

Initiation at Unilab: contributions Brazil – Cape Verde contributions

Abstract

The University of International Integration of Afro-Brazilian Lusophony (Unilab, in Portuguese) is marked by the dual mission of international integration and regional development. Over a little more than a decade, public policies aimed at teacher training were developed at Unilab. These include Pibid, which aims to provide opportunities for the insertion of undergraduate teaching courses students in the daily life of elementary public schools. This article seeks to reflect on the experience of Pibid at Unilab and its contributions to education in Cape Verde. With a qualitative approach, methodologically, this study narrates the life story of a Pibid/Unilab Cape Verdean graduate student as a strategy to approximate it to reality. The findings reveal that the experience in question contributed to the achievement of Unilab's mission, that is, the process of international integration and social insertion, with the participation of students, especially international ones, in basic education public schools. These institutions constituted formative spaces of dialogue, (re)existence and (re)cognition of cultural diversity, contributing to reduce the prejudice and racism, still present in today's society. We concluded that the performance of undergraduate teaching students at Pibid/Unilab enabled learning, reflections and partnerships on initial training in the university's activity areas that were resignified by the graduate students in their professional practice in partner countries, notably in Cape Verde.

Keywords: initiation to teaching; Brazil; Cape Verde.

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Iniciação à docência na Unilab: contributos Brasil – Cabo Verde

Resumo

A Universidade da Integração Internacional da Lusofonia Afro-Brasileira (Unilab) é marcada pela dupla missão de integração internacional e desenvolvimento regional. Ao longo de pouco mais de uma década, dentre outras políticas públicas voltadas à formação de professores, destaca-se o Pibid, que visa oportunizar a inserção de estudantes de cursos de licenciatura no cotidiano das escolas públicas de educação básica. Considerando esse contexto, o presente artigo busca refletir sobre a experiência do Pibid na Unilab e seus contributos à educação em Cabo Verde. De abordagem qualitativa, metodologicamente, o texto se utilizou da narrativa de história de vida de um egresso cabo-verdiano do Pibid/Unilab como estratégia de aproximação com a realidade. Os achados revelam que a experiência em pauta contribuiu para a consecução da missão da Unilab, qual seja, o processo de integração internacional e inserção social, com a participação de estudantes, em especial, os internacionais, nas escolas públicas de educação básica. Essas instituições se constituíram como espaços formativos, de diálogo, de (re)existência e (re)conhecimento da diversidade cultural, contribuindo para diminuir o preconceito e o racismo ainda tão presentes na sociedade. Conclui-se que a atuação de licenciandos no Pibid/Unilab possibilitou aprendizagens, reflexões e parcerias sobre a formação inicial nas áreas de atuação da universidade e que foram ressignificadas pelos egressos em seu exercício profissional nos países parceiros, notadamente em Cabo Verde.

Palavras-chave: iniciação à docência; Brasil; Cabo Verde.

Iniciación a la docencia en la Unilab: contribuciones Brasil – Cabo Verde

Resumen

La Universidad da Integração Internacional da Lusofonia Afro-Brasileira (Unilab) está marcada por la doble misión de integración internacional y desarrollo regional. A lo largo de poco más de una década, entre otras políticas públicas dirigidas a la formación docente, se destaca Programa Institucional de Bolsa de Iniciação à Docência (Pibid), que tiene como objetivo brindar oportunidades para la inclusión de los estudiantes de carreras de grado en la vida cotidiana de las escuelas públicas de educación básica. Considerando este contexto, este artículo busca reflexionar sobre la experiencia del Pibid de la Unilab y sus contribuciones a la educación en Cabo Verde. Desde un enfoque cualitativo, metodológicamente, el texto utilizó la narración de la historia de vida de un caboverdiano egresado de Pibid/Unilab como estrategia de acercamiento a la realidad. Los hallazgos revelan que la experiencia Pibid contribuyó para el logro de la misión de la Unilab, o sea, el proceso de integración internacional e inserción social, con la participación de los estudiantes, especialmente internacionales, en las escuelas públicas de educación básica. Estas instituciones constituidas como espacios formativos, del diálogo, de la (re)existencia y (re)conocimiento de la diversidad cultural, contribuyendo a reducir los prejuicios y el racismo aún tan presentes en la sociedad. Se concluye que la actuación de los estudiantes de graduación de Pibid/Unilab permitió aprendizajes, reflexiones y alianzas sobre la formación inicial en las áreas de actuación de la universidad, que fueron ressignificadas por los graduados en los países socios, en particular en Cabo Verde.

Palabras clave: introducción a la enseñanza; Brasil; Cabo Verde.

