with oral and written language, and coexistence with different supports and oral and written textual genres.

data in person, taking the questionnaires to the rooms so that the students could answer them in the presence of the researcher, however, in the week in which the referred data would be collected, social isolation was decreed and the collection had to be done virtually.

At first, this researcher was very apprehensive about the situation facing the collection of data for the development of this scientific research work. However, the receptivity and participation of students in the research were satisfactory and the anguish dissipated. For the organization and analysis of information, we organized the following categories: reading practices; knowledge of textual modalities and the interdisciplinary project of UNIFIP Moc as a proposal for academic literacy.

## READING PRACTICES

In the first part of the questionnaire, we sought information about the students' reading practices with reference to some genres and media prescribed in official documents. The first question considered the Reference Curriculum of Minas Gerais, which was redesigned based on the National Common Curricular Base (BNCC), intended for basic education<sup>3</sup>, which prescribes, from kindergarten onwards, the teaching of varied textual supports and genres for children. The approach led the academic to the following reflection: "in relation to reading practice, do I read newspapers, magazines, articles and periodicals?"



Of the 37 academics who participated in the research, 11 (29.7%) say they have the habit of reading in relation to the textual modalities that are presented in the approach and that are primordial in the academic environment, such as, for example, articles and reviews. Eighteen students, 48.6%, claim that from time to time they have the habit of reading in relation to genres in the academic domain. If we think, then, in terms of reading practice for the improvement of academic literacy, we have a percentage of more than 78.3% of students (twenty-nine students) who deal with reading, even if not frequently. However, 21.6% (eight students in the sample) stated that they did not have the habit of reading newspapers, magazines, periodicals or articles, which poses challenges to be faced by teachers in the exercise of their activities. Note, therefore, that the teaching practice must be thought and reflected in the sense of how to attract this student to the scope of reading, since this one, probably, had the due stimuli in his basic formation for the reading done in a precarious way. This intervention can be carried out through pedagogical practices that arouse the interest and understanding of the young academic in the readings that surround the discursive environment of the academy, seeking to bring him to this reading and writing environment through practices that develop the interest from the student to academic production.

Inducing students to attend reading spaces at the university must be a prerogative of the faculty, in the sense of improving the level of literacy through effective reading and writing practices.

In this bias, students were asked how often they go to the library space in the academic environment. 43.2% (sixteen students) state that, from time to time, they frequent the library space, this data, added to those who say they frequent the referred space of

reading, 18.9% (seven students) totaling a percentage of 62.1% (twenty-three students), a fact that, for standards of scientific research, reading and writing, is a good indicator for the development of academic literacy. It is necessary to take into account the fact that 37.8% (14 students) of the academics interviewed say they do not go to the library, this points to difficulties that not only students but also professors will face during the undergraduate semesters in a course that it requires a lot of dedication on the part of students with regard to academic reading.

One of the factors that possibly contribute to the non-use of the university library by students may be the difficulty of accessing this space outside of class hours, in addition to the low demand from professors for the use of this collection, and also aggravated by remote work.

Although students claim that they do not go to the library, this information does not seem to interfere with their scientific reading, which can be seen in the next research question: do I try to read scientific works within my professional training, even if not requested by anyone? Thirteen students (35.1%) claim to read even though they are not asked by the teacher, which, added to 40.5% (15 students) of those who say they read from time to time, corresponds to 75.6% of the research collaborators (twenty eight students).

However, 24.3% (nine students) say they do not read if they are not requested by someone, in this case, the professors. If the academic is not predisposed to seek readings to broaden the horizons of his knowledge, this makes it difficult to develop improvements in the level of literacy, especially the academic one. Based on this data, academic literacy can be developed with practices that arouse interest in reading, even if it is not mandatory. Reading and writing habits are crucial for building a good level of literacy during student training.

Even if the poll shows a large majority that seeks reading without a prior requirement, it is necessary to think about that portion of students who, in theory, will not seek academic readings if they are not requested by someone. The teacher's perception of this reality is a decisive factor for reading and writing practices to really develop lasting skills and competences in students who are undergoing training in the engineering course.

