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Indigenous knowledge and cultures in the Master's degree in Letters at UEMASUL: teaching practices and the applicability of laws 10.639/2003 and 11.645/2008

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Abstract: This paper examines how the Master's degree in Letters at UEMASUL complies with Laws 10.639/2003 and 11.645/2008 through its work with Indigenous knowledge and cultures. To achieve this, documentary research with a qualitative approach was conducted. Thus, the objective of this study is to analyze the actions taken to promote ethnic-racial literacy in this postgraduate program. It is noteworthy that after seeking answers to the guiding question, it was identified that Indigenous themes are addressed in the course in the disciplines and in the researches developed by students, from both linguistic and literary perspectives. However, the theme is addressed with greater emphasis in two disciplines: Memory and Regionality and Orality, Writing, and Indigenous Cultural Identities. Thus, we delimited the focus of this work to both. The discussion of the data was based, in particular, on the works on Indigenous literatures from the perspective of Graúna (2013) and Thiél (2016) and on literary literacy by Street (2014). The results indicate that this master's program has contributed to literacy for ethnic diversity, working with works with elements of indigenous identities and knowledge, which points to the relevance of this study, considering that the reading and study of indigenous literature can contribute to the valorization of cultural diversity and the decolonization of knowledge, being an important pedagogical tool for the formation of critical and engaged readers.

Keywords: law 11.645/2008; law 11.639/2003; indigenous knowledge and cultures; teaching practices; master's degree in Letters.

1 Introduction

Brazil boasts considerable ethnic and cultural diversity, the result of a long process of contact between indigenous peoples and people from various parts of the world, including Africans, Europeans, and Asians. However, the country's official recognition as multiethnic only came about through the so-called Citizen Constitution, the Federal Constitution of 1988 (CF/1988). Among other provisions regarding ethnic diversity, this establishes culture as a fundamental right. The State must guarantee its promotion for all citizens, recognizing and protecting its expressions within the national

territory, ensuring equal treatment and combating discrimination, particularly against Indigenous and African peoples.

This is because respect for and guarantee of cultural plurality are essential for a people to establish themselves as democratic, inclusive, and promote social justice. To achieve this, governments and society as a whole must consider public policies that value ethnic-racial and cultural diversity, respect differences, and assist the State in guaranteeing and promoting this right in its symbolic, economic, and civic dimensions. Thus, in the field of education, the Law of Guidelines and Bases of National Education – LDBEN 9.394/96 and the National Curricular Guidelines for the Education of Ethnic-Racial Relations and for the Teaching of Afro-Brazilian and African History and Culture (Brazil, 2004), are presented as two instruments of the legal system, which bring important determinations for the issue of diversity in this multiethnic and pluricultural Brazil, which greatly boosted discussions on the subject, both in schools, universities and political spaces, thus resulting in the elaboration of other public policy actions such as ethnic-racial quota laws, among other affirmative actions aimed at minority and marginalized ethnic groups, with which the country has a historical debt .

Even recognizing that Brazil is a multiethnic country, with cultural diversity present in all regions, and with the provisions of the Federal Constitution (1988), Law of Guidelines and Bases of National Education (LDBNE, 1996), and National Curricular National Council (CNP, 1998), this diversity does not receive due visibility and respect, and is often used as a reason for physical and symbolic violence. Even schools and universities, where prejudice should be combated and diversity respected, remain spaces of exclusion in many institutions. In this scenario, the enactment of Law 10.639/2003 represents an action to ensure that ethnic diversity was included in schools, establishing the mandatory inclusion of the theme “Afro-Brazilian History and Culture” in the official curriculum of Basic Education, which was later amended by Law 11.645/2008, which determined that Art. 26-A of Law No. 9.394, of December 20, 1996 (Brazil, 1996, art. 26-A) , would come into force with the following wording:

Art.26- A In public and private elementary and secondary education establishments, the study of Afro-Brazilian and indigenous history and culture becomes mandatory.

§ 1º The programmatic content referred to in this article will include various aspects of the history and culture that characterize the formation of the Brazilian population, based on these two ethnic groups, such as the study of the history of Africa and Africans, the struggle of black people and indigenous

peoples in Brazil, Brazilian black and indigenous culture and black and indigenous people in the formation of national society, recovering their contributions in the social, economic and political areas, pertinent to the history of Brazil.

§ 2º The related content to Afro-Brazilian history and culture and that of Brazilian indigenous peoples will be taught throughout the school curriculum, especially in the areas of artistic education and Brazilian literature and history.

These laws were created so that the Brazilian people, especially non-Indigenous people, would know and consequently value their ancestry, since their main objective was to include in school curricula the mandatory work on “Afro-Brazilian and Indigenous History and Culture” However, what has been observed is that, in these years of their existence, what has been worked on, disseminated, and promoted, predominantly, were ethno-racial issues related to African and Afro-descendant peoples, thus leaving a gap in the presence of Indigenous knowledge in the school space, as pointed out by the research of Paladino and Russo (2016) and Costa (2022). Therefore, given this gap, this work will focus on compliance with the law in relation to Indigenous issues.

Throughout this historical trajectory, Brazilian education, particularly that offered in urban schools and universities, established the knowledge inherited from the colonizers as the standard. Consequently, a serious and pronounced process of silencing has occurred ever since, whether through genocide or the epistemicide of Indigenous knowledge and practices. In this context, Magno (2020, p. 201) emphasizes that when it comes to the education of the Brazilian people, one must reflect “[...] on economic exclusion, groups holding power, racism, sexism, and all other discriminatory actions against ethnic groups.” And one of the privileged places for this reflection is educational institutions, as Libâneo (2011, p. 80) argues:

The school [university] is a place for teaching and disseminating knowledge, a tool for the working classes to access elaborated knowledge; it is also an educational means of socializing students into the adult social world. Education, as a technical means of communication, should provide everyone with a high-level cultural and scientific education; socialization, as a sociopolitical means of communication, should foster the formation of the social personality in the face of a new culture.