From the “adored land” to the “naked island”: introductory lines¹

The Institutional Scholarship Program for Teaching Initiation (Pibid) provides undergraduate teaching courses students with the opportunity to immerse themselves in the daily life of elementary public schools, seeing the educational phenomenon as an object of critical reflection aimed at the collaborative construction of strategies that contribute to the improve the reality found in these contexts.

This article aims to reflect on the experience of Pibid at Unilab and its contributions to education in Cape Verde.

Unilab is an institution marked by the dual mission of international integration and regional development. Over a little more than a decade, this institution developed different public policies aimed at teacher training, including Pibid, which enables the instruction and learning of the teaching profession based on the participation of undergraduate teaching courses students in the daily life of elementary public schools. This movement is based on the understanding of education as a situated social practice that demands, from educators, a permanent questioning of reality and the defense of commitments to humanization as a non-negotiable horizon of the education processes.

Methodologically, the study was structured through a qualitative approach, since it aims to understand, in depth, a specific phenomenon, valuing contexts and subjects as fundamental references to achieve the established objectives. The life story narrative produced by a Cape Verdean graduate student of Pibid/Unilab, hereinafter called Uncle, was used as a strategy to approximate it to reality, allowing the reader to understand his voice and experience as possibilities to reflect on how the program influences the lives of the people who constitute it.

In addition to the introduction and final considerations, the text presents a theoretical discussion, the methodological path and a discussion of the results, revealing that the Pibid experience contributed to the achievement of Unilab’s mission, that is, the process of international integration and social insertion, with the participation of students, especially international students from Portuguese-speaking African countries,

¹ This article uses excerpts from the Brazilian National Anthem (lyrics by Joaquim Osório Duque Estrada and music by Francisco Manuel da Silva) and the Cape Verde National Anthem (melody by Adalberto Higinio Tavares Silva and lyrics by Amílcar Spencer Lopes) in the section titles.

in elementary. These institutions constitute formative spaces of dialogue, of (re)existence and (re)cognition of cultural diversity, contributing to reduce the prejudice and racism still present in today's society. The performance of undergraduate teaching students at Pibid/Unilab enabled learning, reflections and partnerships on initial training in the university's activity areas that were resignified by graduates in their professional practice in partner countries, notably in Cape Verde, prioritized in this text.

“Vivid ray of love and hope”: dialoguing with the theoretical framework

Education and teacher training bear the marks of the political, social and economic interests of each era. Since the 1990s, teacher training has had its structure questioned in many ways, seeking receptiveness to diverse possibilities, based on a critical, reflective and transformative view of education (Behrens, 2007). In fact, the training we advocate for goes beyond a conservative approach and seeks dialogue with the pedagogical practices carried out in the daily life of schools.

In the current context, in which the education market is increasingly growing, we have two conflicting teaching concepts. The first one, defended by international and market education organizations, preaches the formation of a practical and technical teacher, that is, the teacher as a mere executor of tasks planned by others, with practical training and absence of theory. The second, on the contrary, views the teacher as a reflective-critical intellectual, a researcher of their praxis and educational praxis in school contexts (Pimenta, 2019).

The second perspective presented by Pimenta (2019) is the one we adopt as a reference in this article, because we consider that teacher training is marked by broad and solid knowledge of the social and political contexts that encompass teaching and by the commitment to overcome the inequalities present in school, education and society.

The teacher is an intellectual who fosters the critical and reflective support necessary to mediate learning, considering that the formative process must be constructed by both instructors and participants, legitimizing itself as a space-time for study, discussion, reflection. When think that, in a democratic and horizontal perspective,

training constitutes a continuous movement from the *self* (individual) to the *us* (collective), aiming at the transformation of a reality common to the subjects.

We understand that the educator's formation develops in multiple dimensions, distinct and articulated among themselves, such as technique, politics, ethics and aesthetics. These, anchored in the principles of justice, solidarity and respect, enable an understanding of the school as a constructor of citizenship and happiness (Rios, 2009; 2011).

Unilab was created by the Federal Government during the administration of President Luís Inácio Lula da Silva, through Law No. 12.289, on July 20, 2010 (Brasil, 2010), in the midst of policies for the expansion of higher education, more specifically in the Program to Support Restructuring and Expansion Plans of Federal Universities (Reuni, in Portuguese). Associated to the Ministry of Education, with headquarters and jurisdiction in the city of Redenção, in the Baturité Massif/Ceará, Unilab was implemented as a possibility to expand access to higher education, in a solidarity cooperation project that promoted the inclusion not only of Brazilian students, but also of African and Timorese students, materializing the processes of internationalization and internalization of education that seek to repair Brazil's historical debt to minority social groups in the academic environment. With a multi-campus structure, the institution is present in the municipalities of Acarape and Redenção (Ceará) and São Francisco do Conde (Bahia).

