

## THE DESIGN OF TEACHING MATERIALS AS A TOOL IN EFL TEACHER EDUCATION: EXPERIENCES OF A BRAZILIAN TEACHER EDUCATION PROGRAM

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### Abstract

This paper discusses how teaching material design can contribute to educate EFL teachers to consider their prospective students' profiles. This professional activity requires the student teachers to take a set of decisions, make choices and explain the reasons for them. The described practices in teacher education are carried out at a public university in the southeast of Brazil, and Larsen-Freeman's (1983) assertion that teaching is about making choices, which should be informed, is closely considered. The author describes three different contexts of practice and presents student teacher considerations about the experiences. There are challenges and gains in the process of teaching/learning how to design ELT materials, but as has been pointed out by the participants involved in this practice the gains are worth the challenges.

**Keywords:** Teacher education; EFL teaching material design; practice and context relations

### 1. Introduction

The aim of this paper is to describe teacher education practices carried out in a program on teacher education in a Brazilian federal university. The context presents the teacher educator (TE) with a dual challenge: to prepare student teachers to become professionals and to improve their language proficiency at the same time, as further detailed.

The focus of discussion is based on experiences in three contexts with two different practice perspectives; a mandatory one (MP) occurring in the classroom under TE guidance and supervision, and another project based (PB), an extra curricular opportunity for those interested and selected to teach "extension"<sup>1</sup> courses. In both cases, teaching material design has a central role in the process of educating student teachers

and in guiding them to make *informed choices*, in the sense advocated by Larsen-Freeman (1983).

The design of teaching materials requires the student teachers to take a set of decisions, make choices and explain the reasons for them. This practice will grant them some autonomy (in terms of taking responsibility for decision-making), and also create opportunities (and the necessity) for reflection.

Each of these practices has proved to bring challenges and contributions to both TE and student teachers development, as data collected by the TE in a series of mini action research studies based on her practice and presented in the discussion section of this paper reveal.

The choice of three different contexts for data collection is due to the richness of observing student teachers in different phases throughout their education

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process and being able to analyze their continuing professional growth. In the MP, their teaching practice is still assisted and simulated. In the first PB practice student teachers begin to be responsible for real classes, teaching material design and working in small groups. In the second PB, the variety of classes and design of materials are more complex. Besides, in this last PB the team is larger, composed of undergraduate and graduate students. Following these different phases in the teacher education process contributes to the understanding of how the transition from one phase to another can be planned by educators.

## 2. Choices in Teacher Education: Situated Practices

Until the early 1990s, microteaching used to be the popular choice teacher educators had in most teaching education programs, both, in general and in language teaching, but as pointed out by Wright (2011, quoting Crandall, 2000) the shift, first in general education, from behaviorism to constructivism, has changed the position of student teachers from consumers of ready knowledge (traditionally transmitted to them in training courses) to thinkers or reflective practitioners.

On the one hand, microteaching is comfortable to teacher educators and student teachers as well, because it may be simply a question of showing how to teach and expecting a good performance for the former, and of being a good observer and imitator for the latter. Everything can be done in a classroom with well-defined roles, sequences and script-like performances. On the other, practices of this sort are unauthentic and of uncertain impact in teacher knowledge of teaching, as discussed by Johnson & Arshavskaya (2011).

One of the main problems in the practice of showing “good strategies” to student teachers, such as in prototypical microteaching, is that it is prescriptive in a one-size fits all fashion and, naturally, there is no such a thing as homogenous learning and teaching conditions in real educational contexts. As reasoned by Johnson (2009b, cited by Vieira-Abrahão, 2012, p.459), recently, teacher educators have started to consider learning to teach as situated, socially negotiated, and

sensitive to the knowledge that they have of their own, their students, content, curriculum and context. According to the author, this shift in teacher education was a consequence of the recognition that teacher knowledge is molded by previous experiences that teachers have, interacting with knowledge acquired in teacher education programs and experiences in diverse contexts of teaching and learning.

Also, as well observed by Larsen-Freeman (2003, p.4):

(...) Primary among these (important considerations in teaching) is taking into account who the students are and why they are studying the language. An assessment of students’ language needs and how they learn should inform the choice of syllabus units and teaching practices. *We are, after all, teaching students, not just teaching language.* (Emphasis added).

Similarly, Johnson & Arshavskaya (2011, p. 172) advocate that: “From a sociocultural perspective, knowledge for teaching is understood holistically and the interdependence between *what is taught* and *how it is taught* is crucial to both the processes of learning-to-teach as well as the development of teaching expertise”.

As observed in the literature in the area, elements involved in teaching and learning to teach are too complex to count exclusively with following “successful” models. The practice has to closely take into account many (ideally all) contextual factors, so that key elements can be considered in the decisions of what and how to teach. However, finding means and possibilities to integrate student teachers in school settings is not always easy or even possible. How to find ways to move from traditional microteaching to more holistic practices is certainly a great challenge for many teacher educators.

In the experience presented in this paper two distinct teacher education practices occur, a mandatory and an optional one for student teachers. In both cases the design of teaching materials is used as a tool to enrich the teacher education process. In the PB (extra-curricular) practice graduate students and student teachers (undergraduate students) may work together.

### 3. Why the Design of Teaching Materials?

Teaching materials play a central role in teaching and learning, and as Garton and Graves (2014, p.11) assert: “Materials are fundamental to language learning and teaching (...) *but materials cannot be viewed independently of their users.*” (Emphasis added). This assertion presents two important characteristics of teaching materials that imply their relevance in teacher education; they are a fundamental part of language learning and teaching and they are dependent on their users (both teachers and learners).

Exactly because of the dependent nature of teaching materials, when a (student) teacher is assigned to design them, a number of contextual decisions have to be made and these have a great potential to raise designers’ reflection about what and how to teach (who/where the learners are; what they are learning the language for; how much time is available; available resources, among others). Generally speaking, material design should consider and try to harmonize situated possibilities with learners’ needs and wants.

Besides, choosing and adapting materials represent quite a challenge for most (new) language teachers. At the same time, as pointed out by Harwood 2010, (p. 4), quoting Allwright (1981), “ (...) no pre-prepared teaching materials can meet the needs of any given class precisely; some level of adaptation will be necessary”. It is, consequently, important that teachers become aware of that, understand why and develop informed means to perform this task, inherent to the profession.

### 4. Context and Methodology

Every teacher education program tends to have some global characteristics, but also considerable more specific ones. In this section the context where the described practice takes place will be explained. The program where data have been collected is a 5-year-long undergraduate program at a Brazilian federal university in the state of São Paulo, southeast of the country.