However, what we observe is that this mediation has not been happening as it should. Even though information and guidance on laws 10.639/2003 and 11.645/2008 have already been disseminated, many teachers still abstain from their role as trainers and sociopolitical mediators, failing to address topics that are so relevant to the critical

and civic development of their students, prioritizing Western knowledge and practices and disregarding and/or relegating to the background what refers to Indigenous and African peoples. This happens because, as Libâneo (2011, p. 83) states: “The curricular organization, especially the selection of content [...] is an impoverished model of education designed for the elite.”

Therefore, if working on ethnic-racial themes and issues is not the objective of those who prepare, produce or reproduce the textbooks and literary books distributed in schools, it should be the teacher's, who must develop his/her professional practice “[...] researching and reflecting on his/her teaching action” (Pimenta, 2011, p. 27), so that he/she can mediate and construct knowledge that allows the student to look at the other with respect, taking into account cultural relativism, as one human being should look at another human being. From this perspective, it is from this perspective of knowledge builder that the teacher reframes education with a teaching of “living social practice” (Pimenta, 2011, p. 24), since he or she “[...] must always be available for adaptations and new learning” (Antunes, 2019, p. 33). And we believe that one of the possibilities for new learning lies in the use of literature and other Indigenous knowledge in classes, so that work can be developed that motivates and promotes critical positions on the many versions of Brazilian histories.

We also believe that this movement can contribute to deconstructing stereotypes about Native peoples, since much of the “failure to teach issues related to Indigenous history is reflected in the fact that we fail to even see the students themselves, their demands, and their differences” (Magno, 2020, p. 204). The author also points out that “[...] we fail to see people as people. The plurality of our students tends toward homogenization, both in the way we teach and assess, and in the development of citizenship” (Magno, 2020, p. 204).

Therefore, teacher training (initial and/or continuing) that aims to contribute to literary literacy for ethnic diversity, with texts by Indigenous authors, is one way to confront prejudice, make Indigenous peoples visible and recognized as native peoples, and assist students and teachers in developing activities with Indigenous themes. Based on this premise, this research aims to seek answers to the following problem: How are the activities of the UEMASUL Master's in Letters carried out to comply with Laws No. 10,639/2003 and No. 11,645/2008, with regard to the knowledge and history of indigenous peoples? Thus, the first hypothesis is that teacher training in Indigenous

themes, with references from Indigenous authors, is of considerable significance for planning classes to retell Brazil's history from the perspective of Native peoples. The second is that, by addressing Indigenous themes in the classroom, students begin to identify, perceive, and recognize Indigenous peoples, freeing themselves from the stereotypes ingrained over centuries.

And in order to seek to answer the research problem, we defined the following objective: to analyze how the actions of the teachers of the Master's in Letters, at the State University of the Tocantina Region of Maranhão - UEMASUL, comply with Laws Nº 10.639/2003 and Nº 11.645/2008 in their pedagogical practices involving indigenous knowledge and cultures, as well as to debate the students' perceptions of these practices in the classroom. The timeframe was defined as 2019 to 2024, which corresponds to the first four years of the postgraduate program. After a preliminary study, based on the course syllabi and teaching plans, we defined the focus as the two courses with the greatest emphasis on these themes: Orality, Writing, and Indigenous Cultural Identities, and Memory and Regionalities.

To meet the proposed objectives, we conducted bibliographic research for theoretical purposes, focusing on studies on Laws No. 10.639/2003 and No. 11.645/08, literacy for ethnic diversity and anti-racist education. Considering that, according to Heerdt (2007, p. 67) “[...] bibliographic research is that which is developed trying to explain a problem based on theories published in different types of sources”. Documentary research was also conducted (Chizzotti, 2006), focusing on the subject's teaching plans and journals, as well as the memos prepared by the students who took them, addressing perceptions and critical analysis of the activities performed. We would like to point out that the choice of researching memos is justified by the interest in analyzing the documents produced in the subjects focused on in this study. In surveying these records, it was found that they contained essential elements for analysis, as the memoir was proposed by the teacher to help students build a memory of their learning and systematize their assessment of the aforementioned subjects.

In this context, to analyze the data, we adopted the qualitative interpretation approach, because the intention in this study was to construct the data from the social interactions of the interlocutors with the phenomenon researched, with values and meanings predominating in this study, therefore elements that cannot be quantified, therefore we adopted the guidelines of qualitative research to carry out this work

(Minayo, 2000, p. 21). To organize the research data and establish a dialogue with the theories that underpinned the study, we used idea association maps, which “constitute a visualization tool with a dual purpose: to provide support for the interpretation process and to facilitate communication of the steps underlying the interpretative process” (Spink; Lima, 2000, p. 107). Therefore, this research, developed and funded within the scope of a productivity scholarship program for UEMASUL teachers, is relevant in the sense of analyzing how the training of Master's students has been carried out, which proposes to look at the specificities of their realities and one of them, in a very striking way, is the indigenous presence in its area of coverage, in addition to verifying compliance with educational legislation that deals with attention to ethnic diversity.

Thus, the work we present is structured beyond this introduction into the following sections: “2 Indigenous Literatures: a possible path to Ethnic-Racial Literacy”, which discusses how this artistic expression contributes to anti-racist education and the (re)cognition of ancestry and the appreciation of Indigenous knowledge and identities; “3 Indigenous knowledges and cultures addressed in practices of the PPGLe/UEMASUL”, which identifies how these knowledges are addressed in the Master's program's activities; and “4 What is learned from indigenous literatures in the Master's Program in Letters”, which focuses on the student's perspective on this movement toward addressing Indigenous themes, concluding with final considerations.

2 Indigenous Literature: a possible path to ethnic-racial literacy

During these more than five centuries of relations between the indigenous people and the many peoples who arrived in Pindorama ¹, in this fierce process of invasion of their lands and colonization of their knowledge, spiritualities, and cosmologies, there were many forms of resistance. However, it was only from the 1970s onwards, as Munduruku (2012) and Baniwa (2007) point, that a group of men and women from diverse indigenous ethnicities, led by Marcos Terena, began to articulate politically, artistically, and intellectually to defend their rights and interests (Graúna, 2013), initiating what later became known as “The Brazilian indigenous movement,” which, in Daniel Munduruku's (2012) analysis, has an educational character. For this indigenous writer, philosopher, and teacher, this movement is:

¹Term in Tupi, used by indigenous people to refer to the “land of palm trees”, this territory that was later called Brazil (Graúna, 2013).

