

Thematic Dossier

The Collaborative Presence of University for English Teacher Education *with* and *in* the School

A presença colaborativa da universidade para a educação de professores de inglês com e na escola

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Abstract: This paper addresses the possible implications of the approximation between the university and the school based on the notion of “coming into presence” (Biesta, 2017), that is, when higher education becomes present in the school context. This qualitative study introduces a community outreach project for English teacher education called UNISALE University-School Partnership Project and focuses on the events revolving around the presence of a member of this project in the school environment. Supported by Discourse Analysis principles and procedures, we analyzed interviews and narratives generated by the participating English teacher and the researcher’s field notes. We found contradictory discourses that shift between qualification (admiration) and disqualification (skepticism) of the university’s existence and production, unveiling a distant and fruitless relationship between regular schools and the university. At the same time, we captured possibilities of rehistoricizing (Reis *et al.*, 2019) these discourses, relationships, and representations through the university’s physical presence at the school and, most importantly, how this collaborative presence might strengthen English teacher education *with* and *in* schools.

Keywords: university-school partnership; collaborative work; English teacher education; research-teaching-community outreach programs.

Resumo: O presente trabalho objetiva abordar as possíveis implicações da aproximação da universidade e da escola básica, partindo do pressuposto do “tornar-se presença” (Biesta, 2017) da instituição de ensino superior,

no contexto escolar. Neste estudo, de cunho qualitativo, apresentamos o projeto de extensão UNISALE Parceria Universidade-Escola para a educação de professores de inglês, enfocando os desdobramentos da presença de um membro desse projeto em uma escola. Apoiados em princípios e procedimentos da análise de discurso, analisamos entrevistas e narrativas geradas pela professora de inglês participante e notas de campo da pesquisadora. Apreendemos fios tecidos entre discursos contraditórios, que transitam entre a qualificação (admiração) e a desqualificação (ceticismo) do trabalho da universidade, desvelando uma relação distante e infrutífera entre escolas regulares e a universidade. Ao mesmo tempo, capturamos possibilidades de rehistoricização (Reis *et al.*, 2019) desses discursos, relações e representações, pela presença física da universidade na escola e, mais importante, como esta presença colaborativa pode fortalecer a formação de professores de inglês *com e nas* escolas.

Palavras-chave: parceria universidade-escola; trabalho colaborativo; formação de professores de inglês; pesquisa-ensino-extensão.

1 Introduction

As it might be true also in several countries around the world, there has been a drastic reduction in the investments in public universities in Brazil. Consequently, there has been a lack of investments in science and research carried out by these institutions, especially in the fields of humanities and social sciences. In addition to that, the discourse of ideological disqualification of what is done, said and thought inside public universities grows virtuously (Godoy; Cândido, 2019).

From the analysis of the historical trajectory of universities, we come to understand that they were founded under the image of “guardians and transmitters of knowledge” (Gimenez; Bonacelli, 2013, p. 10). As a result, they have fostered a sort of scientific entrenchment and estrangement, and the establishment of an arduous university-society relationship (Godoy; Cândido, 2019). This scenario seems to contribute to the current (dis) qualification of what is produced inside the universities. In other words, while, on the one hand, history points out a process of recognition and qualification of universities, understood as spaces for production and dissemination of knowledge; on the other hand, a discourse of

disqualification can be equally identified as arising from the apparent detachment of these institutions from the rest of the population.¹

Consequently, a discourse of ideological disqualification of the university might emerge, leading to the reduction of credibility in the importance of this institution as well as in the importance of addressing public financial support to the activities, projects, and research undertaken within universities. At the same time, this discourse corroborates the notion that universities are estranged from most of the population, that access to them is restricted, and that their members are alienated and closed in on themselves. Therefore, it is urgent to destabilize the discursive memory² that situates academia as a distant and obscure domain, just as it is paramount to disseminate and popularize universities' actions that converse directly with the general population matters, including the ones related to the education of teachers, especially English teachers.

In this sense, this paper³ aims to address the potential implications of the inseparability of teaching-research-community outreach and the approximation between universities and schools, based on the assumption that as the university “comes into presence” (Biesta, 2017) in basic education, the discourses and beliefs associated with these educational instances can be rehistoricized (Reis *et al.*, 2019). In addition, we argue that this could promote and strengthen relationships that will have an effect on English teacher education *with* and *in* schools.

This article was organized as follows: first, we discuss the facets of community outreach programs in the educational sphere, resorting to the studies of the pedagogue Gert Biesta (2017) to articulate the idea that the university can “come into presence”, as it becomes present at the school space. Next, we present the community outreach project called UNISALE University-School Partnership, which is the backdrop of this study. After that we discuss the methodology that guides this study as we make theoretical and methodological remarks about Discourse Analysis. Finally, the data is analyzed before proceeding to the final remarks. Thus, the discursive weavings presented here are expected to help us to (re)think about the role universities play in their connection with basic education and the school community, in order to bring them closer to society as an attempt to reconstruct discourses and relationships.