When this program started in 1996, most national “Licenciatura em Letras” (language and literature teaching certificate undergraduate programs) had the

concentration of pedagogical disciplines in the last year or last two years in 4 or 5 year-long programs, and practical pedagogical concerns would be treated only in these late *practicum* disciplines. A few years later, the government passed new laws regarding the education of teachers.<sup>2</sup> One of the main changes was the recommendation that every discipline in teacher education programs should integrate pedagogical concerns to content study from the get-go. Kaneko-Marques (2007) discusses the main characteristics and practical consequences of these laws, and states that:

(...) This way, practice as a curricular component is the one that is present in all the disciplines in the teacher education program, and not only in the ones dedicated exclusively to pedagogical content, that is, all of the disciplines have to consider practical dimensions, involving procedures of observation, reflection, and problem-solution throughout the teacher educational process. (p. 17).<sup>3</sup>

The recommendation to consider both content and pedagogical practice was well received by the teacher educators in the program where this study took place. However, it was challenging to them, especially because the student teachers, invariably heterogeneous in terms of English language proficiency, had to have opportunities to improve their English and to be educated as English teachers at the same time.

Almost all disciplines had to be revised and adapted to the new demands and it took some years to harmonize student teachers’ comprehension of the aims of the program, as they expected first to be language learners and only later professionals. Teacher educators also needed time to find ways to integrate content and practice, and then help their students realize that the new curriculum was more appropriate than the previous one (where only content was studied in the first two years of the program).

In this paper, the author, who was responsible for teaching classes on EFL writing and grammar, presents how she found ways to accomplish the new challenges in class. Additionally, she also discusses extra-class rich possibilities for real practice for student teachers in

national public universities.

In the analyzed program most students are aged from 18 to 25 years old, and there is a tendency that about two thirds of the classes are composed by females. The program grants teaching credentials in Portuguese as a first language and a foreign language (either English or Spanish). Every year forty new students start the “Letras” undergraduate program and all the mandatory classes are offered in the evening (from 7:00 to 11:00 p.m.). Portuguese as a first language, Linguistics, Brazilian and Portuguese literatures, besides some pedagogical disciplines are mandatory to every student teacher. As for foreign language (and corresponding literatures), they need to choose a track, either English or Spanish, upon entrance test enrolment. This means that the forty students entering the program will have common disciplines, but will be split in two groups for foreign language studies, both in content and pedagogical practice.

In a group of twenty students who start the English language track, it is common that about a quarter of student teachers (from 4 to 6) are really interested in becoming English language teachers, but all the twenty students have to go through the mandatory disciplines and integrated practices, as all of them will be granted an EFL teaching degree. Some change their mind throughout the program in both ways, deciding to invest in the EFL teaching career or abandoning it for another field, but in the end, a quarter is the average number of those who do become EFL teachers.

Besides the question of professional interest, the level of English language proficiency is also heterogeneous; some of the student teachers are fluent and even have informal teaching jobs, while others have very basic language skills. Even among those who do want to become EFL teachers, there are, sometimes, basic English language users.

This contextualization serves to reveal the challenges faced by TE’s working in this and many other similar national undergraduate EFL (Letras) teaching programs. However, far from presenting it as a complaint, the intention here is to discuss the best that can be done in this scenario.

#### 4.1 Study Design

This paper brings reflections on the experiences of a teacher educator in providing her EFL student teachers with practices that help them recognize that teaching and learning require a lot of choices and that these have to be informed and context sensitive. It does not exactly result from a specific investigation, but is based on a series of micro-action studies, as the author collects data from student teachers assignments, reports and testimonies. These are based on practices that she has proposed, with most of the data involving the design of EFL teaching materials. Designing teaching materials, as she proposes, is a means through which student teachers can develop increased awareness of a range of important issues that must be considered when attempting to reach their teaching goals.

Tripp (2005, p. 457) says that Grundy (1983) differentiates technical action research from practical action research and, based on the latter, states:

(...) practical action research is different from technical in that the action researcher chooses or designs the changes made. The two distinguishing characteristics here are: first, that it is more like practising a craft — the crafter may take an order, but how they achieve the desired result is left very much up to them, their experience and ideas; and second, that the kind of decisions they take about what to do how and when are informed by their professional notions of what will be best for their clients.

Being the result of the authors’ plans and actions in her practice in response to document regulations and in accordance to her theoretical education and practical experiences, this study may be classified as a practical action research in EFL teacher education and is also qualitative in nature.

Based on Denzin & Lincoln’s (2000) definition of qualitative research, Richards, K. (2009, p.149) proposes the following macro-characteristics for qualitative research:

- locally situated (it studies human participants in natural settings and conditions, eschewing artificially constructed situations);
- participant-oriented (it is sensitive to, and seeks to understand, participants' perspectives on their world);
- holistic (it is context sensitive and does not study isolated aspects independently of the situation in which they occur);
- inductive (it depends on a process of interpretation that involves immersion in the data and draws on different perspectives).

This paper presents the author's analysis of her own practice, so she is directly involved in the natural environment where the studied practice occurs. Data shown and analyzed in the discussion section reveal participants' point of view regarding the discussed practice; teaching material design as a tool in EFL teacher education. The goal is to understand what kinds of reflection the design of teaching material generates in the EFL teacher education process focused in this study.

As observed in the introduction of this paper, the three different contexts for data collection and analysis serve to reveal student teachers' ongoing professional advances.

#### **4.2 Participants**

The participants<sup>4</sup> in this study, besides the author as the teacher educator (TE)<sup>5</sup> in the discussed practice, are student teachers and teachers in two different practices. The first is related to a mandatory discipline (MP) named "Habilidade Escrita em Língua Inglesa: Desenvolvimento e Prática Pedagógica" (Writing Skill in English Language: Development and Pedagogical Practice; WDP hereafter). It is a sixty-hour-long course taught to student teachers in their third year out of a 5-year-long program. The course aims at improving student teachers' writing in English and preparing

them to think of teaching and learning EFL through the design (writing) of a teaching unit (similar to an EFL textbook unit). The main theoretical support for writing development comes from genre analysis, especially based on a Swalesian perspective (Swales, 2011, among others). The pedagogical practices try to consider student teachers' cognition, as recommended in Borg (2003) and Barcelos, (2006), to guide them to reflection through questioning and practice (re) build; as discussed in Gimenez et al. (2004) and bring into light the discussion of sociocultural perspectives, similarly to Johnson & Arshavskaya (2011).