[...] a legitimate instrument in the defense of indigenous rights, structured in a process of self-training and also serving, in another aspect of this same educational character, to change the view of Brazilian society, and even the State, on indigenous peoples (Munduruku, 2012, p. 12).

It was with this goal in mind that young Indigenous students, including Ailton Krenak, Daniel Munduruku, Eliane Potiguara, and Olívio Jekupé, developed several initiatives to defend their values and rights. To this end, they relied on the support of the Catholic Church, particularly the Indigenous Missionary Council (IMC), an organ of the National Conference of Bishops of Brazil (NCBB) , and later on, they were joined by other groups also facing the hardships of a post-dictatorship country, such as professionals, rural workers, landless people, intellectuals, and artists, as Baniwa (2007, p. 138) points out:

Beginning in 1970, indigenous movements began to strengthen, fueled by the holding of indigenous assemblies organized by IMC and the emergence of charismatic indigenous leaders with regional, national, and international prominence. These leaders led to the emergence of the first major regional and national indigenous organizations, under the leadership of the Union of Indigenous Nations (UIN). The maturation of the indigenous movement led to the formation of an indigenous front in defense of collective rights (leadership, organizations, local, regional, national, and international), while simultaneously identifying the needs and strategies of each people, forming the concrete foundation of the indigenous movement and struggle.

It is worth mentioning that this movement built a pan-Indigenous consciousness and sought to deconstruct the Eurocentric and stereotypical vision that fueled countless prejudices against Brazilian native peoples, reinforced in documents such as the Letter of Pero Vaz de Caminha² and later in literary works classified as Indianist literature. And one of the instruments for this deconstruction was/are the contemporary voices of Indigenous literature, which, by adopting the colonizer's medium: writing, presents itself as “[...] a variant of the epic fabric of orality; a place of confluence of silenced and exiled voices” (Graúna, 2013, p. 15). From this perspective, still according to Graça Graúna (2013, p. 15):

Rooted in its origins, contemporary indigenous literature has been preserved in the self-history of its authors and in the reception of a differentiated

² This is a document written by the portuguese clerk Pero Vaz de Caminha. Written on May 1, 1500, in Porto Seguro, Bahia. The document records the first impressions of the land that would later be named Brazil and about its inhabitants, with an ethnocentric and stereotypical description of the natives, their languages and cultural practices.

readership, that is, a minority that sows other possible readings in the universe of autochthonous poems and prose.

In this process of reflection, the text's voice demonstrates that the rights of Indigenous peoples to express their love for the land, to practice their customs, their social organization, their languages, and to express their beliefs have never been truly considered. But, despite the intrusion of dominant values, the Indigenous peoples' way of being and living has stood the test of time: their literary tradition (oral, written, individual, collective, hybrid, plural) is proof of this resilience.

Based on Graúna's (2013) understanding, it can be observed that indigenous literature fulfills an important mission, which is to reach indigenous and especially non-indigenous people, through its narratives, the identities of these peoples and, in particular, it updates the memory and tells another version of the history of this pre-Brazil (Munduruku, 2020). Thus, at the same time that it is art, it can also assume characteristics of ethnohistory, as Candido (1995, p. 263) argues:

The function of literature is linked to the complexity of its nature, which also explains its contradictory yet humanizing role (perhaps humanizing because contradictory). Analyzing it, we can distinguish at least three facets: it is a construction of autonomous objects as structure and meaning; it is a form of expression, that is, it manifests emotions and the worldview of individuals and groups; it is a form of knowledge, including as a diffuse and unconscious incorporation.

In this sense, Pesavento (2003, p. 22) understands that "Literature is a narrative that, in an ancestral way," expresses feelings, values, and cultural practices of people, in the same way that it reflects the historical context of each era. And even though the literary work of art is related to pleasure and its creation is tied to the imagination, imbued with creativity, it is not dissociated from reality, as there is a key and essential element:

[...] its conditioning to the historical and social context in which the producer is inserted and from which he does not emerge unscathed. This link with reality is what allows us to transform a literary text into a document for studying History, Education, and other aspects of society (Nunes; Fialho; Machado, 2016, p. 796).

For Borges (2010, p. 98): "in the broad universe of cultural goods, literary expression can be taken as a form of social and historical representation, being an exceptional witness of an era [...]", therefore, it can be considered as "a sociocultural product, an aesthetic and historical fact". This is because in its narratives it can represent the many human experiences, from their daily habits, cultural practices, food, to the concerns that afflict individuals.

Thus, literature is “[...] constituted from the social and cultural world, and also a constituent of it” (Borges, 2010, p. 98), as societies “[...] have always expressed through language the world of the seen and the unseen, through its different forms : orality, writing, images, music” (Pesavento, 2003, p. 2). Regarding the possibilities of Literature being used as a source for History , Pesavento (2003, p. 82-83) assesses that this happens because the literary narrative “ [...] allows access to the fine tuning or climate of an era, to the way in which people thought about the world, about themselves, what values guided their steps [...] ”, activating both objective elements of everyday life and their subjectivities, given that it allows one to visualize sensitivities and materialities.

Borges (2010, p. 94) understands “[...] literature as a form of artistic expression of a society with historicity and as a documentary source for the production of historical knowledge”. This understanding corroborates what Ribeiro (2000, p. 97) defends, as both interpret Literature as a process “[...] historical, political and philosophical; semiotic and linguistic; individual and social, at the same time. Its reality transcends the text to assume discourse, which relies, at the very least, on the dimensions of the enunciator, the utterance and the enunciatee”.

However, Lemaire (2000) emphasizes that this coherence is not only produced by the writer/historian, it also needs to be reconstructed by the reader. Thus, “works – even the greatest, or especially the greatest – do not have a static, universal, fixed meaning. They are invested with plural and mobile meanings, which are constructed in the encounter between a proposition and a reception” (Chartier, 1994, p. 9).

