

**A CURRICULUM FOR LANGUAGE TEACHER EDUCATION: BETWEEN
PRESCRIPTION AND FULFILLMENT**

***O CURRÍCULO DE FORMAÇÃO DE PROFESSORES DE LÍNGUAS: ENTRE O
PRESCRITO E O REALIZADO***

***EL CURRÍCULO DE FORMACIÓN DE PROFESORES DE LENGUAS: ENTRE LO
PRESCRITO Y LO CUMPLIDO***



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ABSTRACT: This article analyzes how teaching knowledge is developed in initial language teacher education, in order to train conscientious teachers for a linguistic education project. We took as a documental record the Pedagogical Project of an undergraduate language teacher training and we conducted an interview with students from the last year of the course. As a theoretical contribution, we used the concept of ideologeme (DEL VALLE, 2010) and analyzed the data through Wodak's (2009) Critical Discourse Analysis and the power relations established in an initial teachers' training (FOUCAULT, 2008, 2014). Results show that divergences between what is prescribed in the document that guides the language teacher training and what is carried out by the professors can negatively interfere in the development of the critical-reflexive potential of the teachers-to-be, with regard to the appropriation of the disciplinary (linguistic) knowledge of the profession.

KEYWORDS: Ideologems. Disciplinary knowledge. Reflexive teacher.

RESUMO: *Este artigo analisa como os saberes docentes são desenvolvidos na formação inicial, a fim de formar professores de línguas conscientes para um projeto de educação linguística. Tomamos como registro documental o Projeto Pedagógico de um curso de Letras e realizamos uma entrevista com alunos do último período do curso. Como aporte teórico utilizamos o conceito de ideograma (DEL VALLE, 2010) e analisamos os dados a partir da Análise do Discurso Crítica (WODAK, 2009) e as relações de poder estabelecida numa instância de formação inicial (FOUCAULT, 2008, 2014). Os resultados mostram que divergências entre o que é prescrito no documento que orienta a formação e o que é realizado pelos professores formadores pode interferir negativamente no desenvolvimento do potencial crítico-reflexivo dos professores em formação, no que diz respeito à apropriação dos saberes disciplinares (linguísticos) da profissão.*

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: *Ideologemas. Saberes disciplinares. Professor reflexivo.*

RESUMEN: *Este artículo analiza cómo se desarrolla el conocimiento de los docentes en la formación inicial, con el fin de formar profesores de lenguas conscientes para un proyecto de educación lingüística. Tomamos como registro documental el Proyecto Pedagógico de un curso de Letras y realizamos una entrevista con alumnos del último año del curso. Como aporte teórico, utilizamos el concepto de ideograma (DEL VALLE, 2010) y analizamos los datos a partir del Análisis Crítico del Discurso (WODAK, 2009) y de las relaciones de poder establecidas en una instancia de formación inicial (FOUCAULT, 2008, 2014). Los resultados muestran que las discrepancias entre lo prescrito en el documento que orienta la formación y lo realizado por los profesores formadores pueden interferir negativamente en el desarrollo del potencial crítico-reflexivo de los docentes en formación, en lo que se refiere a la apropiación de saberes disciplinares (lingüísticos) de la profesión.*

PALABRAS CLAVE: *Ideologemas. Saberes disciplinares. Profesor reflexivo.*

Introduction

Among so many open questions and increasingly difficult to answer, due to their growing specificity and the difficulty of imagining alternatives for our future, one certainty is almost obvious and could serve here as a starting point: the school is in crisis.

(PAULA SIBILIA, 2012)

(Our translation)

Discussions about Brazilian educational problems and the training of teachers of basic education have been the object of study and research for a long time, if we consider that, in the First Brazilian Republic, the illiteracy rate in the country oscillated between 82% and 71%, according to the 1900 Census (BRAZIL, 1905). Among the lack of investment for quality education, the elaboration of public policies that value the teaching profession and curricula that adjust to social changes, there are deficits in undergraduate courses, especially with regard to the approximation between the contents considered theoretical (disciplinary knowledge) and the practical part of the profession (experiential knowledge). This approach would imply, according to Pimenta (2005), the pedagogical knowledge and the constitution of the reflective potential of the teachers.

Far from coming to an end, this discussion has in Maurice Tardif a pioneer, working together with other researchers who study the international discourse of teacher professionalization (TARDIF; GAUTHIER, 2010; TARDIF; LASSARD, 2014). For Tardif (2014, p. 36, our translation), teaching knowledge "is a plural knowledge". The Canadian researcher defends, then, that the teaching knowledge is constituted of diverse sources, divided only for didactic purposes: professional knowledge (those acquired throughout life, through the examples of teachers that we have/had), the disciplinary knowledge (specific to the areas of knowledge), the curricular knowledge, which we can understand as an ability for didactic transposition (that is, knowledge that allows the transformation of disciplinary knowledge and object of school knowledge), and, finally, experiential knowledge (those acquired throughout the teaching practice).

Thus, it is necessary that the teacher trainers become aware that the first objective of a degree course is to train teachers for basic education – and this requires knowledge not only of the specific knowledge of the area, but also of other knowledge about the school reality, the classroom and the mechanisms of struggle for professional valorization.

