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University teaching work practices as inclusive social practices

Práticas do trabalho docente universitário como práticas sociais inclusivas

Prácticas laborales docentes universitarias como prácticas sociales inclusivas

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ABSTRACT

Background: Universities must be at the forefront in reducing the effects of social inequalities. In this scenario, professors are decisive actors whose work is the point of connection between a structured social context and the possibility of change.

Purpose: Therefore, we aimed to understand how teaching work practices can constitute inclusive social practices.

Method: The locus of the research was Universidade da Integração Internacional da Lusofonia Afro-Brasileira (UNILAB). We conducted five semi-structured in-depth interviews with professors who develop extension and research activities related to human diversity in the social conception of the subject. The theoretical-methodological framework was centered on the dialectical-relational perspective of transdisciplinary Critical Discourse Analysis of Chouliaraki and Fairclough (1999).

Results: The practices developed by the professors are characterized as inclusive social practices because they intervene and alter the local context permeated by hegemonic ideologies that assert inequalities and cause social change through discourses and events.

Conclusions: Teaching is a crucial instrument for challenging prevailing paradigms and fostering diversity in public universities. While such practices can be institutionally aligned with university organizations, they can also become pervasive and transcend institutional boundaries.

Keywords: inclusive social practices; teaching work; university; diversity; institutional boundaries.

RESUMO

Contextualização: A universidade deve ser vanguarda à redução dos efeitos das desigualdades sociais. Nesse cenário, docentes constituem atores decisivos, cujo trabalho situa-se como ponto de conexão entre contexto social estruturado e possibilidade de mudanças.

Objetivo: Objetivamos, portanto, compreender como as práticas do trabalho docente podem se constituir como práticas sociais inclusivas.

Método: O locus da pesquisa foi a Universidade da Integração Internacional da Lusofonia Afro-Brasileira (UNILAB). Realizamos cinco entrevistas semiestruturadas em profundidade com docentes que desenvolvem ações de extensão e de pesquisa relacionadas à diversidade humana na concepção social do tema. Centramos o enquadre teórico-metodológico na perspectiva dialético-relacional da Análise de Discurso Crítica transdisciplinar de Chouliaraki e Fairclough (1999).

Resultados: As práticas desenvolvidas pelos docentes caracterizam-se como práticas sociais inclusivas pois intervêm e alteram o contexto local permeado de ideologias hegemônicas que asseveram desigualdades e provocam mudanças sociais por meio de discursos e eventos.

Conclusões: O trabalho docente é mais do que apenas uma importante ferramenta na quebra de paradigmas vigentes, mas também um instrumento de prática de diversidade em universidades públicas. Tais práticas podem estar alinhadas institucionalmente às organizações universitárias, mas podem ir além, tornando-se cotidianas e ultrapassando os limites institucionais.

Palavras-chave: práticas sociais inclusivas; trabalho docente; universidade; diversidade; limites institucionais.

RESUMEN

Contextualización: Las universidades deben estar a la vanguardia en la reducción de las desigualdades sociales. En este escenario, los profesores son actores decisivos cuyo trabajo se sitúa como punto de conexión entre un contexto social estructurado y la posibilidad de cambio.

Objetivo: Así, nos propusimos comprender cómo las prácticas laborales docentes pueden constituirse en prácticas sociales inclusivas.

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Método: El locus de la investigación fue la Universidade da Integração Internacional da Lusofonia Afro-Brasileira (UNILAB). Realizamos cinco entrevistas semiestructuradas en profundidad a profesores que desarrollan actividades de extensión e investigación con la diversidad humana en la concepción social del sujeto. El marco teórico-metodológico se centró en la perspectiva dialéctico-relacional del Análisis Crítico del Discurso transdisciplinar de Chouliaraki y Fairclough (1999).

Resultados: Las prácticas docentes se caracterizan como prácticas sociales inclusivas porque intervienen y alteran el contexto local permeado por ideologías hegemónicas y provocan cambios sociales a través de discursos y acontecimientos.

Conclusiones: La docencia es un instrumento crucial para cuestionar los paradigmas imperantes y fomentar la diversidad en las universidades públicas. Aunque estas prácticas pueden alinearse institucionalmente con las organizaciones universitarias, también pueden generalizarse y trascender los límites institucionales.