In this context, literary works, especially those with a greater concern for historical context, gained prestige and emerged as privileged sources for reflecting on the realities of societies. And with regard to Indigenous literature, it is observed that it is directly linked to ethnohistory. Thus, according to Chalhoub and Pereira (1998, p. 7), using Literature in the education process requires reflection and problematization about it, and there is a need to historicize it , “ [...] be it a short story, chronicle, poetry or novel - insert it into the movement of society, investigate its networks of social interlocution [...] ”, unraveling the construction or representation of social reality produced by the literary narrative .

Therefore, as Candido (1995, p. 243) points out, “by confirming and denying, proposing and denouncing, supporting and combating, literature enables man to live

his problems in a dialectical way, [...], because it confirms man in his humanity". And this is noticeable both in the production process and in the insertion of indigenous literature in the publishing market and in schools and universities, revealing identities, denouncing issues to be faced and combated, such as environmental problems, and proposing new ways of seeing and relating to the world.

And in the understanding of Rildo Cosson (2020, p. 17): "In reading and writing literary texts we find the sense of ourselves and the community to which we belong", and that "[...] The literary experience not only allows us to know about life through the experience of others, but also to live that experience" (Cosson, 2020, p. 17). Therefore, there is a great possibility of working on literacy for ethnic diversity based on this literary production of indigenous authorship. According to Luciano (2019, p. 93) "[...] literacy encompasses a diversity of knowledge, skills, abilities, uses and social functions" of language as a social phenomenon. Thus, literacy must serve to "[...] master the structures of textual genres, in their symbolic-cultural, historical-pragmatic, socio-interactionist and political-ideological aspects" (Santos, 2016, p. 53). Thus, reading Indigenous Literature, according to Peres (2018, p. 108-109), can contribute

[...] for the cultural understanding of other peoples and for the knowledge of diversity in Brazil. And it can also be seen as an invitation to other ways of thinking, strengthening the cultivation of mutual recognition and respect and stimulating the imagination of the Brazilian reader.

In this sense, literary literacy with texts written by native peoples, it can be a decolonizing instrument that allows the expansion of memory, situating itself outside of individuals and allowing forms of thought that differ from Eurocentric epistemic models (Costa, 2022). It can, therefore, be stated that literacy is one of the products of culture, history and discourses (Street, 2014, p. 9), especially because literacy "[...] seeks to cover the uses and practices of language that involve writing in one way or another, whether they are valued or not valued, local or global, covering diverse social contexts" (Rojo, 2009, p. 98), since "[...] there are multiple literacies practiced in real contexts" (Street, 2014, p. 13).

In this regard, it is important to emphasize that there are multiple literacies that "[...] vary in time and space. Contested in the power relationship" (Rojo, 2009, p. 102), therefore, it is possible to say that vernacular literacies, such as those based on indigenous traditions, are practices of resistance, as they are based on orality, daily life and their cultural practices. Based on this understanding, Costa (2022, p. 106) argues

that reading indigenous literary works “[...] can contribute to literacy for the understanding and redefinition of indigenous cultures, traditions, and knowledge based on the voices of ancestry.”

Because by pointing out ways to know and value ethnic diversity, these productions are “[...] a fundamental and fruitful reading key to access the text and understand the strength of the representation of this emerging movement” (Peres, 2018, p. 116), and which has consolidated itself as a movement that, in addition to being literary, is also ideological and political. Therefore, it is undeniable that Indigenous Literature contributes greatly to the critical development of its readers, to the perception of Brazilian cultural plurality and to the appreciation of intercultural dialogue. In this understanding, Thiél (2016, p. 89) understands that:

Indigenous literature, due to its connection to oral tradition and multimodal construction, among other aspects, challenges the reader. Indigenous texts possess complexities in terms of genre, authorship, multimodality, and cultural perceptions of reality, requiring readers to reposition themselves culturally while simultaneously encouraging interaction with others through literature.

In this way, Indigenous literature allows us to develop a literacy for deconstructing stereotypes and building new ways of seeing and living with Native peoples, their knowledge, practices, and cosmologies. Because, as Janice Thiél (2016, p. 90) argues: “Reading works of Indigenous Literature problematizes concepts, deconstructs stereotypes, and reveals the presence of [Indigenous] people in history and through stories told by their own voices.”

It's important to emphasize that the process of literacy for ethnic diversity places works, authors, and readers in a dialectical movement, because literary reading can foster an exercise in self-knowledge, encouraging understanding of others and oneself. “And this is because literature is an experience to be realized. It is more than knowledge to be reworked; it is the incorporation of the other within me without renouncing my own identity,” as Cosson (2020, p. 17) states.

In this context, enabling changes in thinking and improving knowledge about Indigenous peoples is crucial for professional master's students, especially as we contribute to the development of student-citizens and anti-racist education. Working to implement laws 10.639/2003 and 11.645/2008 can be considered an action that contributes to the development of inclusive teaching practices that embrace ethnic differences.

3 Indigenous knowledges and cultures addressed in practices of the PPGLe/UEMASUL

The UEMASUL is a regional university in a state with considerable Indigenous ethnic diversity, with the mission of focusing on its specificities and identities. Therefore, the Postgraduate Program in Letters (PPGLe), with its professional Master's degree in Letters, works to strengthen teaching and the appreciation of regional memory and identity. It offers a curricular structure that seeks to address the region's diverse backgrounds, including ethnic and racial diversity, with a focus on african and indigenous ancestries. In this regard, it is worth mentioning that this institution is located in an area surrounded by indigenous peoples, including the Tenetehara/Guajajara and Krikati in Maranhão and the Apinajé in Tocantins.

Thus, to accommodate ethnic and racial diversity, the Master's selection process also provides quotas for Indigenous candidates. However, in the five selection processes, no Indigenous candidates applied. To encourage participation and interest among Indigenous people in this graduate program, the inaugural lecture of the 5th cohort was given by Indigenous Lourenço Krikati, inviting them to participate as “special” students in the courses of their interest.