2 The University and the “Coming Into Presence” at the School Space

Tauchen and Fávero (2011) argue that defining the term university is not a simple or uncontroversial task, since any attempt of doing so will always be anchored to the spatial-temporal impositions of a given moment and its people. In other words, any conceptual

¹ At least in Brazil, the population seems to have difficulties to notice the university's presence in their daily life. It is worth emphasizing the relevant presence of universities in our society's everyday life, not only for the education of the various professionals, such as teachers, medical doctors, architects, etc., but also for offering state-of-the-art services in several sectors, such as health, through the development of vaccines, drugs, among others; the coordination of hospitals and dental clinics. However, more can be done in terms of the involvement of the university with regular schools for teacher education. We argue that promoting action in this direction has become imperative and urgent.

² This concept will be revisited throughout the article.

³ A previous version of this paper was published in Portuguese in *Imagens da Educação*, in 2021. This new version has been completely updated and thoroughly revised.

elaboration for the word university and for what it represents will be intrinsically connected to cultural, social, political, and economic issues. However, it is also true that the university should always be referred to as a locus of knowledge production, based on dialogue and interdependence between teaching, research, and community outreach (Tauchen; Fávero, 2011). According to the authors, “the concept of inseparability refers to something that does not exist without the presence of others; that is, the whole ceases to be whole when it breaks apart” (Tauchen; Fávero, 2011, p. 406).

The indissociability of teaching, research, and community outreach is a fundamental principle to be pursued and experienced by public universities in Brazil, as the Brazilian Federal Constitution determines. This inseparability can then be conducive to making universities closer and more accessible to the whole society. Consequently, while bringing both instances closer, academia can become more sensitive to the issues that plague our population.

Universities can therefore offer teacher education courses that aim at establishing educational partnerships founded on “collaboration, cooperation, shared commitments, and responsibilities” (Foerste, 2005, p. 87). Indeed, we realize that the path to this approach pervades community outreach, which precisely proposes the expansion of the relationship between universities and society and the strengthening of the social commitment of higher education institutions in a permanent dialogue with teaching and research.

However, the diversity of meanings associated with the university-school interaction or partnership is a relevant aspect that deserves careful attention since the power that the university has enjoyed historically reverberates in the approximation between the two educational institutions (Foerste, 2005; Mateus, 2009; Reis; Campos; Oliveira, 2018). According to Foerste (2005, p. 37-38), “partnership or inter-institutional collaboration refers to relationships between different subjects and institutions (government, university, schools, unions, teaching professionals in general, etc.)”. Thus, different individuals will design and implement programs depending on the institutions involved and their shared goals and plans.

Not least, the heterogeneity of educational collaboration is desirable, as the quest for homogenization tends to overly formalize and/or bureaucratize co-participation practices. The search for a “magic formula” or standard that fits all contexts and individuals would lead to a form of exacerbated institutionalization, to the detriment of contextual particularities, personal trajectory, and the potentialities of the individuals involved (Foerste, 2005).

In the area of Applied Linguistics to English Language Teaching and Learning, numerous community outreach initiatives have been reported in various previous investigations (Sól, 2015; Mastrella-de-Andrade, 2020; Pessoa; Silvestre; Borelli; Mastrella-de-Andrade, 2022; Mastrella-de-Andrade; Pessoa; Borelli; Silvestre, 2024; Reis; Campos; Oliveira, 2018; among others). The studies ratify the combination of efforts for basic education teachers to re-establish their dialogue with universities. However, as Campos (2019) explains, despite the unquestionable relevance of these initiatives, typically referred to as “English teacher continuing education courses”, the space and time allocated to this training modality is still at universities. As Campos (2019) argues,

[...] the effects of this discourse become quite striking, as it reinforces that academia is in charge of providing development experiences in its space-time continuum for in-service teachers, basically summoning teachers back to the universities. This, in turn, weaves representations of the latter as the only spaces [designated] for knowledge and training, whereas schools are spaces for doing (Campos, 2019, p. 23).

These representations can reinforce the detachment between universities and local educational practices, which, in turn, leads to a certain degree of obscurantism regarding academic activities within the school community. The distance between the two educational institutions also reinforces the schism between the field of theory (the university) and the field of practice (the school), which is rather present in the discourse of teachers (Foerste, 2005).

We advocate that universities need to move away from their position of “guardians of knowledge” (Gimenez; Bonacelli, 2013) urgently and design a new paradigm which fosters actions that come closer to everyday teaching practices and not only to the logic within academia (Forster; Leite, 2014). The university we need today should foster actions privileging not its own space-time but other forms of space and time, each one of them with its own subjects, needs, and capabilities, which, in turn, will allow new collaborative realities. Hence, thinking about the role of universities in contemporary society, and more specifically, seeking to establish a closer relationship between the university and the educational field, involves opening possible paths to (re)share and (re)design actions and relationships *with* and *in* the school space towards the English teacher professionalization.