Unilab was built with a dual mission that comprises international integration and loco-regional development and aims to train students through “interdisciplinarity, interculturality and learning situated in the working world, intending to integrate the domains of specific knowledge of these disciplinary fields to those of teaching abilities and its respective didactics and contents” (UNILAB, 2018, p. 29). In this sense, the institution was implemented to offer higher education courses focused on areas of interest in Brazil and partner countries, joining Brazilian and international students and teachers with the objective of contributing to overcome inequalities, representing an advance in the cooperation and internationalization of higher education (Brasil, 2010).

In 2011, the first course focused on teacher training was implemented at Unilab: the Teaching Degree in Natural Sciences and Mathematics (CNeM, in Portuguese). This interdisciplinary course established as its objective a solid education in Mathematics and

Natural Sciences for elementary and middle school, integrated with a specific qualification for high school, in Chemistry, Physics, Biology or Mathematics (UNILAB, 2014). With the institution's consolidation process, other undergraduate teaching courses were created to meet the demands originated from the loco-regional context, in the municipalities of Ceará and Bahia, and from the international context, considering partner countries' demands. We emphasize that, with the advent of the courses in Biological Sciences, Physics, Mathematics and Chemistry, there was the extinction of the Teaching Degree Course in CNeM.

Pibid emerged along with the implementation of teaching courses at Unilab, and was the first institutional program approved in the university, which was, in that historical context, the main tool for the social insertion of Unilab in elementary schools. The dialogue between teacher training and public educational institutions constitutes one of the goals of Unilab's Institutional Development Plan: "Valuing undergraduate teaching degrees through the equipment of teaching laboratories, reflection on education, supervised academic internships, participation in research, development of Pibid projects [...]" (UNILAB, 2016, p. 23), asserting the institution's commitment to teaching initiation programs articulated with curricular components and diversified actions that boost solid formative processes that dialog with the future professional performance.

The current Institutional Project for Pibid-Unilab, effective until 2024, intends to "favor the integration between higher education and basic education, through the critical and collaborative insertion of UNILAB teaching undergraduates in the daily life of public schools, articulating reflection and action, theory and practice [...]" To this end, "[...] it is structured in a movement of teaching initiation with an investigative-formative nature that values the diversities present in these space-times and contributes to elevate the quality of public education" (UNILAB, 2022).

Pimenta and Lima (2019) reflect that Pibid and supervised internships have similarities in the nature of their activities, but the first is marked by the payment of grants to an university, to school educators and to undergraduate teaching students who undergo a selection process, configuring itself "[...] as a short-range focal policy, since it is aimed at the small portion of students in a teaching course [...]"

Despite the fact that Pibid is a public policy that does not encompass all undergraduate teaching students, a study by Alves, Martins and Leite (2021) reveals that the program “[...] provides the grant holders with unique experiences, allowing them to recognize school through a new look, no longer of a student, but of a teacher.” In fact, early contact with the future professional locus offers opportunities for the experience with teaching knowledge.

We understand that, even pierced by tensions and contradictions inherent to contemporary capitalist society, teaching initiation programs contribute to the construction of the professional’s identity, by promoting approximations between public elementary schools and universities, and between undergraduate teaching students and basic and higher education teachers. Through this experience, the undergraduate students experience, in practice, the teaching and learning processes and closely witness the concrete reality of the teaching practice, thus expanding the theoretical reflections initiated at university.

“More flowers put forth in thy fair, smiling fields”: methodological steps

Scientific research needs a methodology that can account for the object one wants to investigate. We agree with Minayo (1994, p. 17) that “nothing can be an intellectual problem if it has not been, in the first place, a practical life problem”, and we aim to reflect on the experience of Pibid at Unilab and its contributions to education in Cape Verde.

The present article arises from our professional experience at Unilab, which, in its mission, seeks social inclusion, respect and acceptance of differences, prioritizing interdisciplinary dialogue and articulation between theory and practice, in addition to strengthening teaching through research and innovative extension.

Due to the complexity of the study object, we opted for qualitative research, since it “values the subjectivity of researchers and subjects; combines various data collection and analysis techniques; is open to the world of experience, culture and life; values inductive exploration and elaborates a holistic knowledge of reality” (Anadón, 2005, p. 20).

Qualitative research, therefore, seeks to understand a specific phenomenon in depth. We used a narrative interview with a Cape Verdean educator, a Pibid/Unilab graduate who studied Natural Sciences and Mathematics, with qualification in Physics. After graduation, he returned to his country of origin, later returning to Brazil for a master's degree. He then went back to Cape Verde and is, currently, in Brazil again, taking a doctorate course. In this article, the narrator will be called Uncle, so that we can protect his identity and ensure the ethical duty of research (Brasil, 2016).