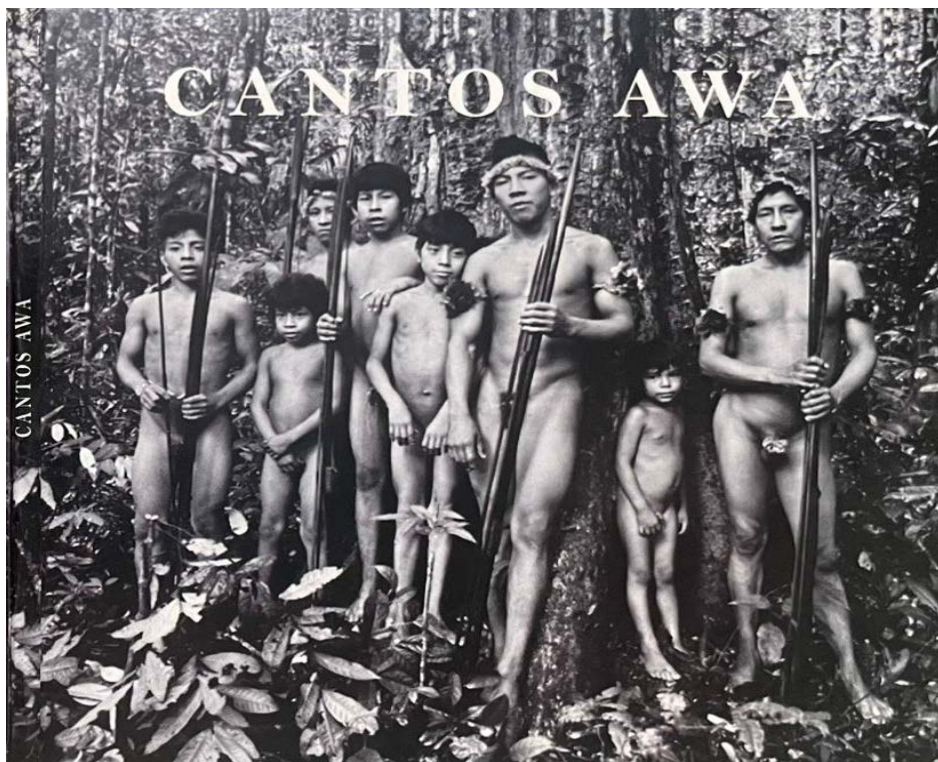
In addition to the approaches adopted in their activities and courses, the teachers have promoted dialogue with the peoples of the region, particularly the teacher of the two courses mentioned in this study, who has a degree in Letters, a master's degree in Letters, and a doctorate in Anthropology. This professor conducts research in the areas of education and indigenous literature, both at the undergraduate and master's levels, and also supervised the papers discussing indigenous themes produced during the period covered by this study. Regarding the curriculum, our study observed that two subjects have a greater focus on indigenous themes: “Oralities, writings and indigenous cultural identities”, which addresses the following themes in its syllabus, according to the teaching plan:

Discussions on the concepts of literature, culture, and the teaching of Indigenous literature. The hallmarks of orality and multimodality in Indigenous authorship. Analysis of the aesthetic and ideological aspects of works by authors representative of Brazilian Indigenous literature, focusing on the dialogue between literature, memory, and ethnic-racial identity.

It presents the following objective: “To analyze the transits and relationships between ethnic identities, memories, and cultural practices with literary productions of

Indigenous authorship and their linguistic aspects". This course focuses specifically on indigenous themes, reading and analyzing works of printed literature, such as "Taynôh: the boy who lived 100 Years" by Aline Pachamama, "The Kambeba people and the drop of water" by Márcia Kambeba, and "Little Warriors" by Yaguarê Yamã. Works based on oral tradition are also analyzed, such as the songs of the Awá Guajá, one of the indigenous peoples of Maranhão, which has the specificity of having some family groups in voluntary isolation from the surrounding society. Speakers of the Guajá language, their songs are the main link "[...] between the world of the living (called wy) and other levels (called iwa), populated by a class of beings called karawara, whose relationship with humanity also occurs through songs", as mentioned in the CD booklet, as can be seen in Figures 1 e 2, below.

Figura 1 – Encarte do CD Cantos Awa



Fonte: Povo Awá Guajá (2014)

Figura 2 – Encarte do CD Cantos Awa (Contracapa)



Fonte: Povo Awá-Guajá (2014)

According to the course diary, while working on this work, the teacher discussed with the students identity and memory and their intertwining in the construction of Indigenous narratives and, in this case, how Awá Guajá cosmology presents the relationship between the Karawara and the elements of nature, in a duality and complementarity between humans and non-humans. "In tracks 2 and 8, for example, the name of the karawara Maniõ is chanted, and because this entity is a great armadillo hunter, the chant is used during the armadillo hunt" (Awá Guajá, 2014).

Another element explored is the Indigenous relationship with the environment, which is intertwined in these works, and the understanding that a kinship relationship exists between all beings on Earth. Likewise, these works cite the authority and importance of elders in the construction of knowledge passed down from generation to generation and in the learning of origin stories, as evidenced in the aforementioned literary works. And the other discipline with a greater emphasis on indigenous themes is "Memory and Regionalities", which in its Teaching Plan proposes to discuss:

Space, time, and identity construction. Memory institutions and "places of memory." The relationship between memory, orality, and regionality. Discussion of the relations of production connected to the question of identity and region; observation of the process of formation of regional and national literatures.

And the objective was to "Analyze concepts of memory, identity, and regionality from the perspective of research in Literature and other humanities" . It is worth mentioning that in this course, according to the syllabus and journal, the teacher's approach encompassed both theoretical and artistic works, with a predominance of literary works by Indigenous authors, non-Indigenous authors, those with Eurocentric influences, and those that discussed issues of Blackness. Indigenous themes were discussed in greater depth in the study of "Space, time and construction of identities", "Institutions of memory and "places of memory" and the "Relationship between memory, orality and regionality". Among the works used in these studies we can mention: "Indian Memories: an almost biography" and "My Grandpa Apolinário: a dive into the river of (my) memory", both by Daniel Munduruku (2005, 2016) and "Half face, half mask", by Eliane Potiguara (2019).

