

Perceptions of Excellence Teachers of Different Disciplines About the Role of the School Library and Their Ways of Using It: Opportunities to Form Reading Communities in the School

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School libraries are a relevant resource to support the formation of reading communities and pedagogical practices. However, there is limited evidence in Chile on how teachers use it in their disciplines; therefore, there is consensus on the need to explore this aspect. For this reason, this study aimed to analyze the perceptions of eleven excellent teachers of elementary education of different disciplines, belonging to the region of La Araucanía (Chile), about the role of the school library and the ways of using it in their subjects. Our results show that there are different appreciations according to each subject, but, in specific, it is in Language (Spanish) where its use is most favored. At the same time, we detected three critical nodes at a transversal level that would represent a limiting factor for integrating the library into reading education processes, and thus, advancing toward a reading community.

Keywords: school library, reading, teacher, reading communities, perceptions

INTRODUCTION

“You can even say that a library is similar, despite its silence, to a small guerrilla camp: the ideas here fight to their heart’s content.”

Gabriela Mistral, Opening of a Veracruz library.

The link between reading and school has, over time, taken on different modulations around multiple purposes; however, there is still a clear responsibility that contemporary societies assign to the school: to train more and better readers. Thus, exploring how the school contributes to favoring the transition from learning to read to wanting to read (Cerrillo, 2016; Colomer, 2005; Hébrard and Chartier, 2002), outlines the challenge of advancing towards the generation of reading communities.

One of the alternatives proposed is to strengthen the role of the school library in educational communities (Durban, 2010; Mekis & Anwandter, 2019; Anwandter & Bombal, 2015; Salaberria, 2008), with special emphasis on Latin America, given that the development of these libraries, as Durban (2010) and Robledo (2008) point out, do not always have a priority place in educational agendas.

In Chile's case, we have the CRA (Centro de Recursos para el Aprendizaje) Library Program, whose implementation began under the protection of the great educational reform of the nineties of the last century and which today exhibits a high coverage at the national level, and therefore, is considered a reference policy at the Latin American level (Mekis, 2016; Robledo, 2008). But in contrast, even when research have been formulated tending to demonstrate the relevance that the library has for the formation of readers (Albelda-Esteban, 2019; Bonilla, 2008; Lockwood, 2011; McKirdy, 2021; Mekis, 2016; Merga & Mason, 2019; Munita & Bustamante, 2019; Serna, Rodríguez & Etxaniz, 2017); in Chile, a diagnosis is shared: it is necessary to intensify studies on the effectiveness and the role played by our libraries in that perspective, because the level of development they present is quite disparate (Gelber, 2017; Mekis, 2016; Mekis & Anwandter, 2019; Pérez-Kauschus, 2015).

One of the critical nodes that have been noted is the scarce integration of the library in teaching in the school classroom (Gelber, 2017; Mekis, 2016). In turn, teachers who instruct disciplines associated with the Humanities use it more frequently than those who teach Science (Gelber, 2017); in that sense, this latest research also finds that both teachers and librarians recognize the need for closer coordination to encourage reading.

Thus, an essential requirement for making progress in the generation of reading communities is to strengthen the formation of readers: a process that presents multiple edges and complexities. However, due to the importance of studying the factors that limit or favor the work of the library in this process, some authors propose the alternative of identifying and analyzing the perceptions that some of the key actors express about this space: students, teachers, or librarians themselves (McKirdy, 2021; Mekis 2016; Merga & Mason, 2019; Munita & Bustamante, 2019).

From our perspective, exploring the teachers' perceptions about the role of the library and its forms of use in different disciplines can provide interesting keys to understanding how the formation of readers is developed and, along these lines, detect opportunities to promote a reading community. These factors become even more relevant when studied in regional educational contexts, where we do not have much evidence in this area. Therefore, this article describes the results of a study aimed at analyzing the perceptions of eleven primary school excellence teachers of different disciplines, belonging to the region of La Araucanía (Chile), regarding the role of the school library and the ways of using it in their disciplines.

Under this scheme, we first outline a theoretical approach focused on explaining, on the one hand, how the training of readers has modified the development of the school library and, on the other hand, the importance of reading mediation in the disciplines and its link with the library. Next, we briefly present the methodological framework we adopted and then continue with the presentation of the results and their discussion.