The first context for data collection, the WDP discipline, has two major integrated goals: 1) helping student teachers (undergraduate students) to improve their own writing in English and 2) preparing them to think of effective EFL teaching practices, by designing (writing) a pedagogical teaching unit. The first aim is planned based on a series of genre awareness activities, which are discussed in detail in Augusto-Navarro (2013). The second purpose (not secondary) is one of the foci under description and analysis in this paper.

The other data collection context has undergraduate and graduate students of the same university as participants. They work as EFL teachers in "extension" programs coordinated by the TE. These programs (project based, PB) are extra curricular and welcome both interested student teachers (from their first year at the university and on) and graduate students. However, before being assigned as teachers, they have to either undergo a selection or an assisted class observation/collaboration process. Most of the graduate students are former undergraduate students in the same institution and, as a result, have undergone the MP. Some of them had previously worked in extension programs, during their undergraduate years and are those who generally do not need to undergo the observation before they start teaching in a new project.

The TE has coordinated different extension projects in the last 12 years, these include: English for children from public schools; English for adolescents; English for specific purposes: reading aircraft maintenance manuals; English for academic purposes: Physics in focus; English without borders (aiming at preparing

Brazilian undergraduate and graduate students to academic interchange in universities of English speaking countries). These represent rich contextualized settings for teaching practice and research. Besides, there are also courses for continued EFL teacher education, where both undergraduate and graduate students can work as TE's teaching assistants.

Particular information about each participant is provided in the data analysis section, accompanying participants' texts under analysis.

### **4.3 Procedures and Data Collection**

Similarly to what occurred in the study reported by Dellagnelo & Meurer (2006), data in this study were naturally produced in the teacher education practices discussed here, and not especially planned for the sake of research.

Since the first class of the WDP course, students are informed that they will have to design, either individually or in pairs, an EFL teaching unit. They are told to start considering: a) target group; b) teaching-learning settings; c) what the focus of their teaching unit will be (what they will teach), and d) necessary resources. They have freedom to make choices such as partners, target learners, theme/topic, but they are also informed that they will need to develop a process work throughout the term, have theoretical foundations for their choices and expose a first draft to the TE, a second draft to colleagues and a third draft to TE, before a final presentation to be delivered to the whole class.

After the first month of classes they have to present their first material design (a kind of textbook unit) ideas to the TE, who will ask them to support their initial choices (situating the teaching-learning target context). During this presentation, student teachers are not told that their ideas are right or wrong, but are asked to explain what they have in mind and why they have planned pedagogical activities that way. TE will then provide student teachers with theoretical texts, based on content, theme and target learners that they have chosen to work with, to help them with foundations in the development of their teaching materials. After reading the texts, about one month after the first plan

had been presented, student teachers need to present a first draft for TE and their colleagues, who will ask them questions, present suggestions and doubts. Then, the student teachers have to decide whether they will maintain the same target learners, context, theme and topic for their teaching unit or if they will change one, some or all of these elements. In some cases, when there are changes, the TE will provide them with new guiding questions and theoretical texts.

The term generally has four months of classes and in the third one each pair is required to present a unit draft (privately) to the TE, who will ask them more questions in regard to the consistence of their purposes and means. At this point they are permitted to make any necessary changes in their draft-teaching units, but they cannot change teaching purposes, in regard to context, audience and topic/content anymore. About two weeks before the end of the term, each pair or person will present their teaching units to the class. Classmates and TE will take notes and offer written feedback. The student teachers will then write a conference submission abstract (a genre studied in the course), as if they were submitting a class demonstration based on the teaching materials that they have designed. Excerpts from two abstracts are shown in the data analysis section of this paper.

As for the extension projects previously mentioned, a needs/wants analysis (Hutchinson & Waters, 1987) is conducted every time a new project starts. Besides considering learners' purposes, in many occasions the sponsor's perspectives are also discussed and considered in the course designs. Every week there is a team pedagogical meeting and everyone involved in the work designs most teaching materials for the courses in each project. Groups of student teachers and teachers (graduate students) organize themselves in commissions and become responsible for designing a thematic unit, depending on the target group of language learners. Each commission presents its teaching materials at the meetings for TE and colleagues' analysis and suggestion. Later everyone will also present impressions of the materials in use and contribute with changes/adaptation suggestions.

Some of the students working in the PB practices are granted scholarships and others are volunteers,

especially when they are observing as teaching assistants. Participants need to write different reports, depending on who provides the scholarships; it can be the university (extension bureau), the interested sponsor (companies, for example) or special programs, such as “English without borders”, whose scholarships are paid by the Brazilian Ministry of Education. These reports serve as an instrument of reflection, in some cases, and also as data collection for this study, as discussed in data analysis.

In this study data have been collected from the following:

1. Considerations about classroom practice written by one of the participants (student-teacher) in a blog created for the WDP course (MP) – originally written in English<sup>6</sup>;
2. Final Abstracts written by two participants (student teachers) in the WDP course (MP) originally written in English;
3. Mandatory reports (because of the scholarships) about project experience written by three PB participants (student teachers) – written in Portuguese and translated in this paper;
4. Voluntary testimonies written by three participants in the “English without borders” (PB practice) upon TE invitation – being one text written by an undergraduate student (student teacher) and two written by graduate students, all written in Portuguese and translated in this paper.

In this study the focus of analysis is the role of material design in the teacher education process, and, as a consequence, the excerpts presented will be those that directly or indirectly address this question.

Data discussed in the next section come from three different contexts: the WDP (mandatory discipline); two extension projects that aim at teaching English to adolescents and children from public schools, respectively (PB, extra curricular practices) and an extension project of national dimension (PB, extra

curricular practice). They are presented/analyzed in the following sequence:

1. Two excerpts of final abstracts written by WDP student teachers in regard to the teaching materials that they have designed in the discipline;
2. One excerpt from a text written by a student teacher in a blog created for the WDP discipline (where students would answer guiding questions presented by the TE);
3. Four excerpts of mandatory reports written by student teachers who received a university (extension bureau) scholarship (PB, extra curricular practices) and
4. Three excerpts from a testimony that the TE asked participants of the “English without borders” project to write (optional). Although there is very rich information in the whole texts, due to restriction of space, only the most relevant ones related to the theme in focus here (the design, use and reflection of teaching materials) have been selected. The total number of participants in this project was 16 and only 9 have written the requested text (testimony). The design of teaching materials is mentioned in all 9 texts and all of them have insightful comments on the participants’ experience in the focused practice, related to a variety of questions that will not be addressed in this paper because of both space and focus of analysis.