Among numerous methodological possibilities, we opted for the life history narrative, understanding that oral narratives are loaded with the interviewed subject's values, beliefs, attitudes and opinions. Thus, we seek to focus on Uncle's experiences with Pibid at Unilab and the contributions of this process to his professional performance in Cape Verde.

The narrative interview, in the understanding of Apple (2005), is made without previous preparation, focused on the interviewed subject's personal narrative. Thus, the interviewer does not play a game of questions and answers, but only makes an initial question that serves to motivate the narrative and foster the subject's approximation to the facts that he experienced.

According to Josso's (2006, p. 27) understanding, working with life history narratives helps to prove the "[...] importance of explaining and developing training projects: the extremely heterogeneous character of the motivations, needs and desires that stimulate the investment of adult students and professionals in continuous training."

We infer that, through the life history narrative, it is possible to obtain the subjective essence of the existence of a subject who experiences the double role of actor and author of their own history. In fact, the subject, through the oral narrative, transmits information about their personal, academic and professional life trajectory, according to their memories and choices, organized "[...] in a narrative coherence, around the theme of formation" (Josso, 2004, p. 38). It is important to emphasize that it is not up to the researcher to confirm the authenticity of the facts, because the narrator's point of view is valued.

The narrative experience provides the subject with knowledge of themselves and their formative process through what they choose to narrate. Thus, according to Josso's (2004, p. 48) ideas, "To speak of one's own formative experiences is, therefore, in a certain way, to tell oneself one's own history, one's personal and socio-cultural qualities, the value attributed to what is 'lived' in the temporal continuity of our psychosomatic being." The dive into the past, provided by the narrating experience, enables the subject to review and analyze their own trajectory. In this set of individual and collective experiences, the narrator selects what they consider significant at that moment.

Weller and Zardo (2013, p. 132) understand that the subject interprets "[...] the world from a given perspective, from certain interests, motivations, desires, among others, reality cannot be conceived under the principle of universal validity. In this way, the subjective sense that an action has for the actor is unique and individual", revealing its biographical circumstance from their concrete experiences.

Josso (2004, p. 48) reveals that the narrating experience "[...] is also a way of saying that, in this temporal continuum, some experiences have a particular intensity that imposes itself on our consciousness and from them we will extract the information useful to our transactions with ourselves and/or with our human and natural environments." The meaning that the subject attributes to what they narrate enables a subjective interpretation that bears the marks of their context of action and socialization throughout life.

“Hope is as big as the sea which embraces us”: contributions of Pibid to education in Cape Verde

Cape Verde is an archipelagic country, composed of ten islands and eight islets of volcanic origins, located in the Atlantic Ocean at a distance of 500 km from the West African Coast, with a total area of 4,033 km² and a population of approximately 600 thousand inhabitants within its territory and almost one million in the diaspora²,

² The diaspora is a socio-historical and cultural phenomenon, marked by the displacement of individuals from their own country to another. In recent decades, African youth have sought to develop their academic training outside their countries of origin, producing a new configuration of diaspora, spontaneous or induced (MARTINS; FREIRE; LOPES; ALEXANDRE, 2017).

according to the country's statistical data. The official language is Portuguese, but the local dialect is *Creole*³, predominantly spoken in the country (Lopes, 2020).

Bathed by Freirean hope, a hope marked by an intentional action, and by the desire for collective construction (Freire, 1992), we seek to reflect on the experience of Pibid at Unilab and its contributions to education in Cape Verde. To this end, we worked with audio narrative recordings, understanding that the oral archive “[...] is an important document, capable of revealing the contributions, richness and expressiveness of orality: intonation, emphasis, doubts, intervals, pauses, rapidity or slowness in reactions, laughter, repetitions, etc.” (Rego, 2003, p. 90). Subsequently, we transcribed the recordings and proceeded with the analysis of the narratives.

Following the proposal by Weller and Zardo (2013, p. 134), the interview with Uncle began in an “autobiographically oriented narrative question, formulated in order to address [...] part of the life story, depending on the researcher's interest and study object”, that is, in this case, his experience with Pibid and its contributions to his professional practice in Cape Verde.

Among the various possibilities when working with life history narratives, we chose to work with the perspective of comprehensive-interpretive analysis (Souza, 2014, p. 43), prioritizing the narrative in its entirety, considering “[...] the three times of analysis as a methodological dimension form among themselves and their dialogicity and reciprocity, considering that they maintain approximations, territories, but also singularity in their times, moments of analysis”.