Finally, our conclusions show that the positive evaluation of these teachers about the role of the library does not necessarily find a correlation in the ways of using it that they declare. In addition, since we found three critical nodes at a transversal level that would limit its use, we suggest some guidelines for integrating the library in reader training processes in order to progressively advance in the generation of reading communities.

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

The School Library as a Resource for the Development of Readers: An Approach

The school library is a type of library that is called upon to serve a variety of purposes. For example, compensating inequalities in access to reading in educational communities with fewer resources (Cerlac, 2007; Pérez-Kauschus, 2015), and also, enriching learning environments by providing access to a diversity of materials, supporting the curricular itinerary and promoting reading (Lluch & Zayas, 2015; Mekis & Anwandter, 2019).

Assuming a strategic role in the framework of the objectives proposed by the National Reading Plan 2015-2020 in Chile (National Council for the Arts and Culture, 2015), our CRA Libraries are disposed of as a learning space where their resources - bibliographic, didactic and audiovisual - are gathered, ordered and put into circulation for three purposes: to encourage reading, to seek information, and to support

learning in all areas (Anwandter & Bombal, 2015). However, as Mekis and Anwandter (2019) warn, it is necessary to have a series of conditions and equipment for its proper functioning.

Furthermore, due to the need to encourage students to develop the necessary skills to read comprehensively and their reading habits (Ballester, 2015; Lockwood, 2011; Mekis, 2016), the work of the library would not be limited only to the lending of books. Indeed, the performance standards for CRA Libraries (Ministry of Education, 2011) and the guidelines that have been agreed upon at the international level to guide their development illustrate the diversity of roles that school libraries have assumed. According to Schultz-Jones and Oberg (2015), libraries should promote equitable and open access to information in all media, nurture students' curiosity and creativity, help develop skills to transform information into knowledge and be available as open spaces for cultural and educational events for the community at large.

Although there are studies that demonstrate how the library can contribute to increasing reading performance, reading motivation, and even reading for pleasure (Albelda-Esteban, 2019; Bonilla, 2008; Lockwood, 2011; McKirdy, 2021; Mekis, 2016; Merga & Mason, 2019; Munita & Bustamante, 2019; Serna, Rodríguez & Etxaniz, 2017); it is important to point out that in order to integrate it into a process of educating readers, it is necessary to reach a consensus at the school level on a series of factors, such as, for example, what visions about reading are to be promoted; how the reading practices of the student body will be incorporated, as well as their interests and reading profiles and the challenges that this entails for teachers and the library team (Mekis & Anwandter, 2019).

Similarly, the goal of transforming schools into reading communities is also incorporated (Mekis & Anwandter, 2019). Indeed, the fact that the *Guía de Uso de las Bibliotecas CRA* (Guide to the Use of Libraries CRA) (Anwandter & Bombal, 2015) is titled *La comunidad que lee* (The reading community) clearly evidences that intention. Therefore, in function of responding to these challenges, it is important not only to involve all agents of the school community, but also to create contexts where there is availability, opportunities, incentives, and supports for reading that are transversal and systematic (Merga & Mason, 2019).

Finally, due to the changes in reading practices promoted by the use and development of new technologies, it is necessary to take as a reference the social practices of reading and writing; so that the library can support this educational process by providing reading opportunities according to that reality, but at the same time, providing the tools to do so (Mekis & Anwandter, 2019). For this reason, their fields of action have diversified, the function of adapting to the challenge of training readers (Mekis & Anwandter, 2019; Parisi-Moreno et al. 2020).

The Mediation of Reading in Disciplines

Given the fact that the understanding of the readings done by students is built in community, it is the teacher who, as an experienced reader, must gradually transfer his/her experience to the novice reader (Bustos et al., 2017) and, therefore, mediate the readings and promote a space of common references (Chartier & Hébrard, 2000). However, according to Rockwell (2001), there are practices of approaching reading that distance students from reading by not mediating texts, not guiding meaning, and not linking them to students' experiences. Indeed, it has been found that young people do read and develop their own reading practices, however, in many cases they are not considered in the classroom (Winocur, 2015). Accordingly, it is also imperative to integrate students' hybrid reading practices (Zavala, 2011).