The first three excerpts presented in this analysis (WDP – mandatory practice) have also been presented in Augusto-Navarro (2013). However, the focus of discussion in that paper is the linguistic development of the participants, and not their teacher education process, as stated in the conclusion of that text: “The aim was to contribute with reflections about pedagogical practices in the teaching- learning of the skill of writing in EFL. Results show that the integration of the discussed theories has favorable outcomes in participants’ awareness regarding language choice possibilities in the genres that they studied” (p.49).

## 5. Data Analysis, Findings and Discussion

This section brings text excerpts of texts written by three groups, who have been involved with the design of teaching materials in three different contexts. Texts written for the WDP discipline have been originally written in English. The others (mandatory reports and voluntary testimonies) have been written in Portuguese and translated in English by the author of this paper, and original Portuguese texts are available as endnotes.

### 5.1 Data from the WDP discipline

The first two following excerpts come from the final activity that student teachers have to hand in to the TE towards the end of the WDP discipline. They are assigned to write an abstract based on the teaching materials (unit) that they had designed, as previously informed.

**Georgia** - a student teacher that had no teaching experience at this time and had a degree in the area of Health. She was a little older than her colleagues and had less proficiency in English than most of them; however, she revealed commitment in all the activities requested.

*Believing that most of our students would have a pet, we thought that talking about “how to take care of your puppy”, as the project (teaching material unit) is named, would be an opportunity to involve the children in the discussions about it in order to improve the four skills – speaking, listening, reading and writing-, to promote familiarity to English language and to stimulate sense of responsibility, which is important for that age level. (Georgia – conference abstract)*

As can be seen in this text, Georgia followed her intuition to design an EFL teaching unit, but also considered the importance of educating learners in language classes and not only teaching language skills. She also considered a theme that she thought would be relevant to students’ interests. Her target group was sixth grade students in public schools. She read two theoretical texts about teaching languages for school children.<sup>7</sup>

**Bill** - was a young student teacher in his first university course. He had been teaching language in

private language institutes for three years when data were collected and he seemed to be at the university only to make his profession officially recognized, as he did only the strictly mandatory and did not reveal any engagement.

*This article presents the use of an internet-based recent-born genre, the memes, as a useful resource to help students to understand better the concept of genre and its branches and also as a credible way to stimulate and improve their production. (Bill – conference abstract).*

Bill planned to work with the development of the four language skills. In spite of having three years of experience as a language teacher, he seemed very uncertain about what to do, probably because he was used to teaching by strictly following textbooks. He eventually decided to teach the concept of genre, which was the same topic studied in the WDP class, as a theme in the development of the four skills. He (and all his colleagues) read a theoretical text about genre analysis and he also read a text about teaching the four skills.<sup>8</sup> Bill showed concern in providing real contexts as input and as output opportunities for his target group: young adults (university students). This concern may be a result of his theoretical readings.

Bill now works in the “English without borders” project, and there is an excerpt of his testimony later in this analysis, which was collected about two and a half years after the previous excerpt.

Finally in this first group of participants and context, we have the following excerpts, by George, which were written in response to the following questions:

*Activity 3 - Discuss the following questions by reflecting about our course and your learning process. Please give the requested information in rich details and trying to present a comprehensive (deep and detailed) and honest evaluation:*

- A) What have you learned by preparing and presenting your teaching unit (as a student, as a teacher, as a language learner);*  
*B) What have learned by attending and evaluating your colleagues’ presentations?*

These questions were posted in a blog,<sup>9</sup> especially created for the WDP discipline, with the aim of



generating discussions among the student teachers and the TE.

**George** - was a young student teacher in his first university course. In his second year at the university (one year prior to the collection of the following data), he worked for one year as a teacher assistant (mostly observing) in the “extension” project “English for children from public schools”, but decided he did not want to keep working in that project.

*During the process of preparing our teaching unit, I tried my best to do something applicable and something fun. As future teacher and also students, I believe that we have to prepare something that we would like to be given to us in the classroom, so, due to this, a dynamics class, connecting not only the four English skills but also the students' progress and production is always the best way to start. Something that Gary, Georgia and Samantha and others have already said and I totally agree with them, is that having a foundation text to guide us or even to clear up some ideas to us, is very important and now that we know what some specific vocabulary means (such as EFL, ESP – I never thought that ESP is so, so funny to work it and so applicable and effective!! –, etc.) we are able to find it ourselves, not giving the excuse that the teacher (during our undergrad course) didn't help us. (George, blog).*

*Also, concerning the evaluation process: when we have to evaluate someone's work, we should never consider that what was presented was bad, because we are dealing with 1) people and 2) ideas. Both are important aspects to be considered and careful to play with. So, we have to reflect and see if it's effective, applicable and aware that what was presented was ideal to the target audience. (George, blog).*

Reading George's text it is possible to notice a blend of beliefs grounded on his own experiences and preferences, such as the idea of classes that are fun. However, he also presents signs of awareness about the importance of considering theory in the light of context, especially in the second excerpt, where he claims that we (professionals in language teaching and learning) have to reflect to see if teaching materials are (might be) effective, feasible and ideal (appropriate) to the target audience (learners). He recognizes that there is no bad (and consequently good) pedagogical plan without considering a situated practice (the potential of effectiveness in regard to enactment conditions,

learners' profiles and expectations). Today George works in the project “English without borders”, but unfortunately, he has not written the testimony upon TE's invitation.

These three participants represent more or less prototypical student teachers of the studies program that tend to follow their careers in language teaching. Today, Georgia works with Portuguese as a foreign language and Bill and George with EFL. For the three of them the WDP discipline was a first opportunity to read theoretical texts and try to consider their prior experiences and beliefs in the light of theory and group discussion when designing EFL teaching materials.

Their previous experiences and consequent beliefs are revealed in the process. For example Bill strongly considered the need to focus the four language skills, it was the central goal of his teaching unit, and both other participants, Georgia and George, also mentioned them. It is certainly because of the emphasis that textbooks play on developing each of the four language skills, but there is little said, by student teachers, about integrating these skills to themes and purposes, for example.

Their beliefs are revisited based on their first ideas for an EFL teaching unit and the questions that the TE and colleagues ask them in the light of theory, chosen target learners for their materials and considered teaching context. Also, they have to think of sociocultural perspectives in the process of designing teaching materials (at least who/what to teach/how and why) and to reflect about their initial plans in response to the readings, discussions, questions and suggestions that are made throughout the process of their teaching material design.