With this in mind, we argue that it is crucial that universities become present in the space-time of others (Biesta, 2017). According to Biesta (2017, p. 56), human subjectivity should be understood from “the question of what the subject is to where the human being as a unique individual comes into presence”. The author states that we come into presence through the relationships we establish with those who are not like us, understanding the ethical dimension of these relationships as a primary component.

Accordingly, grounded on the debate on intersubjective space, Biesta (2017) argues that understanding the social dimension in which the subject becomes present is crucial, as “no one – no-one – comes into presence when the space of coming into presence can only relegate the subject to a certain fixed position, to a point on the map” (Biesta, 2017, p. 79). In other words, coming into presence is not the solitary exercise of a subject occupying a given space since the space cannot dictate or impose the subject’s presence.

We advocate that being physically present in a given space does not ensure that a given subject is really there. It is necessary to be in that space with oneself, with others, and with all the senses (re)stirred by the relations established there. In other words, the space must be occupied with oneself and the other subjects that may also come into its presence. For Biesta (2017), the space of being-with-the-other is the space of intersubjectivity as well as “a ‘disturbing’ space, but this is a necessary disturbance, a disturbance that solely makes our coming into the world possible” (Biesta, 2017, p. 80).

However, we must emphasize the importance of physical space and its displacements as a vital element for the university to become present in its relationship with schools and society in general, ethically and responsibly. That is, just as the intersubjective space must confront itself with movements and unfixed points triggered by the contact and relationships established with others, we believe that the physical displacement of universities towards the school space will also bring a sort of disturbance that might be capable of redefining relations, representations, and discourses prevailing in the interface between these institutions. In our view, coming into the physical presence of an other-space drives a process

of destabilization of unfair structures present in the university-school, theory-practice, and teacher-researcher relationships.

In this sense, in the field of English Language (EL) learning and teaching, at the Faculty of Languages, Literature, and Linguistics at the Federal University of Minas Gerais, we participate in a community outreach project called UNISALE University-School Partnership⁴ which proposes a partnership in the school environment and, more specifically, in EL classrooms. The project stemmed from the desire and the need to reach realities beyond the university walls and contribute to the initial and continuing education of EL teachers (Reis *et al.*, 2019). Therefore, it proposes a re-signification of the university-school relationship, aiming to reduce the historical and verticalized distance between the two educational institutions by making universities physically present at schools through the exercise of “coming into presence” by their coordinators, participant scholars, and volunteers.

This article proposes to analyze the discourse of an EL teacher participating in the project mentioned above regarding the physical presence of the university in the school space – through the presence of the project’s partner. To this end, we analyze the implications and developments of the approximation between both educational instances, highlighting the indissociability of the teaching-research-community outreach interface. We also focus our discussion on the notion of “coming into presence” (Biesta, 2017) in/through the relationship between subjects in the scope of the university-school partnership in the school space.

Next, we will detail the context and the participants of the research, as well as the Discourse Analysis concepts and methodological procedures that guide this study.

3 Research Context and Theoretical-Methodological Framework

In this subsection, we introduce the UNISALE University-School Partnership Project as well as the research context and the theoretical-methodological framework adopted to generate the data analyzed in the paper.

3.1 UNISALE University-School Partnership Project

Aiming to improve English language teaching and learning in Brazilian public schools, the UNISALE University-School Partnership Project⁵ seeks to establish collaborative partnerships that involve students of the undergraduate program in English, students of the graduate program in Linguistic Studies (scholarship students and volunteers), as well as EL teachers working at regular public schools. Established in 2016, the project aims to take its team to schools to develop work that considers the particularities of each teacher’s specific context, in addition to what they need or aspire to achieve from their participation in the project.

The project’s initial operational methodology is based on observation and intervention, according to the principles of collaborative action research (Sagor, 1993). This, in general terms, consists of the work of a group of participants who share a common goal to

⁴ The project will be discussed in more detail in the next section.

⁵ For further information, see <http://www.lettras.ufmg.br/unisale/>.

solve problems and/or expand the scope of pedagogical work. To accomplish our goals, we must be at the teachers' classroom in order to try to build a trustful relationship that allows us to understand what goes on in that space regarding the teaching practice and the educational context. After that, as a team, we make efforts to elaborate actions to be implemented, evaluated and, whenever necessary, redesigned.

Since the teachers' demands are diverse, as well as the way the relationships between partners are established, some elements of the methodology of action will always be unique and dependent on the participants, contexts, and situations. The partnerships established in the scope of the project are then unique and irreplacable since the school teacher is the one responsible for defining the form and the content of the actions that will be developed in the scope of the project, as well as the periodicity of the project visits in their classroom. In general, the partner attends the school weekly or biweekly. Besides, the entire context and the other subjects involved, that is, the students, other teachers, and the school community, also ensure the particularity of each partnership.