Since the CNE/CP Opinion No. 2/2015, (BRAZIL, 2015) of June 9, 2015, which establishes the National Curriculum Guidelines for the Initial and Continued Training of Basic

Education Teaching Professionals, the course pedagogical projects (PPC) have been following discussions and changes aligned with the discourses of the new paradigms of *what, how, why* and *for who* to teach. In this study, we defend a dialogical model that goes against banking education (FREIRE, 2017). But how to make these discussions come to be effective and leave the abstraction of the prescription? Do the government agencies of Brazilian education demonstrate, in fact, an interest in meaningful learning and a quality basic education? And the undergraduate courses are updated to meet the new demands that are imposed on the national scenario – including those that arise unexpectedly, such as the COVID-19 pandemic, which has led teachers to adapt to a reality of remote teaching, for example. What of these discussions, in fact, is carried out?

Thinking about these issues means leaving the comfort zone that still insists on naming a course of studies of/about language in Letters course, reference to a classicist and elitist model for the training of language teachers (BAGNO, 2017). We are already completing half a century of studies in Applied Linguistics and Sociolinguistics, but we are still governed by a structuralist-based language teaching that crowns normative grammar as the only way to teach languages – Portuguese or foreign – in schools, undergraduate courses and language institutes.

In view of this retrograde and unoptimistic scenario for the degrees in Letters is that this article aims to analyze how the Pedagogical Project of the course of Letters (hereinafter PPC) of the State University of Vale do Acaraú (UEVA), located in Sobral, a municipality of Ceará known for the highest score of the IDEB, reflects the disciplinary knowledge in its discourse and how these are appropriated by the students who are finishing the course. Recognizing that this knowledge is not fragments, but constitutes the identity of the language teacher, we limit ourselves to didacticizing a cut to disciplinary knowledge for the time we have for this discussion. In language teacher training courses, the disciplinary knowledge to which we refer are those coming from disciplines in the areas of Linguistics and Literature. Thus, from the concept of ideologemes, which are linguistic-ideological materializations, we can identify, in the document, philosophical and epistemological values about the expected formation, and, in the reports of the undergraduates, how these values are exercised and what their effects are.

It is, therefore, research of analytical-qualitative character, whose *corpus* represents a reality that can be observed, not only in the *researched locus*, but also in the national dimension. After all, according to Boaventura de Sousa Santos (2010), in this moment of postmodernity, in which the sciences no longer have a precise and irrefutable certainty, it is up to us to cast glances at our place of speech, a point situated between the theories and social practices that

they summon. This perspective can generate discomfort for those of Cartesian mind; However, the between-place does not mean a lack of objectivity, but being situated in the web of relations between theories and practices, the place of knowing by doing – a proposal that we focus on in this study.

The will to truth and the will to know in teacher education

The proposal of postmodernity defended by Santos (2010) calls into question the concepts articulated by the natural sciences, on which formalist studies (structuralist and generativist) about language are even derived. Thus, for some linguists who follow these currents, the concepts of truth and knowledge, which materialize through discourses, can generate situations of power and domination, excluding and distancing any perspective that is not explained – or that works – according to the same bases, a phenomenon that will be observed in the discussion of the results of data collection. These ideas about language, it is up to us to warn, are at odds with the documents that govern basic education and teacher training for basic education, namely, the National Common Curricular Base (BNCC) and the National Common Base for the initial and continuing training of teachers (BNC – Formação).

Foucault (2014) updates, via Nietzschean nihilism, the philosophical discourse that reneged on sophist knowledge by Platonic and Aristotelian reason, that is, it goes to the origins of Western thought and seeks, in modernity, a source that tries to suppress subjectivity through the power institutionalized by discourses. Without entering into philosophical daydreams, the French philosopher tries to explain the will to truth through procedures of control and delimitation of discourse that can be of an external or internal order, generating principles of exclusion or support of power.

In a didactic way, and only to provide subsidies for the analysis that we will carry out later, we would have as external procedures: (a) the interdiction, which is characterized by the possibility or impossibility of saying certain things at certain times, such as themes related to sexuality and politics, for example; (b) separation and rejection, which manifests itself in the binary relationship of reason (the discourse of agreement) and madness (the discourse that could not circulate, like the heliocentric theory advocated by Galilei); and (c) another binary relationship, which the author considers "risky" (FOUCAULT, 2014, p. 13), but which is configured in the distinction between truth and falsehood, because, after all, the force of truth, institutionally sustained, is not exercised "without pressure, nor without at least a part of violence" (FOUCAULT, 2014, p. 14, our translation).

Internal procedures, on the other hand, deal with two discursive dimensions that tend to generate exclusion (chance) or reinforcement (the event). These procedures function as principles of classification, ordering and distribution of discourses. Among them are: (a) the commentary, which both "allows to build (and indefinitely) new discourses [and] to say *finally* what was silently articulated in the *first* text" (FOUCAULT, 2014, p. 25, our translation); (b) the author, understood not as the individual who speaks, but as "the principle of grouping the discourse, as the unity and origin of its meanings, as the focus of its coherence" (FOUCAULT, 2014, p. 26, our translation), that is, in the Middle Ages, the very object of knowledge was the author of the known truths, in Modernity, the author only served to name a theory, a syndrome or a discovery, and more currently, the objective role of the author gives way to subjectivities, which are filled by different meanings; and (c) the discipline, which opposes both the principle of commentary, because it is not a matter of chance or happened, but "[d]that which is required for the construction of new statements" and the principle of author, since "it constitutes a kind of autonomous system at the disposal of those who want or can use it" (FOUCAULT, 2014, p. 30, our translation).