As the evidence indicates (Errázuriz et al., 2020; Orellana & Baldwin, 2018; Petscher, 2010; Valenzuela et al., 2015), a motivated reader is gravitating to the development of reading proficiency. In addition, we also know the effect that the conceptions and reading habits of teachers can have on their pedagogical practices in the approach to reading in the classroom and on the modeling of the reading attitudes of students (Foorman & Schatschneider, 2003; Errázuriz et al., 2019; Morrison et al., 1999; Munita, 2019; Orellana & Baldwin, 2018; Sulentic et al., 2006). In fact, there are studies that have found that Chilean teachers who present more epistemic reading conceptions and relate reading practices to enjoyment, mediate their students' reading, focus on motivating it, and are more inclusive, as they consider the reading experience and preferences of their students (Errázuriz et al., 2020; Errázuriz et al. 2019).

However, despite the fact that the Chilean curriculum (Mineduc, 2012) suggests integrating the library in all subjects, thus favoring the mediation of readings, there is still resistance on the part of teachers of other disciplines to mediate reading, as well as to frequently use the library (Gelber, 2017), given that they believe that it is a skill specific to the domain of Language (Spanish) (Carlino, 2005) and not a habitual practice in all areas of knowledge. In this way, a generalist, non-contextualized approach to reading predominates (Shanahan & Shanahan, 2012) that does not consider the specific reading challenges implied by particular disciplinary contexts and their language (Manghi, 2013; Paul, 2018; Shanahan & Shanahan, 2012). Now, if reading is a cultural practice located in a community (Barton & Hamilton, 2004), considering its specificities is essential to mediate it, since this activity varies considerably across communities of practice (Wenger, 1998) and disciplines (Shanahan & Shanahan, 2012, 2008; The New London Group, 2000). Indeed, the fact that learners can use language effectively in one context does not guarantee that they can use it pertinently in other settings (Cummins, 2003; Heath, 2012).

Certainly, the different demands generated by different disciplinary texts have been identified in terms of specific reading competencies (Paul, 2018). For example, Zanotto (2016) states that reading practices in Social Sciences would demand identifying the author's perspective and the stress among other points of view. In contrast, in Science, readers move forward and backward when reading tables or graphs in order to relate them to the rest of the information and thus transform data from one code to another (Shanahan & Shanahan, 2008). In Language Arts, it is necessary to master the conventions of literary texts in order to interpret them and thus discuss their meanings in the classroom (Jones et al., 2021). Without going beyond that, the importance of implementing quality dialogic interactions and exploratory peer-to-peer speech to mediate readings and their link to disciplinary learning in different subjects has also been evidenced (Alexander, 2018; Larraín et al., 2018; Tanner, 2017). Certainly, the meaning of the readings is constructed in a dialogic way in the community and by interacting, students can interact together in each disciplinary context (Mercer, 2001). For this reason, the library is called to offer opportunities to strengthen the different reading contexts that take place in the school: reading to learn to read, reading to learn to enjoy, and reading to learn (Lluch and Zayas, 2015).

METHODOLOGY

This study corresponds to a multiple case study (Flyvbjerg, 2006), descriptive, qualitative, and interpretative (Merriam & Tisdell, 2009).

Participants

We conducted a non-probability incidental sampling (Polgar & Thomas, 2000) of the universe of teachers from 3rd to 8th grade in the Araucanía Region (Chile) from public schools (Temuco, Villarrica, Pucón and Loncoche) (National Institute of Statistics, 2013) who presented at least one outstanding teacher evaluation in the last 10 years. In this way, we randomly selected 11 cases by availability, so this sample is probabilistic. It should be noted that this region has the highest poverty rates in the country (Ministry of Social Development, 2016) and a multicultural reality that has not been sufficiently addressed (Alarcón et al., 2018).

Regarding the characteristics of the participants, they had an average of 12.5 years of classroom experience, 7 of them had postgraduate studies and all of them had some specialization in an educational discipline or stage. In addition, 10 of them are elementary school teachers and 1 is a language teacher (Spanish); 1 is Mapuche and 9 teach different subjects from 3rd to 8th grade. These data are shown in Table 1.