Palabras clave: prácticas sociales inclusivas; trabajo docente; universidad; diversidad;límites institucionales.

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1 INTRODUCTION

Universities are plural and multicultural spaces that must serve as forefronts for debates regarding preponderant questions of society. Despite any merit or scientific knowledge, universities must additionally function as mechanisms that disseminate inclusion policies and that combat the effects of inequality. Themes such as racial, gender and economic inequality issues, as well as cultural diversity and equity public policies in the public sector have been usual in debates, extension programs and academic researches (Campana; Abdal, 2023; Poggio, 2022; Rohden, 2023; Santos et al., 2023).

The university professors have a preponderant role in the formation of citizens that are conscient about the social reality in which they live. The teaching work practices, in the condition of social practices, are made of moments (elements) that articulate with each other, but cannot be reduced in themselves (Chouliaraki & Fairclough, 2010). Therefore, material activities, relationships between social actors, mental activities and discourses are the teaching work moments framed in a university structure that includes official diversity practices. Universities, on the other hand, are an integral part of an educational, socioeconomic and political system. This conjuncture, in which the universities are immersed, articulates social aspects of the national scenario and of the local scenarios in which the universities are situated.

Thus, the teaching work practices are situated between their context and the events resulting from them. (Chouliaraki & Fairclough, 2010). This leads us to assume that the teaching work, in the condition of a social practice, intervenes in the context and gives it back academic and social products that cause changes in its conjuncture/structure.

In this research, we restricted ourselves to the practices of extension and research, taking into account that, differently from the teaching practices, the professors have a relative autonomy to choose the topics they will focus on, as well as the groups they will interact with within the practices.

Regarding the teaching work practices as a subject of study, we outlined an overview of thematic categories aimed at these professionals, considering the approaches and directions presented in 148 articles published in national periodics in the area of administration, indexed in the repository Scientific Periodicals Electronic Library (SPELL), from 2012 to 2014. The SPELL was selected because of the high impact index of its periodics and the quality standards it meets, being a reference base to the area of administration (Rafael, 2023). We identified: formation and capacity building; behaviors and feelings; the student-professor relationship; career; professor identity; adaptation to the context of COVID-19 pandemics and teaching practice. In the last category, we found works mainly focused on teaching and only ten that discuss specifically issues related to the professor-researcher. Therefore, we

did not find any work that discussed the research and extension teaching work practices as inclusive social practices, nor from the optics of Critical Discourse Analysis.

Given the above, we raised the question: how can teaching work practices represent inclusive social practices? We also considered that the professors are not the only ones responsible for these practices, but they are indeed important agents in the students' formative process and their inclusion in the university environment. Thus, our goal was to comprehend how teaching work practices can constitute inclusive social practices.

Consequently, we aimed to comprehend the university teaching work practices as inclusive social practices. For this purpose, we described the moments of such practices and explained how the work of the university professor functions as an intersection between context and events as a social practice.

To achieve our goal, we carried out a qualitative research, based on semi-structured interviews with five professors of The University of International Integration of Afro-Brazilian Lusophony (UNILAB), located in the state of Ceará, Brazil, that were developing at least one research practice related to human diversity in the social sense of the theme. The data were analyzed considering the dialectical-relational approach of the transdisciplinary model of the Critical Discourse Analysis of Chouliaraki and Fairclough (1999). Therefore, this work constitutes a theoretical-methodological advance, considering that we did not find works in the area of administration that had focused on such relationships: teaching work, diversity and the adopted model.

We aimed to contribute to the scientific research regarding diversity in the scope of the teaching work, especially in reference to its motivations, used to determine research and extension practices. Additionally, we took a critical and reflexive look upon the necessity of discussing the diversity intertwined with the work of these professionals at federal universities, under the scope of administration. We intended to offer a study that goes beyond the functionalist discourse about the teaching work practices and to bring to light diversity as a latent element, because it not only reflects the reality of the academic organizational environment, but also, above all, of the society in general.