In these three works, there is a dialogue between literature and ethnohistory, contemplating aspects of the personal trajectories of these authors. However, these are events and feelings that are also experienced by other indigenous people, particularly with regard to inclusion in non-indigenous societies and the problem of assuming oneself as indigenous and all the struggles faced. Regarding the didactic perspectives adopted, according to the teaching plan, it is observed that a theoretical approach was taken to the themes of the syllabuses, the analysis of artistic works, including literary ones, and there was also concern with the development of pedagogical proposals so that these works can be worked on in basic education.

Therefore, indigenous knowledge, by being part of the learning of teachers and students, can contribute to breaking the stereotypes and prejudices that indigenous people suffer from, since "[...] it is important that the teacher, as a social subject, brings to school literature that corresponds to the vision that he himself managed to build throughout his training, as a result of his effort to learn [...]" (Antunes , 2019, p. 38-39). It is also essential to highlight that actions on this topic take into account what is determined by laws 10.639/2003 and 11.645/2008, regarding the mandatory study of Afro-Brazilian and indigenous history and cultures in elementary and secondary schools, since the course is a professional master's degree, therefore a continuing

education for teachers, it assumes the commitment to equip its graduates to work on these themes and comply with what is determined by the aforementioned laws.

As already mentioned, despite these being laws that should have already been consolidated and complied with by the time of publication, initial teacher training still presents a deficiency in the knowledge of these knowledge and themes and even more so in how to bring them to the classroom. In this regard, Pimenta (2011, p. 29) analyzes that:

The fundamental issue, for us, is the need to construct theories that fertilize teachers' praxis in order to transform the persistent selective and exclusionary teaching and learning conditions; and to manage pedagogical practices capable of creating, in school settings, the conditions for emancipation and social, cultural and human development of students belonging to disadvantaged segments of society and who, therefore, suffer the process of marginalization in our schools.

However, this development is only possible when universities, education departments, schools, and, especially, teachers allow themselves to participate in initial and/or continuing education. The lack of knowledge about Indigenous ancestry among Brazilians is undeniable, and by not knowing their roots, they reinforce the erasure of their identity. This was demonstrated by the research conducted at the PPGLe, entitled "SCHOOL IS ALSO A SPACE OF MEMORY AND ANCESTRY: A Literary Literacy Proposal for Ethnic Diversity through Indigenous Literature," conducted by Walquiria Lima da Costa in 2022. In her study, she sought to observe how Indigenous themes were addressed in the schools where she conducted her research. Another noteworthy element is that this graduate's technical and technological production was used in continuing education courses for municipal school teachers, as part of an outreach initiative promoted by the PPGLe.

Regarding this research, it's important to note that, within the timeframe adopted by this study, it is the only one to investigate Indigenous themes, and in this case from both literary and educational perspectives. Analyzing the reasons for this small number, we find that projects related to ethnic-racial issues that make it to the Master's program selection process mostly address African/Afro-Brazilian themes. In our view, this is due to the fact that the discussion and study of Indigenous issues, works, and themes is very recent in universities in undergraduate programs, while those on African/Afro-Brazilian themes have been developed for longer. Certainly, it is through indigenous theoretical frameworks that teachers know and/or will know the universe of

the original peoples, since “[...] few people wake up in the middle of the crowd to sing and declaim to few ears the multicultural universe of the peoples of the forest” (Hakiy, 2018, p. 37). For, as Libâneo (2011, p. 49) argues,

[...] school [university] pedagogical action only makes sense based on the facts of the objective reality of the concrete educational situations that involve the functioning of the school. But, on the other hand, the content of pedagogical action is not a simple act, but a **critical act**, that is, a constant questioning of the direction taken by teaching practice towards a conception of education focused on the interests of the subaltern classes of society.

Thus, whether to make visible what has been done and how it has been done, or to point out possible paths for teaching work with indigenous knowledge, this study is aligned with a proposal for critical-pedagogical training of students of the PPGL of UEMASUL, considering that what is expected is that graduates of this course act in a way that effectively contributes to the quality of basic education and for this it needs to be based on the realities in which they are inserted.

4 What is learned from indigenous literatures in the Master's Program in Letters

During the study and data collection for this research, we observed that by bringing Indigenous knowledge into the classroom, a human construction of knowledge and respect for ethnic diversity is achieved. If we consider that “education (the object of knowledge) constructs and is constructed by humans (the subject of knowledge). It is an object that partially changes when one attempts to understand it, and as it is understood, it induces changes in the one who understands it” (Pimenta, 2011, p. 34).

From this perspective, we sought to identify the elements of ethnic identity and Indigenous cultural practices observed in the works studied and relate them to students' perceptions of Indigenous knowledge explored in class and how their study of the works they analyzed contributed to their literacy in ethnic diversity. Thus, to better visualize and analyze the data, we organized Tables 1 and 2 to triangulate the data from the works with the elements indicated in the students' memos.

It's important to note that the learning memorial adopted in both courses was guided by the following questions: How do I evaluate the collective construction carried out in the course? How did this construction contribute to my development as a teacher? What did I learn in the course about the aesthetic and ideological aspects of literary works by Indigenous authors? And how did the studies conducted in the course contribute to my literacy about ethnic-racial relations? We emphasize that in our

survey, in the four years of the Master's degree, we found that 65 literary works of indigenous authorship were adopted, adding the different works worked on in the two disciplines. However, due to the limitations of this article, we chose to analyze those most cited in the students' memorials, comprising a *corpus* of two works and ten memorials, whose data were systematized and arranged in the tables below.

Table 1 – Indigenous cultural identities and practices in the discipline of Oralities, Writing and Indigenous Cultural Identities

Worked work	Elements of ethnic identity and indigenous cultural practices observed in the works studied	Contributions to ethnic literacy presented in learning memorials
"Taynôh: the boy who was one hundred years old", by Aline Pachamama	Ancestry and the transmission of knowledge by elders: "The boy also spoke with the elders [...] He knew the ancient stories [...] He listened to the old woman explaining how she made the world" (Pachamama, 2019, p. 9). Cultural practices: "Their favorite game was Xondaro, because of the circle they made and the songs they sang and the dance" (Pachamama, 2019, p. 6) Relationship with the elements of nature: "Swimming in the river, I was a fish. Running in the forest, I was a jaguar" (Pachamama, 2019, p. 4).	"One of the important things about working with these indigenous literatures was the issue of the authority of older people, I believe that this is an aspect that indigenous peoples have a lot to teach" (Memorial 1). "If by literacy we understand the way to make social use of knowledge, I think that knowing about indigenous peoples makes us rethink the way we see them. I myself thought that everyone was equal, and when I got to know these works, I saw that there is diversity in all dimensions. For example, for the Puri people there is a game called Xondaro, which is specific to these people" (Memorial 2). "One of the things that indigenous people have a lot to teach us is the issue of the relationship with nature, this was a differentiator in my understanding, which made me look differently at the relationship with all forms of life and how everything is truly connected, like one big family" (Memorial 3).