### **KNOWLEDGE OF TEXTUAL MODALITIES.**

In the second part of the research questionnaire, with the students of the engineering course at UNIFIPMoc, issues related to textual modalities and their specificities were addressed. In this part of the questionnaire, the researcher's gaze was directed to the perceptions that students have about the production of texts and the characteristics that involve each modality. The first question addressed whether the students knew what the textual modalities were: narration, description and dissertation.

From the answers obtained, it can be seen that a majority, 33 students (89.2%), are aware of what textual modalities are in terms of the concepts of narration, description and dissertation, a fact that demonstrates that the work carried out by teachers of basic education is being efficient, since the mentioned content is foreseen in the high school curriculum. Only a small portion, 2.7% (one student in the surveyed sample), claims not to know what are the dissertation, narration and description modalities.

For those who claim not to know what textual modalities are, it is important to emphasize the need to propose in the development of disciplines related to the preparation of students in relation to their insertion in the domains of academic writing; textual production workshops, starting from

the basic modalities and only later entering them into the production of scientific writings. This pedagogical practice, developed through reading and writing practices, based on preliminary concepts of textual production modalities, will increase the level of academic literacy, establishing a better relationship between students and the typical writings of the university domain.

Students were asked about taking into account the importance of text production for better communication. In this regard, twenty-nine students (78.4% of students) answered that they understand text production as an important factor for their communication. However, six students (16.2%) say that, from time to time, they understand that such concern is important in communication and two students (5.4%) understand that it is not important to take into account good textual production as a communication factor.

To take into account the importance of writing texts is a factor that contributes to the development of academic literacy. Therefore, it is important to encourage writing throughout academic activities so that those who say they do not attach importance to the production of texts can be encouraged to write and realize how important the writing skill is for building the communication process.

### **UNIFIPMOC INTERDISCIPLINARY PROJECT AS AN ACADEMIC LITERACY PRACTICE**

In this research data presentation section, we will address the interdisciplinary project of UNIFIPMoc as a literacy practice developed by the higher education institution analyzed here. In order to face the difficulties presented by students with regard to academic reading and writing, UNIFIPMoc proposes the development of an academic project in which all course subjects, throughout the semester, analyze a common theme and, based on this

approach thematic, all the reading and writing practices in which the engineering student will be involved in that period are designed.

UNIFIPMoc's interdisciplinary project, as an academic literacy practice, instigates the process of scientific reading and writing, through textual genres and workshops that are offered to students and teachers so that know-how is progressively built. The development of academic writing textual genres is an important tool for students to relate to scientific production from an early age, understand the importance of the act of writing and reading in the university discursive domain environment, establish intertextual dialogues in their productions and, the more importantly, they go, with each reading, with each writing, becoming academically literate, becoming more familiar with the demands of reading and writing that are naturally imposed in the university environment.

As part of the process of developing academic literacy, the interdisciplinary project proposes, in the area of engineering, the presentation of a prototype developed by academics to fulfill the semester credits. The presentation of the prototype is followed by an analysis of the language used by the students during the presentation by a panel that analyzes whether the message passed was appropriate, understandable and whether it presents an evolution in relation to the social use of writing and language. reading, which corresponds to literacy. For Severino (2007), scientific work,

[...] refers to the production process of scientific knowledge itself, an epistemological activity of apprehending the real; at the same time, it also refers to the set of study, research and reflection processes that characterize the student's intellectual life [...] (SEVERINO, 2007, p. 17).

Through the author's words, one sees the importance of scientific work as a construction of knowledge. Investing in educational practices that foster knowledge and epistemological perception of their profession in students is fundamental in the academic teaching process. The UNIFIPMoc seeks to provide academics with educational practices that put them face to face with the realities that are present in society. Through its educational action centers, society benefits from academic practices that meet the needs that people have in their daily lives.