It is undeniable that designing teaching materials that will not be really put to practice is unauthentic, but at the same time, it is a productive way to generate awareness about the importance of considering a number of factors when designing or choosing/adapting teaching materials. The process of designing teaching materials (when assisted by TE), even in a simulated condition, reveals to be a rich instrument to generate initial reflections.

According to Borg (2003), learners' individual experiences have an important role to play in their practice, but **formal education will contribute to their cognition and**

*practices, especially if previous cognition is revisited. As advocated by Augusto-Navarro et al. (2014, p. 242):*

*Providing teachers with opportunities to reflect about which teaching-learning practices they believe to be effective and requiring them to give supporting theoretical and practical reasons for their choices is a possible way to revisit beliefs and prepare them for critical reflection. Additionally, guiding student teachers to think of the reasons why something is worthy being taught for a given target group of learners would be more appropriate in a critical perspective, as considered by Gimenez et al. (2004).*

### **5.2 Data from the mandatory reports by “extension” project scholarship receivers**

The following excerpts were extracted from PB mandatory reports written by Nadia, a student teacher who receives a scholarship to teach adolescents. Most learners are either from public school or children of university staff members. The course is free of charge (sponsored by the university extension bureau) and occurs once a week, with meetings of two hours each. Nadia was in the 4th year (out of 5) in the undergraduate program when she wrote the 2013 report and in the 3rd year when she wrote the 2012 report. In her first and second years at the university, she was an observer and teacher assistant on the same project, and in 2012, she became a teacher responsible for two groups of students. She had no prior teaching experience, but in 2013 she also started teaching at a private language institute.

**Nadia** - was a young student teacher in her first university course. Her 2013 report was written when she was in the fourth year in the undergraduate program. She had observed classes as a teacher assistant in the projects since her first year, and in the third year she became a teacher in that context.

Nadia's 2013 report translated to English (some additional information has been added in parenthesis to clarify ideas).<sup>10</sup>

#### **Difficulties and Suggestions**

*In the period of the scholarship (March to December/2013) it was possible to reach the expected results, this year:*

*the literary project. It was a very nice initiative that has brought a new way to present content to learners, integrating the coursebook with fiction books to reach the same aims. In the end (of the term) we could present the results to parents and to other groups (of learners in the project), and the learners are excited to choose the material (the fiction book and respective movie version) that will serve as resource for lessons). In the (pedagogical) meetings it was possible to share and improve ideas together with other participants in the project (student teachers), and it was very helpful for both the scholarship holder (author of this excerpt) and to the other members in this project (teaching English for adolescents).*

#### **Importance of this activity to the professional education of the scholarship grantee**

*It was very important due to the changes that have occurred in the project this year and the adaptations that we had to make in the project logistics. The literary project in the second semester of this year also presented a great success, and showed new possibilities to deal with content to all (student teachers and maybe learners) involved. This possibility of leaving the classroom “common sense” and work projects with the learners of different ages has made a world of difference this year, and it brought certainties (confidence) to the professional future of the scholarship recipient.*

Nadia's 2012 original report (in Portuguese) is presented in the endnotes. However, the first part “Dificuldades/sugestões” was not translated, because the second sentence is identical with the sentence in the 2013 report. In the first sentence she describes the importance of extra classes (aulas de reforço) for learners who find it difficult to understand the content (para melhor entendimento do conteúdo).

The second part “Importância da atividade para a formação profissional do bolsista” is translated and presented below.<sup>11</sup>

#### **Importance of this activity to the professional education of the scholarship grantee (May to December 2012)**

*It was very important to participate in this project, since it has shown me a new way to work with the foreign language. The team and the coordinator are always ready to help and teach. It was also important to show what works and what does not work in the classroom practice, once in theory everything seems to work. The team discussions to prepare the classes and activities were crucial for my learning and growth/improvement in the area.*

Nadia's report shows her professional growth. In both reports she recognizes the importance of having

a supporting team to discuss her concerns and share ideas, but in the 2013 report, she shows more confidence, even in relation to her professional future. Having the possibility of thinking about teaching materials in a broader sense, and not just as textbooks, has made a lot of difference and being able to participate in the design of the activities has given her confidence. In 2012, she paid attention to theoretical and practical relations and context reality, and by 2013, she had understood the value of analyzing learners' profiles and interests before preparing materials and course design.

**Candice** - was a young student teacher in her first university course. This report pertains to her first year as a teacher in the project "English for children from public schools". It was her fourth year in the program and she had been an observer (teacher assistant) the year before.

Candice's report (2010) translated to English<sup>12</sup>:

March – Dec 2010

**Difficulties and Suggestions**

*Improvement in the performance of the learners of the M6 in the project, earlier mentioned, and professional and personal gain. Improvement in the teaching material adopted for classes.*

**Importance of this activity to the professional education of the scholarship grantee**

*Participating in this project with the scholarship was extremely important for my professional education, since it favored the exchange of experience with teachers in the area of EFL teaching and learning, and more contact with the language, and with teaching material design and use. It is a very worthy experience for everyone who intends to work in this area.*

Candice informs that her difficulties, challenges, regarded improving her students' performance and improving the teaching materials. By this statement she recognized that she could/should adapt the materials to her group of learners. She also emphasizes the importance of the experience for her professional education, saying it would be worthy for anyone planning to work in the area.

**John** – similarly to Bill, he was young, in his first university course and taught at a private language school

before starting the undergraduate teacher education program. The report was written in his second year at the university (first teaching at the projects that teaches English for children) and he had observed classes in the project as a teacher assistant the year before.

John's report (2009) translated to English<sup>13</sup>

**Difficulties and Suggestions**

*I was able to have a better understanding of how to analyze a previously known teaching material, from a new point of view, besides noticing the importance of this reformulation. I also learned how to collect and analyze data and organize them for presentation.*

**Importance of this activity to the professional education of the scholarship grantee**

*The most important was the fact that I had the opportunity to learn to study my students and design material with this research purpose. Besides that, a great opportunity was, also, the opportunity to experience what it is to deliver a presentation of collected data to audience in the area and, more than that, sharing the obtained information and getting new points of view of a given subject.*

It is possible to notice that when student teachers have to write about difficulties, they tend to inform their challenges and gains as a cluster. Similarly to Nadia, he says he was able to see teaching materials from a new point of view. Presumably, in his case, he was considering the textbooks that he previously knew and followed to the locally designed material that he could/should help to design in the extension project at the university.

He also mentions his research (action exploratory studies) in the classroom and presentation of data (they are motivated to present results of their work in regional conferences, besides presenting to the local EFL team) as one of his main gains.