TABLE 1
CHARACTERISTICS OF PARTICIPATING TEACHERS

Name	Experience (years of service)	Member of a native people	City	Professional degree	Postgraduate	Disciplines and courses
Josefa ¹	18	no	Villarrica	PEGB ²	no	Evangelical Religion (1st to 8th grades) Science (5th and 6th grades)
Mariana	23	no	Villarrica	PEGB	no	History (5th and 6th grades) and Mathematics (5th, 6th and 8th grades)
Katherine	8	no	Pucón	PEGB	yes	Language Arts, Mathematics, Science and Social Sciences (2nd and 3rd grades)
Mauricio	11	no	Loncoche	Language Teacher, Journalist	no	Language (5th to 8th grade), Technology (1st to 8th grade)
Daniela	12	no	Loncoche	PEGB	no	Mathematics (4th to 8th grade)
Yessica	10	no	Villarrica	PEGB	yes	Language Arts, History, Art, Music, Science (4th grade)
Nadia	9	yes	Temuco	PEGB	yes	Mathematics (5th to 8th grade)
Gabriela	7	no	Temuco	PEGB	yes	Evangelical Religion (5th to 8th grade)
Beatriz	13	no	Temuco	PEGB	yes	English (3rd, 4th and 6th grades)
Francisca	11	no	Temuco	PEGB	yes	Language Arts, History, Science, Mathematics (3rd and 4th grades)
Paula	16	no	Villarrica	PEGB	yes	Language Arts, Mathematics (4th and 8th grades), History and Science (4th grade)

Source: developed by the author.

Collection Instrument

Each of these participants was given an in-depth semi-structured interview formulated about their use of the school library. This was calibrated by the researchers and validated by three expert judges. The questions that led the interview were the following: How do you use the school library in your school and how often, what specific activities do you do in the school library, and how often do you use the library? how is the collaboration between you and the library team? what importance do you assign to the school library for the work with your subject(s)? what kind of school-wide guidelines or teamwork are promoted to develop reading?

The interviews were conducted online through Zoom or Meet, due to the restrictions of the Covid 19 pandemic, depending on the convenience and availability of the participant; they lasted approximately 45 to 60 minutes and were audio-recorded through the chosen platform and then transcribed. In addition, all teachers voluntarily signed an informed consent form, approved by the Ethics Committee.

Analysis Procedures

The qualitative coding process was carried out from the *phenomenographic* paradigm (González-Ugalde, 2014), using the Dedoose platform. This approach is best suited to study the different ways of experiencing a phenomenon by teachers, especially teaching and learning experiences (González-Ugalde, 2014; Marton and Saljö, 1976). Thus, we carried out an initial coding by all the researchers on the team, in order to reach a consensus and validate the first codes. Then, in a second analysis by the research team, there was a central coding, in order to determine the final codes and, finally, to continue with the data interpretation and final coding phase.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Perceptions About the Role Performed by the School Library

In a general approach, the perceptions are grouped around two main axes: the first one emphasizes that the library is a relevant resource to the extent that its dynamics allow the promotion of reading as well as other types of learning. The second one also refers to the promotion of reading, but with the addition of access to books and reading provided by the library, both for students and parents.

In the first case, Beatriz states that the library is important but it will also depend on the student's own experiences:

As a romantic I see the importance. I think it is the meaning that each child has given to it according to his or her experience. Now if you say to me: "Is the library transcendental for me? I think a child should go at least once a month to the library (Beatriz, 2021).

Thus, for this English teacher, the relevance of the library is associated with frequent visits by students. However, she elaborates on another idea:

But the library is no longer the place to ask for books. The library is the place where other kinds of learning situations occur, so now it is much more varied than before. So it used to be a quiet place where people went to read, now it is an active place, let's say with other types of activities as well. In fact, we had an English competition in the library (Beatriz, 2021).

As can be seen, for Beatriz, the role of the library is more integral, as it is not limited to lending books, but also generates diverse learning situations. Indeed, having organized this English competition is a way of making the use of this resource more dynamic.

For Mauricio, a language teacher, the library is important to the extent that two factors converge: that there is a good collection of books to promote dialogue with students.