Typically, the project's partners collaborate in the delivery of teaching activities in the classroom, the production and adaptation of teaching materials, and/or the adoption of the resources already available in the school, such as textbooks or solutions for the lack thereof, among other teaching and pedagogical matters. Therefore, teachers will often request more frequent attendance by the partner during school activities. In most visits, a partner accompanies a teacher in his/her school, but it is common to have three partners work in the same school, depending on the demand. Finally, the coordinator makes regular visits to the schools, especially those farthest from the university.⁶

3.2 Corpus Design and Methodology

This study analyzes data previously generated for the development of a master's research,⁷ which was a pioneer in investigating the impacts of the UNISALE University-School Partnership Project on EL teaching/learning in regular public-school classrooms.

Regarding the participants, Ana,⁸ the partner-teacher, has been a faculty member in the Minas Gerais state education system since 2017. During the partnership, this teacher taught eight classes in the morning shift, from 9th grade in elementary school to the first

⁶ It is worth mentioning that the project has also worked in rural schools, far from the university. In these cases, we counted on the invaluable support of the Board of the Faculty of Languages, Literature, and Linguistics at the Federal University of Minas Gerais to transport the team members, according to the availability of a car and a driver. In this case, the visits would take place every two weeks or every month.

⁷ The data used in the present work originate from a master's research (Campos, 2019) which investigated the teacher and her students' utterances, in addition to those by the partner-researcher herself, regarding the university-school partnership in which they were engaged. However, this paper uses some data collected during the master's research that were not used in the dissertation, as well as new interpretation gestures that were not explored before. Therefore, in this paper, new discussions and results are developed by both authors. In addition, the research was approved by the Federal University of Minas Gerais' Ethics Committee on August 24, 2017, under the number CAEE: 69472017.8.0000.5149, being inserted under the Research Project "English language teaching does not only survive on the verb to be: the space, the actions and the actors in the classroom", coordinated by Professor Valdeni da Silva Reis.

⁸ Participant's pseudonym.

year of high school, with an average of 30 to 40 students per classroom. As for the university partner, the various roles played by her (i.e., a scholarship grantee, a master's student, an English teacher for five years, and a researcher) might have driven her to take a position where there was room for an enriching dialogue responsible for generating a collaborative work. The teacher and the partner were about the same age, had equivalent time experience as teachers and both were single and had no children.

Ana's school was visited on a weekly basis, and the form and content of the partner's presence and activities were outlined by the teacher in charge. The two of them collaboratively instituted a dialogue session on teaching practices during the teacher's module time⁹ and agreed that the partner would assist four high school classes.

For six months, the partners worked collaboratively on (re)designing teaching materials, planning classes, and reading and reflecting on scientific papers and books. The two participants outlined the teacher's initial goals and demands together, such as speaking activities. Besides, they also emphasized certain issues brought about during the conversation and reading sessions, such as the use of the appropriate textbook for the students' grade and age and the precepts of classroom management. Therefore, the data were collected over six months of collaborative performance.

The results found by Campos (2019) revealed that the dialogue and the reflections carried out together with the UNISALE partner catalyzed discursive repositioning of the teacher (Neves, 2006) in the scope of EL teaching and learning. Consequently, it also catalyzed the discursive repositioning of her students, highlighting the social construction of the classroom (Green; Dixon, 1994) and the alterity relationship between teacher and students. The author also identified the legitimization of the teacher in her teaching position, from the relationship established in the scope of their partnership and, in a sense, with academia in the space of her classroom. Thus, the project partnership is perceived as an event (Pêcheux, 2006) in which, by seeking to trigger an "already-spoken" statement, the subject comes across other possibilities of saying and doing that did not seem accessible before.

In this paper we go further as we discuss and emphasize the physical presence of the university in the school and its implications and developments regarding the discourses and beliefs of its subjects. Simultaneously, we encourage the development of studies that investigate the role community outreach projects play to the importance and development of universities around the world. Such studies have the laudable mission of gathering and discussing the implications for teaching, research, and community outreach to science and human development. The principle of inseparability between these instances has been revealing itself as a current and urgent challenge (Gonçalves, 2015) that needs to be properly addressed. By doing so, one can also promote the performance and presence of universities in our everyday social life, which poses yet another current and urgent challenge.

⁹ The module period is part of the teacher's workload in the state of Minas Gerais and is defined as the time allocated in out-of-class activities.

3.3 Some Concepts of Discourse Analysis

In this paper, we analyze (1) semi-structured interviews and narratives with the EL teacher and (2) class observations and field notes written by the researcher covering the period from her first contact with the teacher until the conclusion of the partnership work. Our analyses are grounded on Discourse Analysis principles and procedures (Orlandi, 2015), aimed precisely at understanding “how language organizes the discourses of speakers to produce meanings” (Sól, 2015, p. 37).