In short, a proposition must meet complex and cumbersome requirements in order to belong to the whole of a discipline; before it can be declared true or false, it must be found, as M. Canguilhem would say, "in the true" (FOUCAULT, 2014, p. 33-34, our translation).

The author also considers a third group of procedures that allow the control of discourses, the *ethos*, which is not in the constitution of discourses *per se*, but in the imposition of rules that determine who can access them. In this sense, socioeconomic and political conditions directly influence education, because

It is known that education, although it is, by right, the instrument thanks to which every individual, in a society like ours, can have access to any type of discourse, follows in its distribution, in what it allows and in what it prevents, the lines that are marked by distance, by oppositions and social struggles. Every education system is a political way of maintaining or modifying the appropriation of discourses, with the knowledge and powers they bring with them (FOUCAULT, 2014, p. 43-44, our translation).

Thus, the discourses reproduced by the students represent not only the result of the effort undertaken by them during their initial training, but also instructional processes to which they were submitted, either by the methodology of the teacher trainers, or by the ideology of the training institution itself and its curriculum. The knowledge identified in these discourses may imply, in some way, a subversion of the constituted truths, because

They are the basis from which coherent propositions are constructed (or not), more or less exact descriptions are developed, checks are made, theories are unfolded. They form the antecedent of what will be revealed and will function as a knowledge or an illusion, an admitted truth or an error denounced, a definitive acquisition or error overcome (FOUCAULT, 2008, p. 203, our translation).

How, then, to think about the disciplinary knowledge of language teachers, namely, the linguistic knowledge that is being constructed by the students of the UVA Letters course? And what does the guiding document of the course dictate and how do the teacher trainers behave in their teaching practice?

Ideologemes and the curriculum of the UVA Letters course

As a regulatory document, the PPC is not a neutral text, but a discourse that brings, in its internal procedures, strategies of classification and ordering of the discourse, often avoiding the comment and reinforcing the concepts of authorship and discipline, because it is easier to find models that propose norms, concepts and strategies with certain purposes (defending the idea of a *good* professional training), than models that allow dialogue with the new and the possibility of changes whenever new demands arise – this is how tradition is maintained.

To begin our discussion, two pertinent observations about the analyzed document: (1) the last revision of this document, which dates from 2015, only updated the bibliographic references of the disciplines that made up the original text of 2011, and, (2) although disagreeing in many aspects, we cannot exempt ourselves from the function of policymakers² (linguistic and educational) –, since, by teaching the disciplines that fit us, we perform actions that materialize our own conceptions about the language, whether or not they agree with what is proposed in the document. In this sense, teachers are not soldiers³ always obedient to a certain educational policy. In the training of language teachers, teacher trainers should recognize themselves as formulators of language policies, since the PPCs of the courses can be constituted as a tool that enables (or not) professionals to reflect, position themselves against or for or omit themselves in the face of certain issues related to materials, curricula, methodologies and evaluations.

² The original term, *policymaker*, used by Shohamy (2006), refers to all agents who, in some way, are involved in the process of developing and executing language policies.

³ The original term, *soldiers*, also used by Shohamy (2006), refers to the exercise repetitive and obedient de educational language policies *top-Down*, that is, established by the political bodies for the classrooms.

So, as a language policy, would the PPC be a castrating or emancipatory document in the initial training of UEVA undergraduate students in Letters? If PPCs and lesson plans, whatever the choices for language teaching – mother tongue or foreign – reflect theories about the language, we can affirm that they are legitimate documents that represent the ideology(ies) of those who elaborate and execute them. With regard to the English language, for example, Kramersch (2012) points out that graduates are trained⁴ to teach an additional language to speakers who speak the same language as the teacher and see the foreign language as a phenomenon of a different and generally more valued culture, although distant from the reality of both – one of the myths of the imaginary of teachers when they try to explain the failure of English teaching in public schools (MOITA LOPES, 1996). Kramersch (2009, 2012) and Del Valle (2007) update these findings and reinforce the close relationship between ideology and discourse, understanding it as a practice that legitimizes a knowledge that grounds hegemonic orientations and practices. In the case of the PPC of the Letters course presented here, we are interested, in particular, in perceiving the document through its formalist or sociolinguistic biases, assuming the latter as favorable to a linguistic education (BAGNO; RANGEL, 2005) in fact. As a prescription of the course, the PPC is configured as a consensus among the professors of the collegiate of Letters (even if in the teaching achievements some professors do not follow the prescribed guidelines). In this perspective, the PPC is

product and, thus, dominant element of the linguistic life of a social group (whatever its definition: as a community based on stable elements – predominantly cultural, political or social or as a zone of contact determined by constant flows and movements) (DEL VALLE, 2007, p. 19, our translation).⁵

Thus, it is clear that linguistic ideologies materialize in discourses of knowledge institutionalized in/by the courses of Letters. However, according to Shohamy (2006), even if the document guides a certain practice, the teacher has the autonomy to perform others that he finds more appropriate or with which he feels more comfortable or safe. We conclude, then,

⁴ We need to position ourselves against this term with regard to teacher education, because it is not a banking model of education, but a dialogical process, in which the teacher trainer exercises the function of counselor (assisting in learning strategies) and preceptor (mediating theoretical discussions with the [possible] experiences lived in the professional field). Therefore, for BNC-Formação, from the beginning of the degree, the teacher must be inserted in the school environment.