It can be said that these practices contribute to the development of academic literacy since the student can exercise their reading and writing in the social sphere. The subject menus are constructed taking into account the dialogue that must exist between theory and practice, encouraging the construction of multiple knowledge in the student's perception. It is important to point out that there is an inconsistency in the project when asking first-year students to produce textual genres inherent to the academic domain, often advanced to the reality of those who have just entered the new discursive domain, since some of these genres, such as articles and reviews, require in-depth theoretical and methodological mastery of topics in all disciplines.

These textual genres (articles, essays, reviews, simple and expanded summaries) are worked on in practical classes of instrumental Portuguese that, weekly, lead the student to produce scientific texts as a way of encouraging academic literacy.

The analysis of the interdisciplinary project is one of the components that arise from the research object that guides this entire work: students of the engineering course have knowledge and skills that contribute to the proficient development of academic reading and writing.

In order to answer this research question, the interdisciplinary project, which is carried out every six months in all undergraduate courses and which presents a specific theme for each area of knowledge. At the end, written productions are collected, in the scientific field, from the students as the final products of all the work proposed by the project during the semester.

In the first approach, students were asked whether the UNIFIPMoc interdisciplinary project develops reading and writing skills within the course disciplines. Thirty-three students (89.2% of students) believe that the project achieves this objective and only three students (8.1%) say that the project does not meet these reading and writing demands. For the purposes of academic literacy, the development of reading and writing skills are crucial for the good performance of students when they have to excel in moments of social application of reading and writing in the most varied environments.

2.7% (one student) of the research collaborators stated that, from time to time, the project develops reading and writing skills. Analyzing the responses, it is clear that an absolute majority of students understand the project's contribution to the development of the basic elements of literacy. Enabling a wide construction of elements that favor reading and writing must be an objective always sought by the disciplines that make up the engineering course, in the sense of increasing the student's literacy level. By prescribing reading and writing practices, academic literacy is developed, and the construction of textual genres of the university domain becomes a concrete reality for engineering students.

Finally, the engineering course students were asked if the interdisciplinary project of the UNIFIPMoc develops academic literacy practices and the concept of literacy within

the engineering professional's field of activity was explained to the students before they answered.

Through the analysis of the answers, it is noticed that 86.5% of the students (thirty-two students) that make up the sample of this research understand that the project is effective in terms of the development of academic literacy, with a minority of 2.7 % (one student) who understands that UNIFIPMoc's interdisciplinary project does not contribute to improving literacy in the university environment. This fact shows that it is important to think of literacy as an opportunity for the student to build a path of reading and writing that will help him, in the future, to know how to use writing, speaking and reading in the most varied social realities.

Thinking about literacy, in the light of the critical theory of education, is a reality that must be sought by all undergraduate courses so that education is not just an act of imparting content, formulas or concepts, but rather, promoting the emancipation of students, giving them the condition to think about their own existence in a dialectical and epistemological way.

## FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

In the course of this work, we seek to understand the promotion of literacy in the academic environment of UNIFIPMoc, in the engineering course. With this objective in mind, we discussed the development of academic literacy as an essential element for the use of reading and writing throughout graduation. Taking this premise as a starting point, we determined our research problem, which consisted of questioning whether engineering students have knowledge and skills that contribute to the proficient development of academic reading and writing.

Based on this questioning, we resorted to a theoretical contribution that would

support our scientific research work and that could, in the best way, bring clarity about the effectiveness of literacy practices in the engineering course, mainly focused on the development of the interdisciplinary project of the higher education institution analyzed here.

Specifically, we seek, through phenomenological research, to explore knowledge related to academic literacy, to promote a reflection on the literacy of undergraduates of the engineering course, based on the researcher's experiences and identify the measures adopted by the higher education institution (UNIFIPMoc) against the level of literacy presented by their students.

The perception presented above by the students about their skills and knowledge of reading and writing differs from the experiences lived by the researcher, during the instrumental Portuguese classes, when it was found that many cannot read and write texts in the academic domain, which requires careful planning. of all linked teachers to the engineering course with regard to reading and writing practices worked within the course.

Therefore, we conclude this work with the feeling that this research is a starting point for a consistent practice, on the part of this researcher and, above all, professor, in pedagogical and educational terms of fostering the concepts that guide academic literacy among students of engineering of UNIFIPMoc.



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