It is noticeable in the data collected in this context that working at "extension" projects represent a very rich opportunity for student teachers' educational and professional growth. Having a supporting team and being able to design their own materials and programs, assisted by TE and their colleagues, proved to be central in this process.<sup>14</sup> Year after year, every report writers stresses these two factors.

### 5.3 Data from voluntary testimonies by (student) teachers working in a national “extension” project

The national “extension” project “English without borders” started in August 2013 and, since then, the author of this paper has been the pedagogical coordinator of this project in her home institution. One year after this program had started, she invited the (student) teachers working on the project to write a testimony, an appraisal, about challenges and gains in regard to this work. Data in this section come from some of these testimonies. Due to space restriction excerpts of three participants, out of nine, will be shown and discussed. Two (Bill and Candice) have been selected because data from their tasks have been analyzed in other contexts in this study and their growth can be analyzed. The third participant selected, Alice, has been selected because she was the only one who had not been a student at the university where data were collected before.

**Bill** – A student teacher in his last (5th) year in the program. He had never worked in extension programs before, but had been teaching English in private language institutes for five years. Bill had taken the WDP discipline.

Bill’s testimony translated to English<sup>15</sup>:

*(...) Besides that, I had never designed a teaching material to teach English. It was incredible how my initial perception has quickly changed. A (teaching) material doesn’t get done from day to night and it demanded a lot of effort of us all (project team). I think that if I need to design a teaching material today, I at least will have foundations (principles) to do it.*

*So, when I look back and think of my experience in the project up to now I conclude that I have a very positive outcome, because I have acquired knowledge and experience that I wouldn’t be able to get anywhere else.*

As previously stated, Bill had a lot of teaching experience, but in contexts where he had to stick to a course book and method, without opportunities, freedom and responsibility to design courses and materials. He seemed surprised upon noticing that the designing of materials is a long demanding processual

work, but recognizes the gains of this experience. It is possible to notice that he is more mature now than when he designed a teaching unit for the WDP mandatory discipline. Now he is more aware that he needs principles for his decisions.

**Candice** – A teacher who has concluded her undergraduate program at the university where data have been collected. When she was a student teacher, she worked in three different extension programs (English for children from public schools; English for adolescents and EAP with a focus on physics). She got involved in the university projects from her first undergraduate year on, has experience in teaching material design, and has had a job as an English teacher at a regular private school, teaching elementary school children, since 2010. Candice is preparing to start a graduate program in childhood education.

Candice’s testimony translated to English<sup>16</sup>:

*Working as a volunteer<sup>17</sup> teacher at the IsF (English without borders) has brought new values to my professional life, from the teaching material design to the classroom experience and team work. The course focus is very different from those in projects in which I have taught at the university, since the target group (of learners) is different (undergraduate and graduate students) and the goals aim at learners’ academic life.*

*(...) Designing a teaching material is a very interesting process and permits us reflection moments, both throughout the designing process and along the course, with its use in the classroom. It is always challenging to design a material, beginning by the definition of themes and types of activities, together with learners’ needs and motivation, but it is an experience that everyone who wants to become a teacher should go through.*

Candice, contrary to Bill and Alice, already had a great deal of experience in the design of teaching materials, but even so, recognizes that each teaching and learning context is unique. She reinforces the importance of the experience with the design of teaching materials, and emphasizes the reflections in each phase of the process, considering previous decisions conforming to situated context and analysis when using the material that has been designed. Candice’s experience and professional autonomy revealed in her

text is naturally a result of all the processes she has gone through in her undergraduate years and not only in this last project, although it was also important.

Candice shows concern in considering learners' goals and learning settings, she talks about reflection about choices in teaching material design before and while using them as a teaching resource. She also recognizes the importance of the experience of teamwork and seems happy to have one more opportunity for professional growth. All these elements are related to teacher autonomy, as can be seen in Benson & Huang's (2008) paper, where they discuss autonomy in teacher education and talk about the elements incorporated in this conception, as follows:

(...) we have favoured a conception of teacher autonomy that incorporates elements of professionalism, professional freedom and self-direction within the process of learning how to teach. This conception of teacher autonomy clearly has practical implications for teacher education at a number of levels, including pre-service and in-service programmes, and teachers' own efforts to improve their professional competence collaboratively. (p. 435).

Further to that, the authors, quoting McGrath (2000), state that studies in autonomy converge "with established approaches such as teacher development, teacher research, reflective practice and action research". Many of these elements can be identified in the participants' declarations and the design of teaching material in cooperation with other colleagues seems to be a rich tool in the processes of teacher development, as seen in data presented in this paper.

**Alice** – A graduate (master's degree) student and the only teacher in the group who had completed her undergraduate program in another university. She had about four years of experience, having taught English in private school and institutes before working in the project. Alice's testimony translated to English<sup>18</sup>:

*Participating in the English without borders project has made me grow professionally, but also personally.*

*Especially because it was a new experience, since I had never taught with a teaching material that I had helped to design, and I had never taught English with the same purpose as the one in this program. In my previous experiences I always had to follow a method that many times was limited. Consequently, having the "freedom" to bring extra materials, not having to follow a method rigorously, sometimes seems to be easy, but it isn't when you are used to following rules, as I was. Anyway, I believe that this fact helped me grow professionally, because it made me see language teaching from a different (new) perspective. The freedom that we have to express ourselves, to guide our classroom practice, as well as the team support when observing our classes, made me understand that being professional is acting responsibly, even when you are not under pressure for that.*

Alice, similarly to other participants, states that the experience of working in a project where she is responsible for the design of materials (with criteria and support) has made her see language teaching from a different perspective. She also recognizes how difficult it is to have this task when you are used to following materials and decisions made by others.

#### 5.4 The three contexts in review

As can be seen, based on the data presented, in a classroom discipline it is possible to start a process of preparing student teachers to think of rationales for their pedagogical choices. Even when teacher educators do not have the opportunity to provide their students with authentic practice, it is possible to productively integrate content and practice.

Johnson & Arshvskaya (2011, p. 172) talk about the scientific concepts (student) teachers are exposed to when they enter education programs and advocate, from a sociocultural perspective, the importance of helping teachers to connect this theory to their everyday knowledge and the activities of teachers. The authors state that "(...) it is this transformative process of making sense of everyday experiences through the theoretical constructs of the broader professional discourse community and vice versa that will radically change how teachers think about and carry out their work". Furthermore, they alert teacher educators that the dualism in content (theory) and pedagogical work (practice) assumes that these two types of knowledge

can be taught and learned in isolation from each other, but in reality, the process is interdependent (what to teach and how).