Therefore, we seek to encourage a less naive relationship with language (Orlandi, 2015) by considering exteriority as a primordial element of meaning production since Pêcheux (1995) understands discourse as “meaning-effects” between interlocutors, which challenge the illusion of a transparent communication. We advocate that no meaning is assigned a priori, and words can convey different meanings according to their discursive, historical, and ideological conditions of production (Orlandi, 2015).

In this paper, we draw our attention not only to what is spoken by an EL teacher of a public school but also to her way of enunciating. By doing so, we seek to apprehend meanings from the intradiscourse, that is, the linguistic materiality in its content and form. More importantly, we also shed light on the interdiscourse, the “already-spoken” available to the subject about topics, events, relationships, etc. Interdiscourse, also referred to as discursive memory, refers to what is repeated and pre-constructed based on what can be spoken, on what has already been spoken. Therefore, we try to interpret these repetitions to reveal the prevalent meanings and their effects (Orlandi, 2015), concerning, among other things, the approximation between the university and the school, as well as the physical presence of academia in the public school space.

We understand that subjects are heterogeneous, divided, and crossed by ideologies and the unconscious (Orlandi, 2015). By performing an analysis of one’s utterances, we understand the subject not as one and homogeneous but conflicted and divided. Despite the illusion, subjects have no control over the meaning-effects of their utterances because lapses, errors, and ambiguities are constitutive elements of language (Ferreira, 2003).

The teacher-subject’s statements allow us to pinpoint her representations, which are constituted in the interdiscourse and can be understood as images of the world, dynamic and constantly changing, which she appropriates through unconscious identification (Neves, 2006). These representations can also be (re)constructed from the subjects’ individual experiences and those arising from our relationships with others (Coracini, 2003; Reis, 2011). Therefore, we can glimpse the mobilization of discourses and representations in one’s contact experiences with others.

These concepts served as a basis for the formation of the corpus and our analyses, which are presented below.

4 Corpus Interpretation Gestures: From the Discourse of (Dis) Qualification to the Collaborative Presence

This section deals with the data analysis based on the meanings mobilized in the words chosen by Ana and the discursive threads woven into linguistic materiality.

Since our first contact with the teacher, we could pinpoint in Ana's words representations (images) of the university as a hierarchical locus and a guardian of knowledge and solutions. In this sense, the following statement can be observed:

- (1) What I expect // is::: // **to carry out an analysis** / seriously / when I thought of UNISALE project / I thought / **"Geez, how fancy!"** / **it's like consulting** / **it's like coaching** / look, I mean it / that was it (Ana. First interview, April 6th, 2018).¹⁰

In the words of Orlandi (2015), the interdiscourse available to the subject enables utterances, which, when lodged in memory, are captured in the thread of discourse at the intradiscursive level. From the use of lexical items such as "consulting" and "coach", we apprehend the neoliberal discourse applied to contemporary education, in which the colonization of language is in increasing expansion as a result of the adoption of a terminology characterized by economic and corporate jargon. According to her imagination and expectation, by welcoming the UNISALE Project, teacher Ana approaches this discourse as she assigns the project (as a representative of the university) with the role of holding power-knowledge about her own practice. In other words, according to the images Ana creates about it, the project would be in charge of evaluating, categorizing, and guiding her teaching activity by introducing ready-made solutions to be implemented: "to carry out an analysis [...], it's like consulting / it's like coaching".

The adjective "fancy" used in the exclamatory expression "Geez, how fancy!" deserves attention. The resonance of this adjective can be observed in statements uttered by the teacher, using paraphrastic units with the same semantic load, as in "What a luxury to have you here!"¹¹ These lexical items mobilize meaning-effects conveying notions of glamour or the condition of being and/or having something valuable. This representation depicts the university as object of desire, sophistication, refinement, and distinction, designed for the privileged classes and, therefore, unlikely to be accessible to everyone. Such statements are interwoven to highlight the historical status and prestige of universities as holders of knowledge, guardians of truth, and hierarchically superior to other sectors of society, such as primary education schools, for example.

We must emphasize that the statements expressing the detachment between universities and primary schools also resonate in Ana's discourse as if these were disparate, isolated worlds. Indeed, let us observe the following statement:

- (2) And as soon as I heard about / this partnership thing / the university goes to school / I found it awesome / **because we often come across theories** / **that are far beyond the classroom reality** / **sometimes people don't know** / the conditions / of those who are

¹⁰ Bold will be used to highlight important passages in the analysis.

¹¹ Researcher's field notes, April 18th, 2018.

there / so I think it's very cool / and necessary / I'm glad they realized it / isn't that right / let us go down to the real world / I really see it as the real world (Ana. First interview, April 6th, 2018).