⁵ “[...] produto y a la vez elemento determinante de la vida lingüística de un colectivo humano (como quiera que se lo delimite: como comunidad afirmada en elementos estables – predominantemente culturales, políticos o sociales – o como zona de contacto determinada por flujos y movimientos constante”.

that this autonomy, which we define here as linguistic awareness⁶, is capable of transforming linguistic ideologies, that is, it is not because of having a certain training that the undergraduates have to reproduce it in their professional practice. After all, according to Schön (1982), it is part of the teacher's reflective process intellectual openness, to perceive new points of view and even to change their own. It is in this sense that the PPC, that is, institutionalized knowledge, is characterized by ideologemes that, in turn, define and develop more complex linguistic-ideological systems that end up materializing the more or less formalist visions of language to which undergraduates have access (in fact, since when they were students of basic education). These ideologemes can be defined as statements that ground the discourse and can be carried out as practices, this leads us to consider how the dialogical and polysemic dimension of the language affects the teacher trainers, to the point of promoting reflection, and even ideological refraction, and making them obey (or not), criticize or, simply, ignore the prescription of the PPC. Thus, the identification of the ideologemes of the PPC of the UVA Letters course allowed us to reflect on how the ideas about the language, underlying the contents offered, affect the teachers in training to the point of creating feelings of identification (or rejection) with the language studied.

An exaggerated emphasis on metalinguistic issues can transform classrooms, at any level of education, into "morgues" (BAGNO, 2015), which means that the disciplinary knowledge of language teachers is not constituted (only) through normative activities – especially when these activities limit the possibilities of reflection and contestation. If the teacher trainers wish to formulate educational policies and execute them, and not just repeat what has been imposed on them as (will to) truth, they must be willing to develop discussions about the language: its history, its tendencies, its theories and its teaching-learning, and accept the discussion and confrontation with ideas that differ from their own. From these discussions, questions arise about what they learn and what they will teach, about how they learn and how they will teach to learn, and about who they teach and how to promote skills so that they come to teach.

Ideas about language do not exist in pure form, not even in a certain synchronic cut. Nor can we (nor do we want to) affirm that the ideologemes presented below express the conceptions of all those involved in the context where they are established, however, as an institutional discourse (FOUCAULT, 2014), it represents the speech(es) of the professors and the

⁶ Here we do not refer to the generativist understanding of the term, but we expand to a reflection that is situated in the pedagogical knowledge (PIMENTA, 2005) of language teachers (cf. LINS JR., 2019).

course of Letters of the State University of Vale do Acaraú. According to Riley (2007), identity is a linguistic construct, which depends on various social and psychological imperatives whose parameters are determined by sociocultural factors. Thus, the representation of any community can be perceived through ten criteria of a linguistic nature that identify the formation, self-recognition and maintenance of a group that shares the same language/nation, or, in this case, a specific community, of teachers of a given course of Letters, namely: [1] the group identifies itself from a language and other national elements (including terms and definitions); [2] the main objective of the group is its maintenance (through the transmission of knowledge, in which educational practices exert great power); [3] the group has its own practices that differentiate it from other groups (and these depend, in part, on the material and physical conditions available; an example cited by the author is rites of passage and how they differ from group to group); [4] the *group recognizes the various linguistic variants and their values* (the standard, that which is the established norm, develops from the individual); [5] the group shares the vision of social reality (norms, values, social roles are codified and represented through discursive interaction); [6] *the group has an internal structure* (responsible for hierarchical division, distribution of power, etc.); [7] the group identifies itself by territory and ethnic traits (understanding territory not as geographical property, but as the relations that are established between groups that share functions and activities); [8] the group identifies the strangers and establishes the various ways of interacting with them (inter- and intra-group classification processes); [9] the group has a history (which often derives from myths and origin legends, where heroic figures are responsible for the extermination of outsiders); [10] group members are aware of their belonging through identification processes (RILEY, 2007, p. 184-187).

In this study, we highlight the criteria [4] and [6] because they relate directly to our object of study: the conceptions of language, through uses and values, and the teaching practices, which reflect the participation of teachers and students (or just one of them?) in decisions and actions in the classrooms. These criteria defined two thematic fields that materialize the ideologemes identified in the PPC.

In the first thematic field we realized that the course should promote linguistic domains (a word that imprints a formalist perspective), such as the "*mastery* of the use of the Portuguese language and the English language [...] in its oral and written manifestations, in terms of reception and production of texts" (SOBRAL, 2015, p. 25, emphasis added, our translation). The recurrence of the noun 'dominion', which can mean "[...] preponderance [...], power to control, authority [...] space occupied [...] superiority [...], authority, command, power [...]"

competence", especially justifying the importance of the Latin language as a curricular component, tends to attribute to the language a character of a normative and not social nature, distancing itself from functionalist and (socio)interactionist perspectives of language.⁷

Table 1 – Thematic field of language conceptions: what to teach

THEMATIC FIELD 1	IDEOLOGEMES
<p>The conceptions of language and language influence the educational practices of the UVA Language Course</p>	<p>"To train language teachers[s] [...] committed to the construction of a teaching identity focused on the confrontations between <u>theory and practice</u>" (p. 6)</p> <p>"<u>The curricular components are organized in two large blocks: base of specific academic training or basic contents and base of pedagogical and practical training</u> or professional contents" (p. 28)</p> <p>"The Literature course is committed to promoting teaching and learning situations based on a <u>communicative approach</u>" (p. 14)</p> <p>"<u>Mastery</u> of basic knowledge of the <u>grammatical structures and lexicon</u> of the Latin language, in order to relate them to the corresponding structures <u>of the Portuguese language</u>" (p. 25)</p> <p>"<u>Knowledge of existing linguistic varieties and the various levels and registers of language</u>" (p. 27)</p> <p>"Comprehension and <u>active use of spoken language</u> (Speaking); understanding of <u>the speech of native users</u> of the English language (Listening); reception, understanding and <u>reflection of texts written</u> in English (Reading); production of <u>texts in English both formal and informal</u> (Writing)" (p. 27-28)</p> <p>"<u>Understanding, in the light of different theories, of linguistic and literary facts</u>" (p. 28)</p>