	Dialogue and presence of humans and non-humans: “The forest was his guide” (Pachamama, 2019, p. 2). Indigenous commitment to protecting life: “We are a time of waiting and profound action. We are the sap of life that feeds the world.” (Pachamama, 2019, p. 23).	“One of the things that changed my way of thinking was this relationship between humans and non-humans and mainly I understood and now I can even agree that each people has their own way of explaining things, so the myth in the conception that it is a figment of the imagination is inadequate and the most coherent thing to say is an origin narrative” (Memorial 4). “When reading Taynôh and analyzing the issues of the relationship with nature, we can truly say that the future is ancestral, as Krenak said, because what we see is that it is another relationship with the environment and other lives, it is not that they want to take care of everything, but they want to protect everything, all forms of life” (Memorial 5).
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Source: The Authors, 2025.

Given the data presented in Table 1, it can be said that the students consider that reading and studying “Taynôh: the boy who was one hundred years old” contributed greatly to changing their perception of many aspects related to indigenous peoples, with all the memorials mentioning that contact with these texts expanded their knowledge about ethnic groups, because many of the students were unfamiliar with both literary works and the diversity of Brazilian native peoples, as pointed out in Memorial 6.

Before starting my master's degree, I was already a Portuguese language teacher and working with literature, but I had never worked with Indigenous works. First, because I wasn't familiar with them, and I didn't have that experience during my undergraduate studies. So, for me, it was a very significant learning experience; it equipped me with the tools I needed. Now I feel more prepared to work on this topic in the classroom. Working with Indigenous literature was important for me to learn more about Indigenous peoples, especially in my state. (Memorial 6).

In the same way that it contributed to the deconstruction of prejudices and mistaken views regarding these people, “[...] even because many of the prejudices we

have are fueled by this ignorance about the indigenous ancestry of the Brazilian people” (Memorial 7). Corroborating, in this sense, what Ferreira (2013, p. 10-11) emphasizes that “[...] Whoever reads/listens to a text also reads/listens to themselves, because they have the opportunity to discover and recognize themselves in this experience that fuses affection, emotion, imagination, memory, creativity, logic, reason and criticism”.

When it comes to memory and identity, these were the elements most frequently mentioned and perceived by students, based on the memorial records. In this regard, it's possible to say that theoretical discussions may have reinforced and/or directed this perspective. Furthermore, these elements are present in the various languages used in these texts, as mentioned in the excerpt:

When I look back at the memories of this course, I reflect on the appreciation of Indigenous memory and knowledge in its many forms, from oral tradition to writing and illustrations laden with identity-related elements. The multifaceted nature of Indigenous texts captivates and teaches us. Today, I feel more prepared to bring Indigenous texts into the classroom (Memorial 9).

In this way, it can be said that the students had theoretical references to recognize and value Indigenous Literatures in their literary specificity, making “[...] indigenous textualities be interpreted in their cultural and aesthetic contextualization” (Thiél, 2016, p. 93). It's also worth mentioning the emphasis placed on the fact that Taynôh is a multilingual work, presenting the narrative in Portuguese and three other languages: Spanish, Guarani Mbya, and A'uwé, a Xavante language. This allows students to engage with Indigenous knowledge and languages, as well as the expressiveness that the text's metaphors seek to convey in their relationship with nature, as seen in the excerpt below:

AVA'I SA ANO VA'E, SA KUE MEME ÁRA RE, NI MBA'EVEREI HE'YVY,
IJAYU OVY'AA.

The hundred-year-old boy, a hundred times a day, without the slightest inhibition, said that this was where his happiness lay.

PETEI VY'AA TUVIXA NHANDU KYA TEKÓ.

A reciprocal happiness with the great web of life.

HO'YTA OIKOVY YAKA PY VYMA PIRA. ONHA OIKOVY KA'AGUY RUPI
VYMA XVI

Swimming in the river, he was a fish. Running in the forest, he was a jaguar.

OMOGUERA YVY VYMA MBOI. OVEVE YVYRAGUI VYMA GUYRA'1.

Healing the earth, it was a snake. Leaping from the trees, it was a bird.

O/POKA APA RA'U VYMA NHANDU. OJAPO OINY MEMBY RA'ĀGAA
YAPOGUIGUA VYMA CY.

Weaving dreamcatchers was Spider. Making clay dolls was Cy.

NHANDE RAMIGUA HAVIAEVA'ERI KOVA'E RUPI. YVYRA HE VA'ERI
OIPOTA. KA'AGUY RUPI OIMBAE VA'ERI.

Being a person, it was meaning. Being a tree, it was love. Being the forest, it
was complete.

AVA'I MA JOIKAUAA PA.

The boy was Awake! (Pachamama, 2019, p. 4).

Therefore, this literature also enables multiliteracies, since there are “[...] many Literatures, cultures and voices, created not only in Portuguese, but also in native languages” (Thiél, 2016, p. 90), promoting the perception of themes and the ways in which they are approached, aesthetically and ideologically. Thus, what we found when analyzing the cited work is that, beyond the native languages, this narrative presents philosophical understandings of the world and relationships with other life forms, centered on a native cosmology and epistemologies. This is noticeable in the narrative, as Aline Pachamama (2019, book blurb) points out: “This book has its roots in the earth. These are words that were sown and flourished before being written. And they were written with the color and sap of the forest, with the song and call of Life [...]”. Another point we highlight is the illustrations created by the author herself, which, like the narrative, convey the colors and essence of the Puri people (See Figure 3).