For the universities, especially the public ones, to work as spaces of debates regarding the themes related to diversity in society and in the world of work, the universities themselves need to open up to new perspectives about these subjects and to its internal environment as a space that produces an inclusive culture. In that regard, we aimed to contribute both to the improvement of the diversity practices at the mentioned institution and to the ones who practice them, mainly the professors. Through the experiences of the interviewees, our objective is to give visibility to the efforts of professors that encourage the dialogue about inequalities, stigmas and social injustices through their work practices, as well as help other educators into dealing with the human differences in their teaching,

research and extension practices. Finally, we wanted to make explicit how work practices can also be social practices in the educational environment.

Concerning the structure, this article is divided into five sections, being this introduction the first of them. Then, in the literature review, we discuss the concepts of difference, diversity and inequality in the context of the public university, as well as the social practices in the context of the teaching work. The third section presents the methodological framework of the research, followed by the presentation and discussion of the results (fourth section). Finally, the fifth section presents the conclusion of this work.

2 LITERATURE REVIEW

In this section we present the nuances between the concepts of difference, diversity and inequality, taking into account the context of the public university, as well as the social practices and their constituent elements in order to better understand the teaching practices.

2.1 Difference, diversity and inequality in the context of the public university

It is impossible to speak about diversity without discussing its inherent aspects, such as equality, difference and inequality, because these are interdependent concepts. According to Santos (1999), equality is an emancipatory principle of social life. For Barros (2005), on the other hand, the notion of equality is as old as it is complex. To this author, equality is the contrary to difference and contradict to inequality. Equality and difference are in the order of essences, in other words, two essences that oppose each other, that are contrary to each other. Some are natural and others are culturally created. The so-called naturals are inherent to the human universe and cannot be avoided through human action (Barros, 2005). Equality is not the absence of difference (Barros, 2005), but the recognition of it combined with the decision to ignore it, as opposed to the decision of taking it into consideration (Scott, 2005). It is from this logic that we can reflect upon the relation between difference and inequality.

While the opposition between equality and difference is in the field of essences, the contrast between equality and inequality is in the field of circumstances. While the equal and the different belong to the field of contrariety, equality and inequality belong to the field of contradictions. Any notion of inequality will always be circumstantial, since the individuals can be equal or unequal in terms of rights, privileges or restrictions, independently of being equal or different in what concerns essential aspects such as sex, ethnicity and occupation, amongst other elements (Barros, 2005). Following the explanation of Santos (1999), in reality, inequality, just like exclusion, is a system of social hierarchies based on subordinate integration.

It is important to highlight the fact that inequalities can be reversed. Barros (2005) argues that, in theory, there are no fixed inequalities. By their turn, differences, with

exceptions, are striking. Inequality admits reversibility and gradation (Barros, 2005).

Aware of this reality, universities need to keep up with the dilemmas presented in the contemporary world and engage in the problems of their countries and in the international context, paying attention to the primary needs and to the longings of modern society. However, “for this to happen, universities need to have the sensibility and the courage to change internally first [...], it is necessary to democratize universities” (Kunsch, 1992, p. 27). Universities play an important role in the formation of citizens, in such a way that surpasses the professional qualification. They are a preponderant element in the development of people through education (Constitution of the Federal Republic of Brazil, 1988).

We understand that a university, in the condition of a formal institution, is planned, has explicit goals, has an internal structure with well-defined functions, goes through constant decision-making processes, has its own organizational culture and faces challenges. It lives and survives under threats and environmental concessions.

Kunsch (1992), on the other hand, warns us that, despite being formal institutions, universities are very different from other institutions. The author justifies this affirmation considering, mainly, their purposes, their kind of activity, their forms of control and the functions they perform in society.

Universities play a fundamental role in modern society. They have a compromise with the past (memory preservation), with the present (production of knowledge and the qualification of new professionals) and with the future (serving as a forefront). For these reasons, they cannot exist isolated from the world. They need to meet social demands while transforming these scenarios. Universities are, perhaps, the institutions that interact most with the greatest number of social segments, in comparison to any other institution. (Kunsch, 1992).

In recent years, a debate has arisen regarding affirmative actions aimed at university education that are anchored by the inclusion of disadvantaged segments of society. In 2012, the law number 12,711/2012 instituted the adoption of quotas for public school students, combined with quotas for students with low income of self-declared black, brown or indigenous. Thereafter, many discussions have arisen in the environment of federal institutions.