For the teacher, the partnership would be configured as a novelty ("I'm glad they realized it"), an approximation between both educational spheres, isolated between inaccessible theories and real-life practice ("this partnership thing / [...] we often come across theories / that are far beyond the classroom reality / sometimes people don't know / the conditions / of those who are [working] there"). The use of the subject pronoun "we" and the noun "people" shows that schools and universities may be on opposite sides. Thus, by choosing "we", Ana situates herself on the side of schools, where ineffective theories that neglect classroom reality come to be tested ("because we often come across theories / that are far beyond the classroom reality"), whereas the use of the noun "people" represents the side of academia. Physically absent from the school, universities, through their members ("the people"), conceive mistaken theories due to their lack of knowledge and unawareness of the educational context and its community ("sometimes people don't know / the conditions / of those who are there").

Similarly, the use of the adverbs "beyond" and "there" delimits such physical separation, placing the two institutions in different domains. According to this idea, the school is defined as "the real world", which reverberates an "unspoken statement" that operates equally on the production of meanings by affirming, conversely, that the university is an ideal/idealized, illusory, or fictional world. Therefore, the teacher also believes that academia "needs" to break the boundaries of such an idealized bubble, visit schools, and become aware of the real world in order to be able to rethink its theories and teaching practices.

We apprehend a veiled criticism of academic work (which is "beyond" and not located "there", *in* and *with* the school) and the notion that universities are distant and unaware of the school practitioners issues; situated in some ideal world, and unable to produce meaningful knowledge for the "real world". As we can infer from the statement above, this discourse contributes significantly to the disqualification of academic work, corroborating meaning-effects revolving around the absence of dialogue and sharing between individuals situated "beyond" and "there". Therefore, one question persists: where is the university?

We point out how Ana's words shift dynamically between feelings of attraction, admiration, and amazement by universities, "Geez, how fancy!" / it's like consulting / it's like coaching", and the way she questions what is produced in such places, by somewhat disqualifying the academic know-how. Indeed, she thinks universities remain isolated in their lack of knowledge and information on the "real world" and alienated in their own ideal world ("[...] we often come across theories / that are far beyond the classroom reality / sometimes people don't know / the conditions / of those who are there"). These voices constitute subjects who, since they are divided, are conflicting, heterogeneous, and embedded in various discourses.

Interestingly, we can also notice that Ana's voice, in its multiple constitutions, is mixed with the voice of universities, revealing that these institutions can only exist, operate, and be modified by human action, both collectively and plurally, from the contribution of each subject. However, it primarily gives promising indications of the impact of a horizontalized

partnership, which aims to join forces, share responsibilities, and be plural when solving problems, becoming, finally, “us”. In other words, the use of the verb “go” in the first-person plural in “Let us go down to the real world” points to a form of heterogeneity (Authier-Revuz, 2004) through the use of direct speech by reporting an other-utterance, which belongs to the university but also indicates that Ana either belongs to that universe or perceives herself as part of it: “Let *us* go down to the real world” (emphasis added). This sheds light on the way the physical presence of the university in the school poses opportunities for redefining historicized actions and positionings.

Moving forward, the presence of the UNISALE Project partner in the school during the weekly visits initially caused confusion regarding the role she was really about to play in that space. Many employees and students believed she was an undergraduate student completing her mandatory internship, which was one of the first university-school partnerships instituted in Brazil (Foerste, 2005). However, the moment the school community realized that this was not what she was there for, doubts arose as to why a person from the academic universe was attending school at all.

In the meaning-effects surrounding the uncertainties raised by the school community, we find the socio-historical relationship between universities and schools. After all, if the scholar were not there to fulfill her mandatory internship, a practice that typically benefits only the university in its members and needs, what could she be doing in that space? Amid such confusion and uncertainty, there is a representation of universities as “exploiters” of schools, which sets up an extractive relationship in which universities only visit the latter when they need to (Telles, 2019). Therefore, the school community is left without reference or interdiscourse that supports options other than that of being an intern.

In this sense, the following statement can be discussed:

- (3) As for the teachers and the school board, I've got a rather negative perception of the presence of the scholar. It seems **they don't understand the reasons for her presence** [...] I think I may have fostered that distance by introducing her as a “researcher” (Ana. Narrative, August 6th, 2018).

This statement reinforces the vagueness of the partner's presence and role for the school community. According to the teacher's interpretation, her colleagues cannot understand why she is at the school (“they don't understand the reasons for her presence”). However, her statement also reveals that the lack of a clear definition was encouraged by Ana, who introduced the partner as a researcher, although she was first introduced to her as a UNISALE partner and only later as a researcher. It can be inferred that in Ana's imagination, this way of introducing the UNISALE Project partner would sound like a form of status or something luxurious and fancy, as shown above. In other words, it seems that introducing the scholar who she was going to work with as a researcher could qualify her teaching practice and its relevance in the face of that community.

However, the meaning-effects mobilized based on this idea trigger the interdiscourse that situates the scholar and the university precisely on opposite and antagonistic sides in relation to the school. We must note that Ana adopts a modal expression of possibility to convey the idea that she may have stimulated the community's apparent fear of approaching the scholar (“I may have fostered that distance by introducing her as a researcher”). The use

of “foster” in this verbal construction allows us to glimpse that the detachment was already in place and was merely triggered or encouraged by the teacher’s statement.