Source: Primary research data

Initially, we identified two issues: the first, the valorization of Latin as necessary for the understanding of the syntax of the Brazilian Portuguese language (LPB), the second, of an even more serious nature, in the linguistic simplification, resulting from the effort of a work of contrastive analysis that seems to place the LPB as subaltern to Latin. For example, we wondered if, in 60h/semester, it would be possible to deal with Latin declensions and verb tenses, compare the cases with the syntactic functions and still correlate with the functions of the Portuguese, and, finally, provide the student with a lexicon that allows him to understand the formation of words in our language.

Taking into account the particularities of Latin (the absence of an article, the flexibility of the position of phrasal elements, the placement or not of prepositions in certain adverbial locutions, etc.), the task of the menus of these disciplines is defined as exclusively traditional (grammar-translation method) both for the Latin approach, as expected, and for that of the Portuguese in the attempt of a linguistic analysis – which goes against the ideologemes identified on pages 6, 14 and 28, for example. The right to "oral expression in a manner appropriate to the different situations of language use [and] knowledge of existing linguistic

⁷ Available: <https://www.dicio.com.br>. Access: 12 Jun. 2022.

varieties and of the various levels and registers of language" and to "understanding and active use of spoken language; [...] reception, understanding and reflection of texts written in English; production of texts in English both formal and informal" (SOBRAL, 2015, p. 27-28, our translation), represents an attempt at linguistic variationism that ends up suppressed by the normative tradition that disguises itself in the progressive discourse of the document, making it, even, contradictory.

The syllabus of the discipline of Portuguese Language states that it is the "study of textual communication: theory of communication in an enunciative-discursive perspective [...] and study of normative grammar through text samples" (SOBRAL, 2015, p. 42-43, our translation). As a first-semester course, are students at this university prepared to be exposed to (a) discourse analysis, (b) communication theory, and (c) textual linguistics at the same time? About this, a very interesting reference is the course of Letters of USP, which takes place in five years, reserving the first year for a preparation of the student to the world of language studies. This should be considered by the UEVA Literature course, taking into account the deficits in reading and textual production that students bring from basic education (GATTI *et al.*, 2010).

The other disciplines, such as "Text and Discourse", "Text Production", "History and Linguistic Variation" (or would it be Romance Philology?), "Phonetics and Phonology of the Portuguese", "Morphology of the Portuguese", "Syntax of the Portuguese", "Semantics of the Portuguese" and "Stylistics of the Portuguese" approach the theoretical content in a way that considers only the standard norm, without going into the variationist question. For example, the Portuguese Syntax syllabus (SOBRAL, 2015, p. 63, our translation) focuses on the "analysis of the period of the Portuguese: constitutive elements, relations, construction processes and functional structure" and states that the programmatic content must address the constitutive elements of prayer, the relations of coordination and subordination and morphophonemic, morphosyntactic, lexical-semantic and pragmatic-discursive aspects in the process of analysis and construction of the sentence, Not to mention other linguistic variants that deviate from the standard norm – in fact, the term normative grammar has already been recommended since the first course, as we saw at the beginning of the paragraph. Once again, we reaffirm that the variationist character is not only minimal in the writing of the document, but also in the composition of the curricular disciplines. However, regarding the teaching practice, we can only use the information provided by the collaborators of this research.

With regard to the English Language (hereinafter LI), the situation is not so different, especially because it is a language that many students do not have access to and, therefore, think of the Letters course as a language course: just to learn the language, without realizing often that it is a training course for English teachers. This perception only happens in the middle of the course, in the disciplines of Supervised Internship. The curriculum proposes a gradation in the communicative skill/competence of the student who arrives at the course in LI without the communicative competence in it. With regard to the "understanding of the speech of native users of the English language" (SOBRAL, 2015, p. 27, our emphasis, our translation), the discourse reinforces the principles of the communicative approach of the 1990s and rejects three phenomena that make language a social phenomenon to be considered as such: (1) the absence of native speakers in the course (except when exchange programs are approved); (2) the lack of definition of what a "native" speaker would be, since there are studies that demystify this term (KUMARAVADIVELU, 1994), and, even more problematic, to associate a good linguistic education with access to native speakers (MOITA LOPES, 2008, p. 328); and (3) the use of didactic materials that bring ideologies that can hide hegemonic values, for example, which variant is chosen and the reasons for this choice (MARTELOTTA, 2016, p. 239). That is, in the middle of the post-method era (KUMARAVADIVELU, 1994, 2001), in which the autonomy of the learner in the academic and social spheres must be stimulated in the initial formation, the class model that we perceive, in the students' report, is of traditional and expository approach. Likewise, the disciplines analyzed are an example of how the curricular discourse can serve only technical and institutional purposes, revealing a power structure that goes against the proposal of inverted symmetry proposed in the document (SOBRAL, 2015, p. 12). This leads us to realize that

Changes in the codes of curricular organization are, above all, changes in the relations of power and control that govern the curricula. By disregarding this conclusion, many of the proposals for integrated curriculum throughout history transform the discussion about changes in the curricular organization into a technical issue, to be solved, simply, with new curricular grids, new conceptions of teachers, new dynamics in school administration (MOITA LOPES, 2008, p. 38, our translation).