As it occurred in the world of work, the contemporary affirmative policies of inclusion in university education, especially the ones that consider the social/racial profile, as the quotas system, generated antagonistic positions (Vieira, 2015).

Independently of the affirmative policies and considering their autonomy, universities can and must get ahead in the implementation of diversity practices and of a culture of respect and acceptance for everyone, especially the ones seen by the society as social minorities.

The cultural plurality, characteristic of the academic environment, provides freedom of expression in the different

ways in which human beings express themselves. Such plurality is what concedes to the university its condition of a multicultural space. According to Certeau (2014), this space goes beyond the local structure and encompasses its social environment, since the “space is the practiced place” (Certeau, 2014, p. 184). The place only assumes the condition of space if practiced socially, and, therefore, needs the subjects and their many relations. The space is dynamic. Under the guise of Certeau’s (2014) thoughts, the university, architecturally and structurally planned as an organization, is transformed in space by the social actors of the academic community which carry their many differences and identities.

So, the constructive critical view of diversity in organizations (Trittin & Schoeneborn, 2017; Zanoni et al., 2010) opens the way to the understanding that universities, by developing practices to reduce the effects of the inequalities aimed at its students, are also developing diversity practices in which their professors can act as diversity practitioners (Tatli, 2011). Such practices democratize the academic space, which is also a space of social struggle, because it is not uncommon to find “[...] in the academic routine, the fight flags of many social segments that represent the so-called social and ethnic minorities, but that in that space seek, form and support entities that promote and protect human rights” (Benevides & Pinheiro, 2018, p. 172).

Therefore, it is urgent for the universities to reinvent themselves as inclusive spaces, breaking culturally ingrained paradigms, recontextualizing their spaces and reflecting upon their fundamentals and practices, so they can meet the demands of a society increasingly conscious and anxious about its rights (Faria & Camargo, 2018), through reflection and the participation of all of their actors, which obviously includes the professors.

It is the role of the universities to instill equality, liberty and citizenship as emancipatory principles of modern social life. In these arenas, the professors are special agents in the construction of this emancipatory relationship. The efficacy of university education depends on multiple factors. A large number of them are directly connected to the professors.

2.2 Teaching work practices and social practices: a continuum between abstraction and concreteness

The teaching work practices are characterized by the social aspect that surrounds them. The social practices are understood by Chouliaraki & Fairclough (1999) as the point of connection between structures and events, they “are recurrent manners, temporal and spatially situated according to which we act and interact in the world [...], points of connection between abstract structures, with their mechanisms and concrete events” (Chouliaraki & Fairclough, 1999, p. 21). Thus, these practices represent the transformation of the abstract present in structures in concrete events (Vieira & Resende, 2016).

Structures are “historical conditions of the social life that can be modified” (Chouliaraki & Fairclough, 1999). The

social structures are abstract entities that define a set of possibilities for holding events. The events, however, are not effects of the structure. In fact, structure, practices and events are in a *continuum* of abstraction/concreteness and, thus, the relationship between what is structurally possible and what really happens is not simple (Resende & Ramalho, 2019).

In addition, this *continuum* is composed of moments (elements) that speak with each other. In order to better comprehend these complex relations that constitute a social practice, we revisited some propositions of representation (Magalhães et al., 2017; Resende & Ramalho, 2019; Vieira & Resende, 2016) and presented the Social Practice Moments Model (Figure 1).

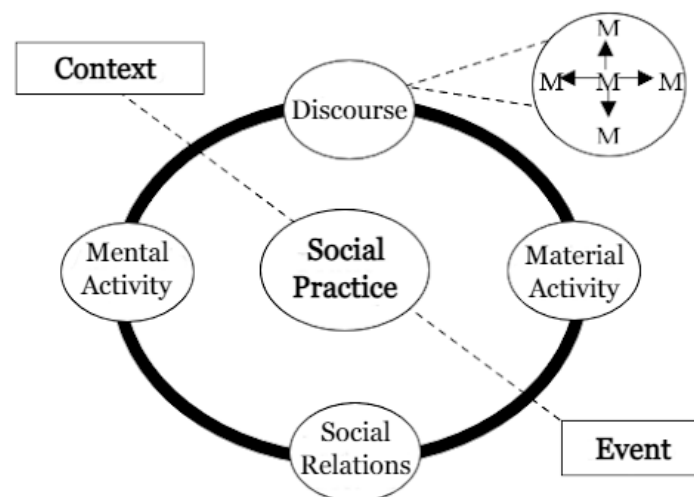


Figure 1. Social Practice Moments.