The narrative of Uncle, a Cape Verdean graduate of Pibid, begins as follows:

I would like to thank you once again for the opportunity to be here to share my experience, to share moments that mark the trajectory of our journey, of our life, bringing the possibility of a policy that generates benefits and positive actions for our society and for the strengthening of the path, instruction and learning in teacher training. This explanation is extremely important because it contemplates life experiences that strengthens the teaching and learning processes, which makes us understand that this trajectory is continuous and not static. Teacher education cannot be thought of as a static process, it must be thought of according to time and space dynamics. We, as teachers, must have the

³ Portuguese lexical base language, which is considered the mother tongue of almost all Cape Verdeans and used as a second language by Cape Verdeans' descendants in other parts of the world.

audacity to follow time and space dynamics and transformations, to reformulate from these transformations, enabling ourselves to have innovative vision and capacity, so that we can provide the answers to new generations' needs. Our mission as teachers is to share experience, lessons, learn, teach and train according to time and space (Uncle, 2023).

Uncle brings up a broad understanding of training, considering it as a mutual and collective process between instructor and participants, legitimizing itself as a space-time for study, discussion and reflection. Lima (2001) proposes training as a *continuum*, which is the formative process itself, comprising initial and continuous training, throughout the teaching practice, in a process of comings and goings, welcoming personal experiences and the various types of knowledge that contribute to the construction of the teacher's professional identity. Thus, according to the narrator subject:

As educators we cannot remain static in time and space, simply wanting future generations to adapt to our postures, needs, molds, certainties and traumas. On the contrary, we have to be very flexible to keep up with time and space dynamics. In fact, this is an exercise of mutation, we have to have the capacity to change, to transform ourselves into various things according to the context that awaits us, and we should not be teachers who conserve values in the educational field, which perhaps do not adapt to the new realities, we should be teachers who accompany the generations, because we are different from those who lived 100 years ago. Our way of seeing the world, our cosmovision, our cosmoperception when seeing and reading the world is different, we are different, so we must understand and deal with this difference. The world is ours. This understanding allows us to unlearn and relearn with the difference, to enter other worlds, in a positive way, so we can understand the possibilities and perspectives to contribute to the progress and happiness of others. The idea is not to format the individual, but rather to make the individual find themselves and discover their own light (Uncle, 2023).

We are constantly invited to commit to transform this markedly unjust and exclusionary society. For this, we need flexibility and the exercise of dialogue, seeking, for example, a real interaction between university and school to become closer to the ideal of forming critical and reflective citizens. Freire (2004) proposes an exercise of permanent and critical reflection of our practices, understanding that this is an unfinished process, essentially inconclusive, multifaceted, in constant transformation.

Subsequently, Uncle dives into his memories from the time in which he studied Natural Sciences and Mathematics, with Physics degree, at Unilab:

My path as an Unilab student was marked by achievements and challenges. I distinctly remember when I joined PIBID, still very young, without having any idea of what a university was. At that time my life experience was of a more closed and timid country (Cape Verde) and my first contact with another country was Brazil, which had another magnitude dimension, with prospects of emancipation of independence much greater than ours and with a level of thought much faster than ours. It was at Pibid that I met Eduardo Galeano and read a text that I remember to this day: “Diego did not know the sea. His father, Santiago Kovakloff, took him to discover the sea. They traveled south. It, the sea, was on the other side of the high dunes, waiting. When the boy and his father finally reached those heights of sand, after much walking, the sea was in front of their eyes. And such was the immensity of the sea, and such its brilliance, that the boy was speechless with beauty. And when he finally managed to speak, trembling, stuttering, he asked his father, ‘Help me look!’”⁴. This text is very reflective, it may have taken me years to understand its meaning. It was after that moment that I got curious and interested in understanding it, because I did not understand what it wanted to show me, a sentence that supposedly so simple for me at that moment. In my short time as a teacher, I have always been saying, at the end of the challenges, “teach me to look”, because it is necessary to learn to look. In any dimension we have to have the humility to understand and learn to look (Uncle, 2023).

Pibid’s experience over more than a decade at Unilab is marked by the presence of foreign students in public schools, a differentiator that provides opportunities for various intercultural experiences at the university and in schools, combining theory and practice as a way to combat various forms of discrimination and prejudice. According to Costa *et al.* (2015), the program has acted on different fronts, such as: a) continuous training of the team; b) activities developed in the context of the school; c) socialization strategies of the activities carried out at schools; d) systematization of knowledge and presentation at events.

Pibid/Unilab has, therefore, the mark of a collaborative perspective, taking elementary schools as an important reference, marked by dialogicity, humanization, emancipation, respect and appreciation of diversity as formative horizons that illuminate the journey, as reported by Uncle.