In other words, the way Ana referred to the partner sparked an interdiscourse that does not favor the university-school relationship since it recalls relationships previously established between both instances during the conduction of studies within (public) schools. According to Telles (2019), researchers “knock on the school door” with their data collection instruments, and, after they obtain what they want or need, they return to universities to write their dissertations and theses, leaving little if any contributions to the setting that welcomed their proposal. The author goes on to say that these researchers spare no effort to “scorn” teachers and their practice without even giving meaningful feedback to the school (Telles, 2019). Such images seem to have been recalled and initially compromised the successful relationship between the scholar and the school community.

However, over the months of the project partnership, we also identified curiosity and affirmation of the work of the partners from the part of the community, as they could see the partner attending the school space on a weekly basis. For example, after a few months, the school employees greeted and said goodbye to the scholar in English, using typical English expressions such as “Hello, Isabela!” and “See you, Isabela!”. Indeed, even though it seems to mean very little in terms of the use of a foreign language, it is meaningful when analyzed from a broader sequence of events. Namely, as the partner becomes a part and a member of the school community, the university comes into presence, re-signifying the university-school relationship. In the view of the university members, entering the school space and integrating into that environment does not happen in a few days through occasional visits. On the contrary, the participants must spend their time there, staying longer; making it possible that universities build other reputations than “exploiters” and approaching a collaborative instance as they learn how to come into presence (Biesta, 2017).

Ana also reveals her interpretation of how the students perceive and relate to the project’s partner. See the fragment below:

- (4) I notice that the students have reacted very positively to the scholar’s presence in the school. I like it when I hear them questioning where she is or why she’s not there on a certain day. This shows that **her presence is missed, and from their speech, we can see that the scholar is a collaborative presence in the classroom** (Ana. Narrative, August 6th, 2018).

Unlike Ana’s impression regarding the way other teachers and school employees understand the scholar’s presence and role in the school, the excerpt above allows us to point out that the teacher believes that the students have come to comprehend it perfectly. Ana seems to realize that by missing the scholar, the students show that she is already seen as an important member of that environment. This leads to school-university integration once the scholar is perceived as part of that group and as “a collaborative presence in the classroom”.

More importantly, we confirm the integration between the members of the social construction delimited in the classroom space (Green; Dixon, 1994) through the interweaving of different voices. In other words, through the use of the verb “see” in the first-person plural when referring to what the students think and talk about, Ana once again offers strong evidence that in the social construction of this classroom, its members are present, active

partners, working like a team or a group (“from their speech we can see that the scholar is a collaborative presence in the classroom”).

According to Green and Dixon (1994), the classroom is perceived as a social construction since its members interact among themselves and with other elements, building patterns of behavior. However, as a complex and adaptive system (Silva; Paiva, 2016), these patterns are unstable and can shift as a result of small or large actions performed in the space and scope of the interaction between members. Thus, over the months the project was being conducted at the school, the project’s partner certainly influenced the dynamics of that space and the interaction between subjects, thus becoming a crucial part of that system (“her presence is missed”; “collaborative presence”). She becomes a physical presence in the EL classroom, which, in turn, culminates in movements, constructions, and readjustments in this adaptive and complex system that the classroom environment truly is (Silva; Paiva, 2016).

Finally, observe some of Ana’s accounts in her final interview:

- (5) The relationship with the scholar / very good / very open / [she] was always like / **ready to listen / communication / we built real communication, didn’t we / I think we really built it / we really built it / it wasn’t just you or me / or just me / it was a construction** (Ana. Final interview, September 28th, 2018).
- (6) **I was encouraged to reflect on what I did / “what did you think of that?” / “how was the students’ participation?” [...] then / UNISALE Project brought about / theoretical improvement / practical improvement / improvement by thinking about / these issues I talked about in the professional sphere / and in the personal sphere as well** (Ana. Final interview, September 28th, 2018).

The repetition of lexical items such as “build” (“we built”, “construction”) in [5] mobilizes meaning-effects referring to the development of the partnership. That is, each one added to the collaborative work what they could according to the means they had, as a combination of distinct parts to elaborate a greater purpose, thus achieving the goals; building something together (“it wasn’t just you or me”).

Thus, it is clear that the relationship is primarily established through the collaborative and attentive relationship between partners (“ready to listen / communication / we built real communication”). Over the period of six months, the teacher and the partner collaborated in various activities, such as a weekly meeting at school dedicated to planning and reflection, teaching materials production done primarily online, as well as the participation of the partner during lessons delivery every week, which culminated in a relationship established “as a movement in the face of the experience arising from confronting others” (Reis, 2011, p. 508). That is, as we stand before those who are different, we can reach unknown spheres of others and ourselves, and so we grow, build, and elaborate new possibilities of being and doing in the world beyond the limitations of our ideal world, which might, in return, have an impact not only on our personal, but also professional development.