It is a very nice space, where you can get your hands on all the books it has. You have hundreds of brilliant brains at your disposal there, who have traveled through time, it's a matter of talking to the kids and taking out books... Look at what you said, what this person said... it can be a very entertaining space. The fact that it's full of books, a room full of books is nice, it's not usual for the kids either (Mauricio, 2021).

Unlike Beatriz, Mauricio's perceptions emphasize opportunities for dialogue around the readings. An approach that would highlight the benefits of dialogue around texts (Meneses, Müller, Hugo & García, 2016; Mercer, 2001), and in turn, having varied and quality bibliographic collections in the library (Colomer, 2005; Mekis & Anwandter, 2019). Factors that for him are key to motivating students.

Paula teaches several disciplines and, in her opinion, having a library is very important, especially for the reading promotion activities that are carried out: "there is a collaborative work with the library manager, with the one who promotes reading" (Paula, 2021). Thus, this teacher associates the role of the library with the promotion of reading.

These statements suggest a positive evaluation of the role played by the library, but under certain conditions: that students visit it with a certain frequency; that it has bibliographic collections, and that it is a dynamic space, mainly because of the activities that can be carried out. However, the statements of Yessica, who also teaches several subjects, provide an interesting shade, because they point to the need to create habits to behave appropriately in the library. In fact, although reading sessions are held, for her this resource plays a role more associated with study; in her words:

So the children go, from the beginning, when they enter the CRA they have to be quiet, not eating, clean hands, and so on. The culture of this is to be silent, because it is the place where you go to learn, to study, to read, so you can't be shouting, and so the children enter from the youngest, from pre-Kindergarten on up. And so there is a culture of that, for example inside a place like a library, and there the lady reads to them, she reads. I haven't really been part of how they do it, because there are also children who read as well (Yessica, 2021).

Regarding the second axis, for Katherine, who teaches several subjects, the library is important because her students do not have access to books at home. Therefore, she appreciates the librarian's motivation to promote -through different alternatives- the exploration of books by students.

Very few children had books at home, very few. So they had the option of... especially that the teacher... (she is not a teacher) but the person in charge of the library, that is... she has a very good ability and a very good approach with the students, besides she really likes the reading promotion day and everything, she is very motivated. I would get the tables ready with the books and they would choose, then I would comment on some books, others would look at the cover. Well... there is everything, others saw the one with less or more drawings and less text, and so on in general (Katherine, 2021).

Emphasizing how the library can lessen inequality gaps in access to books (Cerlac, 2007), their statements, under a more pedagogical key, would also highlight the importance of exploring books in the perspective of favoring more friendly reading environments and, thus, generating a better disposition of students in front of reading (Colomer, 2005; Gelber, 2017; McKirdy, 2021). Thus, for Katherine, the access factor is complemented by the support of other agents in the school in order to help students who have a lower reading performance, or whose motivation for reading is somewhat weak:

But the same thing happened to me with some students that it was very difficult, that it was very hard to motivate them. We tried to link up with the PIE because many times, not in all cases, but in most cases the children found it difficult to read, so they were not motivated

because they found the books too long. So the PIE library has even nicer and more eye-catching books than the CRA library, but there are fewer of them. So we gave them the option of going to the PIE library and selecting other books, and the teacher would also help them with the reading. Because they were children whose parents did not always know how to read, so that discouraged us a little bit (Katherine, 2021).

Finally, strengthening the library's relationship with the student's mothers, fathers or caregivers is a positive development for Daniela, who teaches mathematics. Indeed, to promote reading opportunities at home, it is advisable to open library services for all families that form part of the educational community (Mekis, 2016; McKirdy, 2021). Daniela states:

And I think that, well, it has also been a contribution in terms of reading at home. For example, I have also seen that some of the parents have taken texts that they are interested in, and that also speaks well of our library, which is being implemented more and more (Daniela, 2021).

Ways of Using the School Library: Advances and Critical Nodes

In accordance with the selected statements, we can state that these teachers use the library under a repertoire where some strategies are more prominent than others and, in turn, we observe different levels of integration between the disciplines with the library. Therefore, organizing a schedule by course to occupy the library is the strategy with the greatest consensus.