For Michael Young (2011, p. 611), there are two possibilities to see a curriculum. The first, and most common, is by a traditional bias, which characterizes the curriculum as a discipline-centered document, in which knowledge is the content to be transmitted to students who, as individuals, should only abide by it, what Freire (2017, p. 80-81) calls "banking education" and Young "curriculum by compliance." This vision is very clear within the

document analyzed when it states that "the curricular components are organized in *two large blocks*: base of specific academic training or basic contents and base of pedagogical and practical training or professional contents" (SOBRAL, 2015, p. 28, our emphasis, our translation). At another moment, the text makes it clear that it is not only a matter of making a distinction between linguistic and literary contents on the one hand and pedagogical contents on the other (a view that was in force until LDB 9.393/96), but of prioritizing the contents previously determined in relation to the human demand of the course itself by pointing out that the contents and the treatment that should be given to them assume a central role, since it is through their learning that the construction and development of competencies will take place. In other words, it is *through the contents that the purposes* of this pedagogical project of teacher education *will be realized*" (SOBRAL, 2015, p. 15, our emphasis, our translation).

The second possibility of seeing the curriculum goes against what was exposed above, and takes into account the experiences of students in relation to the academic practices to be developed, from social and historical issues, which Young (2011) calls "curriculum by engagement". At this moment, our second thematic field comes into play, which concerns the roles played by teachers and students in the UVA Letters course, as shown in table 2, below.

Table 2 – Thematic field of the teaching-learning process and power relations: how to teach

THEMATIC FIELD 2	IDEOLOGEMES
<p>The discursive roles of teachers and students are in the same power relationship in the UVA Language Course</p>	<p>"The project is guided by the <u>principle of coherence between the training offered and the practice expected of the teacher, in view of the concepts of inverted symmetry</u>" (p. 12) "The Letters course is committed to promoting teaching and learning situations based on a communicative approach, <u>in which students and teachers co-participate, competing with an equally decisive influence for the success of the process</u>" (p. 14) "<u>Nothing can replace the performance of the student himself in the task of constructing meanings</u> about the learning contents. It is he who will modify, enrich and, therefore, build new and more powerful instruments of action and interpretation" (p. 15) "The contents and the treatment that should be given to them assume a central role, since it is through their learning that the construction and development of competencies will take place. <u>In other words, it is through the contents that the purposes of this pedagogical project of teacher education will be realized.</u>" (p. 15)</p>

Source: Primary research data

By affirming that teaching practices should be guided respecting the concepts of inverted symmetry, in which "students and teachers co-participate, competing with an equally decisive influence for the success of the process" (SOBRAL, 2015, p. 14, our translation), it is expected that teachers and students can participate in the selection of contents and evaluative practices, for example, during graduation, which can be seen, also, as a way of reconciling the two great dichotomous blocks already mentioned earlier; after all, it would be a learning to

teach participating in the construction of what is learned – which could minimize the theory-practice gap, identified in the introduction of this text. However, as we saw above, when asked about the correlation that teachers make between the contents worked in the classroom and how they relate to the future practice of the profession in the classroom of basic education, a large part of the collaborators said that their teachers did not make any reference to this issue. The reports show that there is, in fact, no such relationship of equal power in the decisions of the academic course between professors and students and that the proposal of an inverted symmetry is nothing more than (one more) intention recorded in the document.

Proposing greater flexibility to the PPC does not mean changing an entire local culture immediately, but generating a discomfort, a restlessness, without which it is not possible to move from one state to another. It is important to have the initial willingness to want to get out of the comfort zone and think collectively about what is best for the students from the reality that is presented to them.

From what we have observed so far, the course, although it manifests the intention to think about a more democratic formation and that considers, in fact, the interactionist-communicative perspective of the language, is marked by a very strong formalist ideology, which materializes in the text of the PPC. Thus, the centralization of the teacher in the teaching-learning process reflects the ideological and discursive values still present in the course of Letters of UEVA.

Theoretical-analytical instrumental

The data analyzed are part of a research (LINS JR., 2019) carried out under the co-guidance of professor and linguist Marcos Bagno, which aimed to identify the perception of students of Letters in relation to the development of reflective thinking in initial training. The present excerpt is limited to discussing how the disciplinary knowledge of the UEVA Letters course is prescribed, in the document, and carried out, from the relationship between teachers' trainers and teachers in training. Of the three data collection instruments of the original research, we used only the unstructured questionnaire about the experiences as students of the course disciplines. The research followed the protocols of Resolution No. 196/1996 (BRAZIL, 1996) and Resolution No. 466/2012 (BRAZIL, 2013) – and their complementary – in order to guarantee employees, the right to free and informed consent, and was approved by the Ethics Committee of the Federal University of Paraíba (UFPB), under No. 2,331,186, on October 16, 2017.

We understand the discursive practice as a social practice, where power relations are exercised and activated, configuring a place of power dispute. As no discourse is neutral, we also defend the need for a linguistic education that is concerned with the training of teachers of reflective languages from their initial formation, developing a process of discursive emancipation, in the sense of challenging, questioning, breaking and transforming the established discourse orders, guaranteeing the oppressed groups (licentiate students) a place of confrontation with the dominant groups (teacher trainers and curricula).