As Biesta (2017, p. 56) reminds us, “we come into presence through our relationships with others who are not like us”. It is a relationship that makes us gaze at ourselves, as we are encouraged by others to dive deeper into and beyond ourselves. As stated by Ana in [6], the relationship, the contact, and the confrontation with others (in this case, the project scholar)

helped her improve aspects of her professional and personal life, as she was challenged to reflect (“I was encouraged to reflect on what I did”). This process of reflection, as many authors state (Dewey, 1959; Kumaravadivelu, 2003, and others), is of paramount importance for the teacher education process, which is fostered by the collaborative presence of the university *with* and *in* the school.

5 Final Remark

Through the intertwined threads in Ana’s discourse, we were able to capture the shifts around the (dis)qualification of the university’s know-how in the scope of its distance and ignorance of the “real world”. However, the incorporation of the UNISALE Project into her English teaching practice is a form of collaborative presence as the university is personified in the figure of the partner. This, in turn, embodies the collaborative work, pointing to the rehistoricization of relations, discourses, and representations, in the intersubjective and physical space of the school and its subjects.

That, consequently, has a direct impact on Ana’s professional development once the collaborative presence of university seems to contribute greatly to her teaching continuing education and professionalization. However, we acknowledge that the detachment between universities and schools has been nourished for decades and will not be easily erased. Therefore, it is important to emphasize that the university must come to occupy a place and position from where it can be possible to (re)construct more horizontal and integrative relationships with schools and their members. In order to do so, the university will have to renounce or abdicate the mistaken role of guardian of knowledge and adopt a much more humble position of being interested and really getting to know that space through a physical presence that instigates an attentive, curious, prolonged, and committed ‘being there’ with and for that community.

Therefore, this study can contribute to the urgent need for universities to become a collaborative presence in the school environment, based on the desire to foster professional development and (re)build genuine partnerships. We understand genuine partnerships as collaborative work in which each member or instance occupies its respective place without ignoring the history of the institutions, places and people. The collaborators must be engaged, responsible, and interested in the work and in each other to achieve a common good. Without these elements, any effort undertaken to carry out collaborative work will be fruitless. Thus, a genuine partnership between the university and the school requires us to change how we look at things, our actions, and the exercise of being connected and committed to people’s needs by coming into presence.

Finally, we emphasize that it is urgent that the university occupies a place from where it can be closer to the society and promote wider dissemination and appreciation of its performance out from its walls. The university can do so as it finds ways to work from the inseparability of the teaching-research-community outreach. In addition to that, this paradigm of initial and continuing English teacher education fostered by a stronger presence of the university *with* and *in* the school setting will certainly advance the university-school relationship for English teacher education, which still poses some challenges but with hopeful glimmers of possibilities.

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Ethics Committee Report

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Isabela de Oliveira Campos: initial text planning; text structuring; corpus generation and interpretation; writing and reviewing the entire text. Valdeni da Silva Reis: deepening the initial text planning; text structuring; corpus interpretation; writing and reviewing the entire text.

Declaration of Conflict of Interest

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest.

Data Availability Statement

The institutional data supporting the analyses presented in this paper can be partially found at Campos (2019). Other data are available only under permission.

Use of AI

The authors declare that AI was not used in this paper.

Reviews

As part of the commitment made by the Brazilian Journal of Applied Linguistics to Open Science, the journal publishes the reviews issued regarding its published works, when authorized by all parties involved.

Review 1

The paper describes a qualitative study that presents a community outreach project aimed at improving English language teaching and learning in Brazilian public schools and analyzes the discourse of an EL teacher participating in this project regarding the physical presence of the university in the school space, through the presence of the project's partner. Discourse Analysis principles and procedures are used to analyze interviews and narratives generated by the participating English teacher and the researcher's field notes. The findings indicate that the school teacher has contradictory discourses of admiration and skepticism of the university's existence and production, showing a distant and fruitless relationship between regular schools and the university. At the same time, as a result of the collaboration between the school teacher and the university teacher in various activities, such as lesson planning, lesson delivery, assessment etc., over the period of six months, the school teacher's discourses shifted, demonstrating that the university's physical and collaborative presence at the school might strengthen English teacher education *with* and *in* schools. I believe the paper discusses a very important issue, which is the fact that the university should strengthen ties with the community in general and with the schools in particular. Besides, it is well organized and well written, presenting a good theoretical background, relevant data, and discussion.

Reviewed on: 07/07/2024.

Recommendation: Accept Submission.

Reviewer: Rosane Rocha Pessoa.

Review 2

Artigo bem redigido, com temática relevante para o campo da Letras e também para outras áreas acadêmicas, tendo em vista a importância de uma aproximação entre a produção de conhecimento científico e os setores sociais em que o conhecimento acadêmico é aplicado – neste caso a escola. A fundamentação teórica está bem descrita e a metodologia consistente

com essa base teórica. A análise está bem fundamentada nos dados que foram apresentados, e os argumentos apresentados de forma persuasiva.

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