Data collected in the WDP discipline show that based on the task to design a teaching unit, with TE guidance and some theoretical support, student teachers start a process of trying to make sense of their prior experiences, theoretical studies and established goals. It is still an unauthentic practice, but it appears to be a potential site for teacher development. The analysis of data produced in regard to the second context of analysis, observing and then teaching course through “extension” programs, has shown very satisfactory results. Participants have repeatedly observed how important it had been being part of a team and having the opportunity to view teaching materials, and also course design, from a different perspective than the common sense of putting predetermined course planning, methods and textbooks to work, disregarding the learners and learning conditions. In this second context, the seeds have been planted.

Lastly, the third context, where student teachers and graduate students work together, it is possible to see these professionals in different developmental autonomy phases, but certainly, as data have shown, all of them see the importance of considering learners’ needs, wants and reaction to what is proposed in course and material designs. In this context it is possible to see the fruit of the crops.

The whole process is certainly not built without challenges and difficulties. For (student) teachers the main ones are: having to assume the responsibility to design and redesign materials; accepting colleagues and TE’s critics; carrying research for resources and theories to serve as tools and bases for their work. However, in the end the results are worth the investments, because as has been demonstrated in the analysis, participants develop autonomy to make *informed choices*.

For the teacher educator this perspective brings extra work, as she has to: select new/different theoretical supporting texts to her students in the mandatory discipline each year; conduct weekly meetings for each of the “extension” projects; harmonize the teams of work (sometimes they have divergent positions and the

TE has to guide them to reflection and idea supporting rather than arguments), guide and review the whole course and material design process; besides having to respond to sponsors or parents, depending on the project nature. Nevertheless, it also brings extra joy, as it is possible to see the results of her work.

## 6. Conclusions

The goal of the analysis presented in this paper is to understand what kinds of reflections the design of teaching materials generates in the EFL teacher education process focused in this study. As has been shown, participants’ insights, comprehension, confidence, and autonomy will vary, depending on their educational phase and experiences, but all of them have benefited from the purpose of designing EFL teaching materials and have seen its challenges as a resource for professional growth. Having colleagues to share the tasks and ideas has also been significant to most of them.

Although autonomy is not the central focus of the study reported here, it certainly is a very important element in teacher education and is directly related to professional development. However, student teacher autonomy has been under researched, as pointed out by Benson & Huang (2008, p. 435):

How we may best go about fostering teacher autonomy among pre-service teacher education students, or among foreign language students who are likely to become language teachers, remains an open question. We would want to argue, however, that the answer to this question will, in some sense, involve the notion of teacher autonomy growing out of and incorporating learner autonomy in the transition from learner to teacher, a transition which is perhaps for the autonomous teacher never complete.

As observed in the previous quotation, the authors argue that teacher autonomy is developed in a process that incorporates learner autonomy while student teachers are learning to teach. The kind of practice discussed in this paper seems to be in congruence with the idea proposed by Benson & Huang.

Regardless of the depth of their reflections, participants in this study have come to understand that, as stated by Garton and Graves (2014, p.7), quoting Edge and Garton (2009: 55): “the teacher’s purpose is not to teach materials at all: the purpose is to teach the learners and the materials are there to serve that purpose”.

It is possible to say that the design of teaching materials in the teacher education process is not a solution for all challenges that teacher educators have, but it can certainly bring some inspiring contribution, as this study has shown, because it grants (student) teachers opportunities to have an active role in the planning, designing and redesigning of their own practice, considering situated contexts.

#### Notes

1. Extension courses are extra courses taught at public universities, or in other places under university professor coordination. In most cases undergraduate and graduate students work in these courses under professors’ supervision. These courses may be free of charge; university or Ministry of Education sponsored or contracted by either private or public institutions, which pay fees to the university.
2. As discussed by Kaneko-Marques (2007), there was a new law in 1996 “Lei 9.394/96”, which dictated national regulations for education and teacher education (Nova Leis de Diretrizes e Bases para a Educação Nacional). This law was changed in 2002 by legal Resolutions of the National Council of Education (Resoluções do Conselho Nacional da Educação (CNE) de 2002). “Resoluções CP1/2002 e CP2/2002”. The new regulations requested pedagogical practice to be integrated with content since the first year of teacher education programs and gave programs three first years to conform to it.
3. Original text: (...) Sendo assim, a prática como componente curricular é aquela presente em todas as disciplinas do curso de formação, e não apenas nas de conteúdo pedagógico, ou seja, todas devem contemplar dimensões práticas, envolvendo procedimentos de observação, reflexão e resolução de problemas ao longo do processo formativo.
4. Participants’ real names have been replaced by pseudonyms, so that their identity can be preserved.
5. The TE has a degree in Letras (Language and Literature: Portuguese L1 and EFL), a master degree in Applied Linguistics (EFL), a Ph.D in Letras (Linguistics) - with one year visiting scholar position at the English Language Institute at the University of Michigan, and a post-doctorate research at the University of Michigan. She has been an English teacher since 1986 and a teacher educator since 1996. Her research interests involve genre analysis, grammar as skill, ESP/EAP, EFL teaching materials and EFL teacher education.
6. Texts are maintained in their original form, as written by the participants, without any editing of language mistakes (or errors). In the data presentation and analysis, nicknames are used instead of the real name of the participants.
7. Bourke, J.M. (2006) . Designing a topic-based syllabus for young learners. *ELT Journal* 60 (3): 279-286 and García, A.L.(2007) Young learners’ functional use of the L2 in a low-immersion EFL contexto. *ELT Journal* 61 (1): 39-45.
8. Hyland, K. (2007). Genre pedagogy: Language, literacy and L2 writing instruction. *Journal of second language writing*, 16(3), 148-164 and Hinkel, E. (2006). Current Perspectives on Teaching the Four Skills. *TESOL Quarterly*, 40 (1), 109-131.
9. <http://gaelmatew2012.blogspot.com.br>
10. Nadia’s original 2013 report (in Portuguese):
 

**Dificuldades / sugestões:**  
Durante o período da bolsa (Março/13 a Dez/13), foi possível alcançar os resultados esperados, que neste ano: o projeto literário. Foi uma iniciativa muito legal, que proporcionou uma nova maneira de apresentar o conteúdo para os alunos, casando o livro didático e para-didático, para o mesmo fim. Ao final pudemos fazer uma apresentação dos resultados para os pais e outras turmas, e os alunos já estão ansiosos para a escolha do material do ano que vem, para o mesmo projeto. Durante as reuniões foi possível compartilhar idéias e aprimorá-las junto com os outros integrantes do projeto, sendo de grande utilidade tanto para a bolsista, como para os demais integrantes do projeto.