Paula, who teaches several subjects, comments: "Well, there is face-to-face work, we had a schedule in the library, so in Mathematics and Language (Spanish) I had my schedule, so I could develop a class in the library" (Paula, 2021). Yessica uses it in the same way, but emphasizing a more disciplinary approach to the area of Language (Spanish): "Yes, I understand it. Look, one of the strategies is that the language classes, the classes in the schedule have to have an established schedule of going to the CRA (the children) during the week" (Yessica, 2021). Emphasizing the collaborative work, she points out that "the teacher goes with the children and from there the work is done by the library manager. Because she also takes training. So the teacher is guiding, but she is approving" (Yessica, 2021). She describes one of the dynamics generated to encourage reading, but she does not elaborate on how her disciplines are involved in it:

There is reading promotion. Every week a video of a reading is shared where one lady (who is the librarian), with puppets, tells the story and all of this is shared with the school on a weekly basis (Yessica, 2021).

These more playful strategies, which are associated with encouraging reading, are also emphasized by Daniela. As she explains, small theater plays are staged with puppets, which are "novel new things that catch the attention of the children" (Daniela, 2021). However, in contrast to Yessica, this math teacher does detail how she integrates the library into her discipline:

I'm going to some class period with the kids and we're going to do research papers. Okay? I work with the person in charge, and we do some specific research work and then we work in the library. We also make projections in ppt (Daniela, 2021).

As suggested by several authors (Díaz, 2008; Gelber, 2017; Lockwood, 2011; Mekis & Anwandter, 2019) and even the CRA Library guide itself (Anwandter & Bombal 2015), fostering research activities, as part of the curricular support, is one of the purposes that libraries should provide to their educational communities. Therefore, it is advised that the materials and bibliographic collection cover all curriculum areas (Mekis & Anwandter, 2019; Ministry of Education, 2011).

Meanwhile, Mauricio comments that he uses the library both for his language classes (Spanish) and to organize reading sessions where students can manipulate the books, highlighting "the issue of immediate

consultation, that's what I like about the library, you can get your hands on everything, atlases, maps, and know the origin of words. And so many beautiful books that get to you. Something that did not happen before, now very nice books arrive" (Mauricio, 2021). This availability is used to promote a more dialogical reading environment: "the children themselves suddenly feel more freedom to comment when they read books in the library. I read this book, yes, last year I read this one, and I don't know, to generate those dynamics sometimes" (Mauricio, 2021). As has been suggested, reading and dialogue are relevant learning opportunities because students are being formed together with others in their reading trajectories and, also, this exchange of experiences contributes to favor a better disposition to read for pleasure (Lockwood, 2011; McKirdy, 2021; Mekis, 2016).

Deepening his more disciplinary approach, Mauricio emphasizes: "The language (Spanish) teacher always knows what is in the library. He can always assemble a class quickly. But the math, technology or history teachers may not, well... but they should" (Mauricio, 2021). In light of studies that show that for librarians it is essential that teachers become familiar with the materials offered (Mekis, 2016; Merga & Mason, 2019), Mauricio's appreciation becomes more relevant, since this factor, collaborates with the creation of a reading culture across disciplines (Merga & Mason, 2019).

In contrast to Mauricio, Gabriela, her use of the library is associated with studying texts in a more peaceful environment. Since she teaches Religion subject, it is likely that this has an impact on the way she uses it: "what the Bible was in this case. That the children go to read in silence, and I also used it for classes" (Gabriela, 2021). If for Mauricio the library is the ideal place to discuss the readings, for this teacher it is the place to read the Bible in a more peaceful environment.

Other ways of using the library re-emphasize the importance of providing opportunities for peer-to-peer reading instruction. Josefa, for example, uses the library for her science classes, but she wants her students to say that "I read, but I also want my classmates to know about this text I have here" (Josefa, 2021). Meanwhile, Katherine uses it frequently and, since she teaches Language Arts (Spanish), she also uses it to celebrate Book Day. Her case illustrates the dynamics of collaboration that she maintains with the library team within the framework of her discipline:

So there is a very good communication, and she also proposes ideas and we accept, or the other way around we propose something not only for the book day but in general. The very fact of messing up the library a little bit to choose the books, no; she is always ready for the same thing so there is very good communication there (Katherine, 2021).