⁴ GALEANO, Eduardo. **O livro dos abraços**. Porto Alegre: L&PM, 2000.

I highlight my academic career within Pibid, which went from 2013 to 2017, marked by the subproject Science Teaching, Diversity and Citizenship. My experience fits within Law 10.639/03, with the perspective of taking the teachings from the African context to strengthen the fight for racial equality in Brazil. This is a law that I think needs to be reclaimed to foster teacher education and the understanding of diversity, because otherwise we will train formatted teachers who do not understand the continuity and practice of teacher training, which is not something static, thus giving the individual the ability to comprehend and understand themselves in time and space. For an individual to have this understanding they have to see themselves beyond their time and space. And to see beyond their own time and space, such individual has to allow themselves, because if they do not allow themselves, they will want to learn what they think they know, which is no longer a process of open training, in which we would train qualified teachers, with the capacity to educate, to build new teachers capable of responding to the great social demand that we have, which are the formative frameworks, the teachers, the world educators (Uncle, 2023).

According to Costa *et al.* (2015, p. 15), the program has strengthened the relationship between Unilab and elementary schools, fostering the construction of rich dialogues for the institutions involved and the subjects associated to them. There is a permanent practice of studies and exchanges, which seek to stimulate “teacher training to tread a path leading to an education that recognizes in differences the possibility of building solidarity bonds and strengthening alterities through the recognition of our incompleteness and our unfinished state.”

In this learning process, it is important to highlight that the education of ethnic-racial relations in dialogue with Natural Sciences and Mathematics, as done in Pibid, contribute to the development of an anti-racism pedagogy, providing opportunities for the knowledge and appreciation of the universe of traditional cultures and respect for others, mobilizing teachers and students, individually and collectively, into exercising citizenship, guaranteeing human rights and fighting against various discriminatory practices. Subsequently, Uncle narrates:

We need to build a better world. For that, we have to have people who are able to open up to other people. The teacher is a light that will illuminate not other people, but the way, so that others can find their own lights. Being a teacher is a complex job, it requires the satisfaction of the individual themselves and they have to find themselves in a space where they feel comfortable with self-expression, to inspire others. We speak of inspiration, the teacher who does not inspire their student does

not form an individual for society. The teacher has to know how and where they can inspire their student to be able to boost this individual's talent. We are inspirers, we have to provide people with the taste and pleasure of doing things (Uncle, 2023).

Uncle's reflections dialogue with Freire's (2004) ideas, when he proposes the teacher-student concept, understanding that educator and learner are formed in communion and the existence of one is linked to that of the other, starting from the individual to the collective. Gadotti (2011, p. 1) reveals that "the concept of teacher-student is confronted with the dominant concept of teacher training, which establishes a relationship of command and subordination between educator and learner". There is, therefore, a dialectical, horizontal relationship, in which teachers and students rotate the roles of masters and apprentices. Next, Uncle talks about the challenges of teacher education.

It is a huge challenge to think about teacher training. I remember one of my unpleasant experiences in my formative process as a Pibid participant. One time, a teacher dropped me off in a classroom with high school students to teach without his supervision. It was the worst experience I had in the classroom as a teacher, because I was not prepared enough to teach that class and the students lost control, became very agitated and I could not control the situation. It was a frustrating scenario for me. At that moment I swore that I would not be a teacher, but in time I resumed my conviction. It is necessary to monitor and guide the trainee, within a strategic plan, delimited by phases, to introduce the trainee to the classroom. This experience strengthened me and made me rethink the challenges. Today, as a teacher, I am aware of my responsibility to the classroom and to my students in the context of teacher training. In Cape Verde we have enormous challenges with teacher training, because we still need to make teachers understand the complexity of teaching, so that they understand the context of training. Only then will we train teachers with diverse perspectives, capable of allowing themselves to understand the challenges of the new times (Uncle, 2023).

Teaching requires preparation, planning. It can't happen by chance. Pibid is understood as a privileged space-time to learn the teaching profession, and the school, as a quintessential place for the development of teacher training (UNILAB, 2022). Thus, both the study and (re)cognition of the socio-educational context and the close dialogue between Pibid members and school professionals are necessary for the appropriation of

the school routine, which includes planning, developing didactic-pedagogical strategies and systematically reflecting on actions.

Uncle also reflects on the challenges of teacher training in Cape Verde. We understand that thinking about quality education requires reflection on teacher training, both initial and continuous (Candau, 2011). Faced with the challenges posed to society and, consequently, to education and, in particular, to school, continuous training is indicated as a way to articulate theory and practice in order to ensure the quality of education, whether in Brazil or Cape Verde. In recent years, studies and reflections have guided a new concept of training, in which the privileged *locus* is the school. As defended by Pibid, the pedagogical practice of teachers in everyday school life is a space for the production of new knowledge, because the issues emanating from the group can be reflected on, dialogue with theory and give space to the suggestion of new practices. Therefore, a place of mobilization and construction of new knowledge is created.