**Importância da atividade para a formação profissional do bolsista:**  
Foi muito importante pelas mudanças que ocorreram este ano e adaptações que tivemos que fazer na logística do projeto. O projeto literário durante o segundo semestre deste ano também apresentou um grande sucesso, e mostrou a todos os envolvidos novas possibilidades para lidar com o conteúdo. Essa possibilidade de sair do “senso comum” da sala de aula e fazer projetos com os alunos de várias idades fez muita diferença este ano, e trouxe certezas para o futuro profissional da bolsista!
11. Nadia’s original 2013 report (in Portuguese):
 

**Dificuldades / sugestões:**  
Durante o período da bolsa (Mai/12 a Dez/12), foi possível alcançar os resultados esperados, como a

*preparação das aulas extras (reforço) e a aplicação das mesmas. Pudemos perceber com isso como são importantes as aulas de reforço em alguns casos, para o melhor entendimento do conteúdo. Durante as reuniões foi possível compartilhar idéias e aprimorá-las junto com os outros integrantes do projeto, sendo de grande utilidade tanto para a bolsista, como para os demais integrantes do projeto.*

**Importância da atividade para a formação profissional do bolsista:**

Foi muito importante participar desse projeto, uma vez que me mostrou outro caminho para trabalhar com a língua estrangeira. A equipe e a orientadora estão sempre prontos a ajudar e ensinar. Foi importante também no sentido de mostrar o que realmente funciona ou não funciona na prática da sala de aula, uma vez que na teoria, tudo parece funcionar. As discussões com a equipe para a preparação das aulas/atividades foram cruciais para a minha aprendizagem e crescimento/aprimoramento na área.

12. Candice's original 2010 report (in Portuguese):

**Dificuldades / sugestões:**

Melhora no desempenho dos alunos do Módulo 6 do projeto já citado, melhora na prática profissional e um ganho tanto profissional quanto pessoal. Melhora na qualidade do material didático adotado para as aulas.

**Importância da atividade para a formação profissional do bolsista:**

Participar desse projeto como bolsista foi de extrema importância para minha formação profissional uma vez que possibilitou a troca de experiências entre professores da área de ensino-aprendizagem de LE, assim como um maior contato com a língua e com a preparação e aplicação direta de material didático. **É uma experiência muito válida para todos que pretendem atuar nessa área.**

13. John's original 2009 report (in Portuguese):

**Dificuldades / sugestões:**

Consegui entender melhor como analisar um material didático já conhecido utilizando um novo ponto de vista, além de perceber a importância dessa reformulação. Também aprendi como coletar e começar a analisar dados e organizá-los em forma de apresentação.

**Importância da atividade para a formação profissional do bolsista:**

O mais importante foi o fato de eu ter tido a oportunidade de aprender a pesquisar com meus alunos e montar um material com esse propósito de pesquisa. Além disso, grande oportunidade, também, foi o fato de eu ter podido experienciar o que é fazer uma apresentação dos dados obtidos junto ao público da área e, mais do que isso, dividir as informações colhidas e obter novos pontos de vista de um determinado assunto.

14. When student teachers join an extension project they first observe a colleagues' classes and the team's

pedagogical meetings (all student teachers involved and the TE meet every week). Later these newcomers assist in classes. Finally, they decide the groups they would like to teach, give suggestions about course design (themes, topics, kinds of activities), start researching and collecting "raw" material (such as texts and videos) and design their teaching activities in cooperation with colleagues. Everything is presented and discussed in the pedagogical meetings. Student teachers are also advised to give their learners opportunities to make choices. For example, if the theme of the semester is literature, learners can choose from three different book titles to read. If the focus of work is news, they can develop a project to present printed, digital or video news, and so on. In this sense the autonomy of choice and responsibility is simultaneously presented to the student teachers and to their students.

15. Bill's original testimony (in Portuguese):

(...) Ademais, eu nunca havia preparado um material didático para o ensino da língua inglesa. Foi incrível como minha concepção inicial mudou rapidamente. Um material não fica pronto do dia para a noite, e exigiu muito esforço de todos nós. Penso que se hoje eu precisar preparar um material didático, terei pelo menos fundamentos para fazê-lo. (...)

(...) Assim, ao olhar para trás e pensar sobre minha trajetória no projeto até então, concluo que tenho um saldo muito positivo, pois adquiri conhecimento e experiência que não conseguiria obter em nenhum outro lugar. (...)

16. Candice's original testimony (in Portuguese):

O trabalho como professora voluntária no IsF tem agregado novos valores à minha vida profissional, desde a elaboração do material didático à experiência em sala de aula e o trabalho em equipe. O foco do curso é bem diferente dos projetos nos quais já atuei como professora de língua inglesa na universidade, uma vez que o público é diferenciado (alunos de graduação e pós) e os objetivos direcionados para a vida acadêmica dos alunos.

(...) Desenvolver um material didático é um processo muito interessante e nos permite momentos de reflexão, tanto durante sua confecção quanto ao longo do curso, no seu uso em sala de aula. É sempre um desafio a elaboração de um material, a começar da definição de temas e tipos de atividades juntamente com as necessidades e motivação dos alunos, mas é uma experiência pela qual todos que desejam ser professores deveriam passar por.

17. The IsF program grants scholarships to student teachers, but they need to commit 20 hours a week to the project. In the institution where this study took place, those who cannot dedicate many hours to the IsF can still participate as volunteers. The volunteer teachers observe classes, come to pedagogical meetings



and contribute in course and material design. It is an investment in their professional development.

18. Alice's original testimony (in Portuguese):

A minha participação no programa Inglês sem fronteiras tem me proporcionado crescimento profissional, mas também pessoal. Primeiramente, por que foi uma experiência nova, pois nunca havia dado aula com um material no qual eu mesma ajudei a fazer, assim como nunca havia dado aula de inglês com o objetivo que é proposto por este programa. Nas minhas experiências anteriores, sempre tive que seguir um método, que muitas vezes era limitado. Portanto, ter "liberdade" de trazer material extra, de não seguir um método a risca, às vezes parece fácil, mas não quando você está acostumada a seguir regras, como era o meu caso. De qualquer forma, acredito que este fato me ajudou a crescer muito profissionalmente, pois me fez enxergar o ensino de línguas por outro ângulo. A liberdade que temos de nos expressar, de atuar em sala de aula, assim como o apoio da equipe ao assistir nossas aulas, me fez entender que ser profissional, é atuar de forma responsável, mesmo quando não somos pressionados a isso.

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