As we pointed out, positioning the library transversally to support the formation of readers is a complex process. Indeed, although these teachers agree that the library plays an important role in their schools, this does not mean that they use it in the same way. In summary, the declared strategies make up a repertoire that includes developing classes, organizing visits by schedule, conducting research, organizing sessions to explore books and discuss them, and even reading and studying in a more silent environment.

When asked about the difficulties in integrating the library with their disciplines, teachers perceive three critical nodes: the need to formalize more active coordination with the library team, to have more relevant and attractive bibliographic collections and didactic material for students, and finally, limitations associated with the library's infrastructure. Beatriz's experience, for example, illustrates the difficulties of maintaining adequate coordination with the librarian, especially due to the demands of meeting curricular coverage.

The readings they check out from the library, in general they take it out of the library for other subjects. Now, I don't know but I... it's not, as I say. I am not part of it, no... no... I am not contemplating going once a month to the library. It is difficult, I have 4 classes, in some cases 4 classes a month, so to cover all that curriculum (Beatriz, 2021).

In this regard, Mauricio comments that agreeing on schedules by course to occupy the library did not arouse much interest among his colleagues. But the main obstacle is the coordination with the librarian,

“mainly because of a role issue that is not very clear. For example, the idea was that the teachers would arrive at the library and the material would be ready” (Mauricio, 2021). This is how he describes what happened on some occasions:

But in practice what happened was that the teacher would arrive at the library and there would be nothing waiting for him and he would have to bring the children who had been organized in the room. And to reorder the library on Mondays. So it was seen almost as a formality to go to the library. It had not been seen as an opportunity and neither was there anything waiting for them. I think that this is the reason why the issue did not give much result (Mauricio, 2021).

On her part, Francisca says that her school’s library is in excellent condition and has a large number of books. However, he points out:

To be very honest, it is hard to go to the library, you have to plan activities very precisely to get to the library, sometimes you really want to, and everything... but sometimes things happen at school that make the library closed, and you can’t carry out the activity (Francisca, 2021).

Regarding the need for more attractive and relevant books and didactic materials, Beatriz states that a different type of library would be needed for her subject:

Let’s see... what happens is that in English it is difficult because we would have to have an English library, there is no English library, but there are some texts like dictionaries, posters and we work with that, but the library is not a requirement to do my classes (Beatriz, 2021).

For her part, Yessica appreciates that the management team is looking for “how to generate and spend resources by buying current age-appropriate books, with different types of the beginning, intermediate and advanced levels, which were suitable for children” (Yessica, 2021). A measure that relieves managerial leadership to favor a school reading culture (Merga & Mason, 2019). Indeed, having a diverse and adequately selected bibliographic collection is one of the most important factors for the support provided by the library (Lockwood, 2011; Mekis, 2016; Mekis & Anwandter, 2019); therefore, the contrast expressed by Daniela is interesting: “Our library was quite, let’s say, ‘poor’ because there were actually many texts, but very old. Readings that often did not catch the children’s attention” (Daniela, 2021). Acknowledging that better books have been acquired, she warns that “now, perhaps we lack many more resources in terms of teaching materials” (Daniela, 2021). Regarding this limitation, Katherine points out: “I think the weakness is the number of copies because suddenly there are ugly photocopies... so you don’t even feel like reading them” (Katherine, 2021).

In the case of the last critical node, the lack of library equipment and physical space is mentioned. For example, Josefa appreciates the willingness of her management team, but regrets that due to infrastructure issues the library is used for other purposes:

The thing is that we are in the change of directors, we have already had a lot of news with these new directors, they are very cool (which I love) and they are accepting many ideas from all of us; but not much work is done in the way I would like, because the library is transformed into a photocopier, which should not be (Josefa, 2021).

Similarly, Yessica highlights the support of her management team in addressing some of the limitations in her school’s library:

Yes, now they were renovating again, painting, they bought new furniture to put these nice books. Because there were few; the new management realized that there were very old books and few of them. For example, from one title there were two, that doesn't help much (Yessica, 2021).

CONCLUSIONS: THE LIBRARY AS A SPACE OF POSSIBILITY

As we indicated in the introduction, exploring the perceptions of teachers about the role of the library and its forms of use in different disciplines can be a key to understanding how the formation of readers is developed and, along these lines, to detecting opportunities to promote a reading community.