According to Wodak (2009, p. 19), this postmodern period of fragmented identities requires from the sciences a multidisciplinary methodology that can "investigate, in a critical way, social inequality as it is expressed, signaled, constituted, legitimized, etc., by the uses of language." Considering the discourse a phenomenon legitimized by ideologies of a dominant group, which conventions and naturalizes the effects of power in its productions of meaning, three basic operations are necessary for an analysis of the discourse: (1) constantly criticize the texts produced, aiming to identify inconsistencies, contradictions and paradoxes in their internal structures; (2) transcend the internal structure of the text, revealing its contexts to situate the communicative or interactive structures of the discursive event; and (3) contribute to the improvement of communication, transforming the reality around them. These operations are perceived in the students' discourses when confronted with the prescription of the PPC.

Results and discussion

We begin this text by calling attention to the fact that we are not conducting a study in a recent field of research, because the professional teacher training dates from the late nineteenth century (GATTI, 2010), but research in this area becomes a priority when we realize that graduates of Literature courses are reaching the labor market without the basic theoretical-methodological knowledge for teaching (ALVARENGA, 2012; FLORES, 2015; COSTA, 2016). When we talk about teacher training, we can understand that protagonism (SCHÖN, 2000, p. 88) implies a pedagogical practice able to mobilize the knowledge of the teacher in training for the "critical reflection in and on the action" of learning and teaching a language.

When asked about the teaching of specific subjects (one of the "blocks" cited in the PPC), 72% of the collaborators associated the study of the language with manuals and individual texts. If we consult the PPC of the course, we will see that there is no clear distinction between what are language and linguistic subjects, with the exception of one subject in the first semester called *Portuguese Language*. When the basic bibliography of these disciplines is

consulted, the works seem to opt for more metalinguistic approaches than the development of practical activities of language use (epilinguistic). Once again, we are not arguing in favor of the end of language teaching, but pointing to the fact that epilinguistic issues, necessary for language education in primary and secondary schools, seem to be ignored in the process of teacher training of the course. These teaching practices were also associated with a teacher-centered methodology and with evaluations that did not favor the development of reasoning and reflexivity, but memorization. Only 26% of the employees – and who were studying for qualification in English – stated that they perceived a dialogued practice in language classes. However, in the disciplines of grammatical topics (Syntax, Morphology, etc.), the classes, also focused on the linguistic positions of the teachers, ended up using less creative and reflective-analytical evaluative techniques, opting for summative tests that required only data reproduction strategies. An interesting fact is that the students were able to identify, in their reports, two distinct postures: those teachers who were more formalistic and those who were more interactionist.

About the ideologemes that relate to the question of the proposal of inverted symmetry, we saw that the conflicts are not only in the documentary proposal of the course (PPC); They materialize in teaching practices, according to the collaborators of the research. This allows us to elaborate criticisms of the (pretended) coherence between the epistemological and pedagogical principles of the PPC and the teaching practices of the teachers who train the UVA Letters course, with regard to the lack of autonomy on the part of the students and the oppression exerted in the discourses of the teacher trainers, and consented to by the submission of the students:

[...] Teachers *expect* these students to already *know (understand)* the English language. And maybe that's the big problem with UVA *wanting* students to take the courses *as if everyone has the conditions* or support to do so, *not that it's the mistake of teachers to demand it*. But it is something that does not happen, *students are not exactly prepared to study* English language here at UVA (INFORMANT 54, emphasis added).

The speech demands that the materials be thought (or even elaborated) to solve a lack that the students bring from basic education, and points out a conflict between a desiderative-imposing posture of the teachers (to wait for the students to know/understand) that materializes the failure in the disciplines (to be the great problem of the course). Neglecting this failure of basic education may mean that undergraduates will experience difficulties throughout the training of language teachers, being approved at the end of each semester only for developing

specific skills to respond to the proposed assessment models (instructional, non-linguistic or professional skills). This will not guarantee that, after graduation, they will be able to communicate in English or teach the language or the LPB itself.

For the question regarding what is important in the teaching-learning of a language, we conducted a survey of lexical items that could refer to the conceptions of language cited in the National Curricular Parameters (PCN) and reinforced in the skills explained by the National Common Curricular Base (BNCC), namely, the defense of the "discursive engagement of the student, that is, [that takes] in [account] his ability to engage and engage others in the discourse, in order to be able to act in the social world" (BRAZIL, 1998, p. 63, our translation), in relation to traditional teaching, focused on norms and structures of the language, which provide nothing but an empty and meaningless analysis for the students of basic education – a place where our future teachers will act. It is necessary that the teachers who train the undergraduate courses do not lose this fundamental objective of the course, which differentiates it, for example, from the Bachelor of Arts courses, whose objective is not teaching in basic education, but the training of researchers in language studies. This is not to say that graduates cannot be researchers, on the contrary, they must be researchers of/in their own classrooms, dealing with the phenomena of teaching and learning and so many other demands that are established in the educational environment. What is expected of a teacher training course, distinct from bachelor's degrees, is to contextualize disciplinary knowledge in the reality of Brazilian basic education. Otherwise, we end up

to teach, as teachers, and to attend, as students, disciplines totally irrelevant to teacher training and, at the same time, we leave aside a whole set of theories and practices that are of the first necessity so that someone who graduates in "*Letters*" can work in connection with what is expected, today, of a language teacher (BAGNO, 2017, online, emphasis added).