Uncle reflects on the contributions of his experience at Pibid to the development of his pedagogical practices in Cape Verde.

My experience at Pibid helped me a lot here in Cape Verde, allowing me to understand my relationship with the classroom and enabling me to create stable relationship dynamics with my students. In my training course, I realized that many people did not see teacher training as a challenge, but as a possibility. Through the coexistence I had with my Brazilian colleagues, I realized that they were doing that training because they had no other education alternative. I distinctly remember several reports from colleagues saying that it was easier to get into university for a teacher's course, and that they were doing teacher training so that they could have a job and start their professional lives. This mindset is frustrating to the goals of teacher education. Even within Pibid I heard the same reports, some colleagues saying they were in Pibid just because they received a grant. These students were not aware of the importance of Pibid, they did not know the value that this program would add to their education and their lives. I, at the time, could see more than them, I understood the importance and significance of Pibid, my relationship with the program was pleasurable. I understood Pibid in a different way, I saw it as an alternative in teacher training, a boosting possibility, which makes us understand the meaning of teaching initiation (Uncle, 2023).

Much more than providing an opportunity for a grant, Pibid is part of the “National Policy for Teacher Training of the Ministry of Education and aims to foster teaching initiation, contributing to the improvement of teacher training in higher

education and of the quality of Brazilian elementary public” (Brasil, 2022). This condition reveals a political and social commitment to public education and the valorization of teaching.

The program, therefore, fosters the creation and consolidation of qualified training spaces. As Uncle points out, Pibid collaborates with teacher training by providing an opportunity to (re)construct the teaching praxis through autonomy and reflection, in a critical perspective committed to human emancipation, based on the principles of mutual support and help. In the case of Unilab, Pibid, experienced by students in the diaspora, also contributes to the improvement of education quality in partner countries.

In the African context, we understand teaching initiation as an opening to get to know the world, allowing one to become a new person. When we initiate a person into a field of knowledge, we are opening the person to new experiences, actions and knowledge. This is the great advantage of thinking about Pibid in a larger, inclusive, formative context that can be an alternative for our society. I am proof of this, my transversal way of seeing things and my interdisciplinary vision of relating things were born from Pibid, giving me the opportunity to reconcile theory and practice. I remember the teaching of a wise friend, who always told me that the practice made me understand the theory. We have to think of Pibid in this dimension. Even though the curricular structure of universities prioritizes theory over practice, Pibid enables us to build theory from practice. The Pibid that I experienced in Ceará – Brazil was a program that promoted concrete actions in schools, we actively participated in the demands of schools, we built actions that contributed to the strengthening and improvement of schools. This Pibid allowed us to understand theory from practice. In this case, we have to think strongly about a dimension that allows us to build theory from practice (Uncle, 2023).

Uncle understands Pibid as a possibility for multidimensional training, which considers teaching in a perspective of totality, enabling a plural reading of the education phenomena. Similarly, we understand teaching as a social practice that contemplates “[...] multiple articulations between teachers, students, institutions and the community, impregnated by the sociocultural contexts to which they belong, forming a game of multiple confluences that are multidetermined in a given social time and space [...]” (Franco; Pimenta, 2016, p. 547-548). Multidimensionality, therefore, brings to the center of the debate the necessary articulations between cultural diversity, course knowledge and the pedagogical political project of schools, providing an opportunity for a process of

critical reflection on the formative trajectory of teachers, as is done in Pibid/Unilab. Uncle concludes his narrative reporting on the contributions of Pibid to his professional teaching life.

Pibid has a great importance in my life, even if it faced demotivating situations, caused by the ego of the few people who dismiss teacher training. I understood the value and significance of Pibid in teacher training. Many teachers, because they have limitations and little understanding about Pibid, can't succeed in the classrooms, can't consolidate a good relationship with their students. Teaching is love, understanding, solidarity and humility. I highlight these values that I found in some professors, especially in Pibid. Our relationship was marked by these values. Thus, I understood my essence from the tasks done, giving me the freedom to express and go beyond the space I knew, with my boldness and with my noble mission of doing epistemic disobedience. Within this perspective, we worked on the concept of Ethnoscience, which is an important possibility for teacher training, a possibility that allows teachers to create alternatives for teaching, an alternative to deconstruct Eurocentric, racist, denialist concepts that do not contemplate the diversity of knowledge. We have to build new forms, new epistemologies capable of teaching our students the understanding that knowledge is born from our experience with nature. At the end of the day, the main goal is to be happy, so we must think of ways that contribute to the happiness of others (Uncle, 2023).