Table 2 – Indigenous identities and cultural practices and ethnic literacy in the discipline of Memory and Regionality

Worked work	Elements of ethnic identity and indigenous cultural practices observed in the works studied	Contributions to ethnic literacy presented in learning memorials
“The Kambeba People”, by Márcia Kambeba	Ancestry and the transmission of knowledge by elders: “The elders say that a long time ago, when there were no human beings on earth, Tana Kanata Ayetú - who is our radiant light, the great spirit - saw that there was a lack of men and women to care for all the beauty that existed in that place.” (Kambeba, 2022, p. 7). Cultural practices: “The Omágua/Kambeba rode canoes, climbed trees, and jumped	“Of the many memories of this discipline, which is already a memory, I think the strongest ones that remain are the ways in which the elderly are valuable and contribute to the preservation of knowledge and cultures. And this is something that has much to teach non-Indigenous people” (Memorial 6). “When we read a work by indigenous authors like that of the Kambeba, many cultural practices

	as if repeating the movement of a drop falling into the river. Paddling was careful and required skills and knowledge that only the elders could pass on." (Kambeba, 2022, p. 15). Relationship with the elements of nature: "Because of their strong connection with water, the Omágua/Kambeba sought to build their villages near the river. They used the water for all their activities. Children learned to swim at a young age, taught by the boto, who taught them to jump and spin in the air, diving into the arms of the river that surged back and forth, seeming to understand the game, enveloping them in its waves." (Kambeba, 2022, p. 12). Dialogue and presence of humans and non-humans: "The River then continued, saying that his life in the waters is to be enchanted, that is why the dolphin would keep him company and wherever there was an Omágua/Kambeba, there would always be waves and calm. The girl held out her hand, and the old man gave her a necklace. In a commanding voice, he said that this would be the symbol between the physical world and the world of water. (Kambeba, 2022, p. 19). Indigenous commitment to protecting life: "But with so many people appearing, nature became frightened, the animals threatened, and man thought it was Tana Kanata Ayetú. It was then that the great spirit appeared, a rumbling sounded in the earth, and from within a large clearing, the protectors of nature spoke: — Man forgot the commitment of his existence, he received mastery of science, but used it anyway. To solve the problem, you must do your part in coexisting with Mother Earth, guardians of a treasure, a precious gift that has life, soul, pain, love, and breath. You must be	are represented, from the way they use the canoe, to body painting, to ways of eating" (Memorial 8). "One of the things we learn most from these indigenous literature texts is this kinship relationship between all the elements of nature and how it is intertwined with everything that lives and does" (Memorial 2). "One of the factors that stands out when we seek to recover the memories of the discipline are the many deconstructions, among them the way in which there is a very strong dialogue, in all the works we analyzed and in Kambeba's as well, which is between humans and non-humans and this is natural for them, so we also need to look at it naturally" (Memorial 10) "What I learned and see as very important is the fact that all forms of life are interconnected and interdependent, and this idea is very natural for Indigenous people. Therefore, when carrying out activities as a teacher, it is certainly important to understand these cultures and also seek to reflect on this maxim that the future is ancestral" (Memorial 3).
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	rational to survive as a human and mortal. I declare you protectors of nature with praise. You will care for every being as soldiers of the environment that surrounds the planet.” (Kambeba, 2022, p. 23).	
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Source: The Authors ,2025

From what was indicated in both Table 1 and Table 2, Another element highlighted in the indigenous texts analyzed was the relationship with nature, which was evidenced by the presence of beings from the forest and the spiritual world. And this happens because, in Jekupé's understanding (1998, p. 58):

For Indigenous people, the ancestors who govern nature have accompanied all human evolution, like sowers who scatter seeds across the earth and observe, nourish, and care for them until they bear fruit. The Indigenous person emerged from these sacred ancestors: sun, moon, rainbow, earth, fire, and air. From the plant, animal, and mineral kingdoms, the Indigenous person gradually merged with these sacred beings.

And in both works analyzed, we also observe a writing that can be considered autobiographical, with many elements of identity and cultural practices specific to each ethnic group. For this reason, Graúna (2013, p. 23) states that “[...] Indigenous Literature in Brazil implies a set of voices among which the author seeks to testify to his/her experience and transmit “from memory” the stories told by the elders, although he/she often sees himself/herself differently in the eyes of the other”. Thus, memory and identity are in constant maintenance, as Daniel Munduruku analyzes the ancestral knowledge that is passed on by grandparents, through orality, “[...] as an instrument of transmission of tradition, forcing new generations to exercise memory, guardian of the stories lived and created (Munduruku, 2018, p. 81).

5 Final considerations

“For thousands of years, the enunciative vocation of indigenous peoples has echoed with the signal of survival and will continue to echo against the conflicts generated by the dominant culture” (Graúna, 2013, p. 72), therefore, it is from the memory and indigenous ethnic identities that a new history will be constructed about the process of understanding and valuing the ancestry of the Brazilian nation, which has indigenous peoples as original peoples . Thus , we consider that indigenous literature, with its works in both written and oral form, when used as a pedagogical tool,

has proven effective in developing critical readers, in addition to contributing to the deconstruction of prejudices and paradigms that feed and reinforce prejudices and violence, broadening the worldview, strengthening interculturality and promoting empathy, by knowing and valuing indigenous culture, also improving creativity and contributing to the construction of a more just and inclusive society .

Therefore, when we look at how the Master's in Letters works with indigenous issues and themes, we can affirm that the PPGLe of Uemasul in this four-year period contemplated what is determined by laws 10.639/2003 and 11.645/2008, because what we found was a scenario of great acceptance, in which indigenous knowledge and cultures are echoed, addressed in the disciplines, in research and in extension actions, promoting dialogue with society and especially with basic education . Thus , working with this literature provoked a rethinking by students about the historical context of the past and also the present, in a reflection on the urgency of knowledge, so that the ethnic-racial diversity of this plural country can be valued and respected, and contributed to the instrumentalization of teachers to include indigenous knowledge, histories, cultures and arts in their classes, in a process of autonomy and citizenship formation.

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