When asked what is important in language teaching-learning, the table below summarizes perspectives of language in the discourses of employees.

Table 3 – Comparison of formalist and interactionist views of languages

Letters - Portuguese	Letters – English
1. Formalist Perspective (40%)	1. Formalist perspective (41%)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Content domain - Mastery of <u>the cultured</u> norm and its variations - Know the object that will be passed on in the classroom and its theorists - Simplify definitions and terms - Interpret the rules 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Content domain - Knowledge of the object it teaches - Fix the content in the room (A12-LIF)
2. Interactionist perspective (36%)	2. Interactionist perspective (20%)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Being aware of the object in question - Know its characteristics, both in the orality part, as in the writing - Not thinking your language is the right one and devaluing your neighbor's - Reflect on what you are learning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - It's not just teaching rules, grammar, but also introducing cultural elements - Work with interaction

Source: Primary research data

The discourses show that the formalist perspective overlaps with the interactionist one. Among the respondents of the Letters/Portuguese course, there was an average in the ideas represented: 40% discussed metalinguistic aspects that prioritize the standard norm against 36% who defended epilinguistic questions. On the contrary, the respondents of the Letters/English course distanced themselves considerably in their opinions: 41% were in favor of metalinguistic activities, while 20% only brought references to epilinguistic, cultural and dialogical activities. Note that the percentage was not reached in its entirety, which means that part of the employees did not manifest themselves clearly or, in some cases, did not understand the question, which corroborates the idea that

Thousands of students leave university without even having heard (or having heard very vaguely) of grammaticalization, pragmatics, discourse, literacy, textual genre, enunciation, sociocognitivism, sociointeractionism, sociology of language, linguistic policies, creolization, diglossia, theories of reading, speaking/writing relations... fundamental areas of research and action to have a coherent vision of what a language is and what it means to teach language. To make matters worse, these same people also come out believing that there is "prayer without subject" and "hidden subject" [...] and other myths and superstitions that our grammatical tradition insists on preserving and that *the courses of Letters* do not endeavor, as they should, to criticize and replace with concepts more in tune with contemporary theorizing and scientific research. [...] In the vast majority of courses, the only contact that the student has with the science of language and its history is through a discipline called "Introduction to Linguistics" or something similar, often in a single semester (BAGNO, 2017, online, emphasis added, our translation).

In fact, the understanding of grammar brought by the representatives of Groups A and B presented different perspectives based on the vision that these students demonstrate to have

about the language. Irandé Antunes (2007, p. 22, emphasis added, our translation) explains "the character of grammar as an *area of great conflicts*", of an internal order, given the complexity of linguistic phenomena, and of an external order, since language is one of the social facts resulting from historical factors, because as stated by the first grammarian of the Romance languages, in the fifteenth century,

of one thing I am sure: the language has always been a companion of the Empire, and in such a way it accompanied it that together they began, grew and flourished, and then, simultaneously, there was the fall of both (NEBRIJA, [1492]1992⁸, emphasis added, our translation).

Thus, in an attempt to "*reprogram the minds* of teachers, parents and students", Antunes (2007, p. 23, emphasis added) clarifies that the term 'grammar' has a polysemy that needs to be clarified, especially in Letters courses. For the author, when we refer to grammar, we can be talking about rules of a language or a specific norm, from a study perspective, a school discipline or a linguistic instrument. Therefore, we defend that teacher training in Letters should provide more epilinguistic methodologies and that demystify the misunderstandings that are made of grammar, in order to contribute to the training of language teachers prepared for a project of linguistic education for basic education.

Final remarks

Given the data analyzed, two desires to know guide this research. The first, that the ideologemes of the PPC of Letters of UEVA express the linguistic identity of this collegiate and that this identity is conflicting in the organization of the discourse itself. By opting for discourse analysis as a process, we recognize the relevance of the between-place, that is, the representation of a critical-reflexive position, which leads us to the second – and most important – will to know, which guides the entire methodology of analysis: that these knowledges are not (nor are) fixed in their theoretical limits, but relate to each other, creating a fluid space that no longer justifies descriptions or explanations based on formalist traditions (or categorical perspectives).

Therefore, we were left with the work of evidencing, through the discourses of the collaborators of this research, how the curriculum – including the PPC – of the UVA Letters

⁸ "[...] *Uma cosa hálo y: sáco por conclusión mui certa: qui siempre la lengua fue compañera del império; y de tal manera lo siguió, que junta mente començaron, crecieron y florecieron e después junta fu ela caída de entrambos*" (Prologue of the *Grammar of la lengua castellana*, dedicated to Queen Isabel, by Antonio de Nebrija, in 1492, our translation).

course can influence (negatively) the training of reflective teachers. In this sense, reflexivity, as we understand it in this study, is a process that begins in the degree in Letters (professionalization) and continues throughout the professional teaching exercise (professionality).

We also noticed, in most of the statements analyzed, that there is a perception that the model of language teaching in the UVA Letters course does not differ much from what has been practiced in basic education and language courses (in the latter case, for students of Letters/English). Most of the practices reported refer to a passive learning model, with few teachers who are open to more interactive learning models (or in an inverted symmetry perspective, as recommended in the document), resulting in the failure of strategies that can combat the low degree of multiliteracy.

We hope that the reflections of this research will be added to many others on teacher education, in the sense of trying, from a specific place of speech, to rethink the undergraduate courses in Letters with its first objective: to educate competent teachers willing to improve the quality of language teaching in Brazilian basic education.

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