Pibid has as its main mark the collaborative work between participants, university professors and school teachers in organizing their own training, as well as the understanding “of contextualization and diversity among teachers that imply different ways of thinking and acting. Such demands contribute to achieving a better acceptance of changes and greater innovation in practices” (Imbernón, 2010, p. 31).

Uncle harnessed the various learnings built throughout his training, especially during his participation in the program, further strengthening the understanding of Ethnoscience “as one of the central points for the legitimation of a new knowledge epistemology, proposed from the practices of knowledge produced by those who were and are subordinated by Western thought” (Lopes, 2020).

Pibid/Unilab, throughout its editions, with the presence of Brazilian and international students in elementary public schools, has created and consolidated space-times of training, production and dissemination of knowledge with social relevance, striving for the ability to reflect, analyze and resignify pedagogical action.

“Between the stars and the Atlantic”: Final considerations

This article crossed skies and seas in order to reflect on the experience of Pibid at Unilab and its contributions to education in Cape Verde. To this end, we used a qualitative approach, based on the life history narrative of a Cape Verdean graduate of this program, Uncle.

The narrative interview gave the participant an opportunity to be both an actor and an author of his own history, carrying out and presenting a selection of his memories and a systematic critical-thinking exercise on his experiences with teaching initiation, seeking connections between life, training in Brazil and professional practice in Cape Verde.

Pibid/Unilab has a unique mark: the presence of Brazilian, Timorese and African students in the diaspora, developing the praxis in elementary public schools along with the theory studied at university. Thus, it creates a formative space-time, marked by dialogue and cultural diversity, seeking humanized and transformative education.

Uncle weaves, in his autobiographical narrative, his formation as a teacher, revealing not only his learnings in teaching initiation, but also the awareness around the self-formative investments made during his training and the recognition of these contributions to his teaching in his country of origin.

This self-reflection exercise brought up findings on Uncle’s experience, which can contribute to a broad understanding of education, especially of teaching initiation during undergraduate teaching courses. We highlight some of our findings:

- Pibid is much more than a program that provides teaching initiation grants, it is a concrete possibility for learning the profession and understanding that it cannot happen statically, distant from the school context. It must be dynamic and seek to accompany and understand transformations, aiming to strengthen educator’s critical, creative and innovative capacity;
- Teaching initiation offers real interaction between teachers and students. The subjects learn from difference and diversity, embracing, through an inclusive posture, the commitment to transform the social context. The interaction between different subjects enhances the critical view learning so that, from near

or far, they understand the challenges of teaching in elementary school, recognized as a beacon that illuminates the path, helping to define new demands, without forgetting everything that has already been achieved;

- The understanding of the African context present in Pibid/Unilab is a unique mark that provides the opportunity to strengthen the fight against various discriminatory practices, respecting diversity and the full exercise of citizenship in the Brazilian context in order to have teacher training committed to the social demands of Brazil and its partner countries;
- The training offered within the scope of Pibid consists of a teacher-student exercise, in which teachers and students interact collaboratively and in solidarity, each one illuminating the other's work, in a process of teaching and learning the profession;
- The complexity of teaching requires planning and cannot happen at random or be carried out by someone without minimum preparation for the task;
- The learnings developed during Pibid contribute greatly to the exercise of reflection before, during and after the action, a factor that can be brought to the context of Cape Verde, understanding that continuous training, which takes the school as a reference, can be a viable way of articulating theory and practice and of constructing new knowledge, constantly reworked among peers;
- Pibid fosters a different look at the teacher-student relationship, which contributes to the development of a harmonious classroom environment in Cape Verde, that is, a perspective of horizontal and democratic teaching, committed to the subjects' emancipation;
- Participation in the program broadens world reading and provides an interconnection between theory and practice through multidimensional training;
- Pibid/Unilab is recognized for the collaborative work between participants and teachers in the organization of their own training, integrating university and school in a solidarity exercise;
- The program, in the specific context of Unilab, has been promoting the construction of new knowledge, especially those related to Ethnoscience and to the possibility of carrying on studies in continuous training.

In summary, Pibid/Unilab has, over more than a decade, with the participation of Brazilian and international public-school students, contributed to achieving the mission of this university, that is, the processes of international integration and social insertion. Thus, it has helped to weave a collaborative and dialogical space of (re)cognition of diversities and for learning the teaching profession in the Brazilian context, which has been resignified by graduates in their countries of origin, as in the case of Uncle, in Cape Verde, which represents the history of many others.

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