In this sense, a first conclusion is that the perceptions about the role of the library and the ways of using it do not necessarily follow the same line in these teachers. In other words, if on the one hand, they value the library for the formation of readers, this would not ensure that they use it through a wide repertoire of strategies. Therefore, we detect an opportunity for all disciplines to strengthen the use of the library with strategies that promote diverse contexts and reading objectives (Lluch & Zayas, 2015).

Since the prevalent tendency is to occupy the library for classes, it is worth asking whether this change of scenery effectively implies activating the library's potential. Some findings offer clues in this regard: for example, to hold reading sessions, and promote dialogue and exchange of reading experiences, the library is a favorable space in the area of Language (Spanish). In contrast, in Mathematics, Science, Religion, and Social Sciences their use is focused on holding silent reading sessions and developing research work. The latter is particularly relevant because the need to integrate the library with the research activities promoted in the subjects has been noted (Mekis, 2016).

As the evidence shows, the library contributes from diverse edges in the processes of reader formation (Albelda-Esteban, 2019; Bonilla, 2008; Lockwood, 2011; McKirdy, 2021; Mekis, 2016; Merga & Mason, 2019; Munita & Bustamante, 2019; Serna, Rodríguez & Etxaniz, 2017); consequently, it could be assumed that in all disciplines its integration is favored. Even more so, if we have guidance in that direction from the CRA Libraries team (Anwandter & Bombal, 2015). However, our results suggest that it is in the area of Language (Spanish) where the link with the library takes on greater prominence. Thus, it would confirm a trend that other studies have also detected (Gelber, 2017; Mekis, 2016), and this, would indicate that the responsibility of training readers is not necessarily a shared objective at a transversal level.

In this sense, although this group of teachers is outstanding, two factors could be at play: on the one hand, since most of them teach more than one subject, it is likely that general approaches to reading development coexist with more disciplinary approaches in their practices. In turn, even with their differences in discipline, the ways of using the library do not seem to respond to an institutional plan of reader training. Indeed, in order to move towards a reading community, it is advisable that all strategies pay tribute to clear objectives shared by the entire school community (Errázuriz et al., 2019; Lockwood, 2011; Mekis & Anwandter, 2019; Munita & Bustamante, 2019).

Consequently, there is a clear opportunity for each school, from the voices of teachers, principals, and students, to make progress in this challenge; nevertheless, correcting the three critical nodes that would be limiting the collaboration between the disciplines and the library appears as a fundamental measure.

Without assigning them to a single cause, we note the lack of greater coordination between teachers and the library, the lack of more relevant and attractive bibliographic collections for students, and, finally, some space and equipment problems. These are factors that, in one way or another, limit the opportunities for students to consolidate their reading habits through collaborative work between the disciplines and the library.

In order to provide some guidelines, it would be desirable that schools, from their own contexts, appropriate two general principles: strengthening a collaborative environment in order to agree on a comprehensive reading plan; which is a first step to move towards the transformation of the school into a reading community (Mekis and Anwandter, 2019). Also, since evidence suggests that students perceive the library as a place more conducive to doing homework than reading for pleasure (Gelber, 2017), it would be desirable for all subjects to favor diverse reading objectives and contexts when occupying the library. As

our results suggest, consolidating the library across disciplines, with teachers who have at least one outstanding teaching evaluation in the last 10 years, would not be a sufficient condition if this consolidation is not a shared school-wide purpose.

As Castán (2008) states, the school library is a space of possibility because its didactic potentialities necessarily require a whole associative work to activate them. Therefore, from another angle, it is important to understand that “the state of a school library is often a clear indicator of the school’s commitment to the written culture” (Meek, 2004, p. 253).

Admitting the limitations of this study, we propose two lines of research that can complement it: the first is to explore the daily life of a school library under a more ethnographic approach, since in Chile we have little evidence from this perspective. Likewise, by putting in dialogue the voices and practices of teachers, librarians and students, it is necessary to study how the formation of reading communities is being approached in different schools in our country. Thus, we could build a cartography focused on showing in what ways we are taking advantage of libraries in this perspective, and then disseminate repertoires on the good practices that are being carried out in schools.

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ENDNOTES

1. The names of teachers correspond to pseudonyms.
2. Pedagogy in General Elementary Education.

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