Source: Adapted from Magalhães et al. (2017), Resende & Ramalho (2019) and Vieira & Resende (2016).

Each one of the moments of a social practice is composed of micro moments/elements that articulate with each other internally and transform into this macro process of articulation.

Resende & Ramalho (2019, p. 40) explain that “the discursive moment of a particular practice is the result of the articulation of symbolic/discursive resources (gender, discourses, styles), articulated with relative permanence as moments of the discursive moment”. By its turn, the “material practice” moment articulates spaces, resources and various materials with its internal moments, while the “social relations” moment articulates the relationships between the various actors involved in this practice. Finally, the “mental activity” moment, according to Magalhães, Martins & Resende (2017), articulates values, beliefs and desires, among others. When there are changes or reconfigurations of these articulating elements, there is also a discursive change.

We emphasize that, while the social practice is composed of situations that articulate internal moments, the practice itself articulates externally with other practices, composing a network of relatively permanent practices and becoming a moment in this network (Resende & Ramalho, 2019).

Understanding the work of the public university professor through Chouliaraki & Fairclough's (1999) concept of social practices means that their work always involves different moments/elements. Such work practices do not exist separately. They occur in the context of a university structure that, by its turn, is part of a political education system, receives state interventions and influences from society. Thus, the teaching work practices are connections between society, the university structure and the events that result from such practices. In this reality, we can understand events as all of the academic products or results derived from the teaching, research and extension practices.

Furthermore, the teaching work practices in the areas of teaching, research and extension form a network of interconnected practices that articulate with other internal or external, social and business academic practices, and create events that provoke social change.

The professor is not a simple transmitter of information or manufacturer of specialists, as highlighted by Piletti (2008). Their function is much larger and characterized by the social aspect. Piletti (2008) says that the best professors are those who do not live their lives confined or isolated from the social environment. Now, regarding the social relations in the teaching activity, Barros, Brito & Clemente (2018) highlight that dedicating vital investments to their activities is what gives professors the power to envision, transform contexts and produce new realities.

To this end, Gil (2009) states that the professor needs to be open to what happens in society, outside the university, its transformations, advances and changes, new forms of participation, achievements, emerging values and discoveries. Only then the professors will be able to reassess their actions, making innovation a constant process of reconstruction and transformation of the teaching practices and the social reality.

Therefore, the university teaching is immersed in a tangle of relations and its transformations (Vergara & Davel, 2005), and it cannot be separated from the social reality, composed of differences and inequalities that articulate in the plural space of the public university.

3 METHODOLOGY

This is a qualitative and descriptive research. The research locus was the University of International Integration of Afro-Brazilian Lusophony (hereinafter UNILAB), a federal institution created by Law No. 12,289/2010, whose elective activities began on May 25, 2011. In other words, it is a relatively new institution. UNILAB articulates in parallel the movements of internationalization and interiorization, having been created according to the principles of supportive cooperation between peoples, interculturality, citizenship and democracy in societies (Marques & Nogueira, 2019),

pointing to inclusion policies, which justifies its choice as a field of research.

Until 2022, UNILAB had 4,222 students (3,053 Brazilians and 1,169 foreigners), distributed across 28 undergraduate courses (25 face-to-face and three distance learning) from six academic units on four campuses. Among the students, 85.3% are self-declared black or brown from eight countries (Brazil, Italy, Guinea Bissau, Angola, São Tomé and Príncipe, Mozambique and East Timor) and aged between 20 and 39 years old. The majority of the students are female (51.6%) and are enrolled in bachelor's degrees. Furthermore, the institution maintained, until the same period, 173 research projects developed in 114 active research groups, which together include 178 undergraduate students as scholarship holders or volunteers (UNILAB, n.d.).

Regarding the teaching staff, UNILAB declared that it has 372 permanent professors, 342 of whom are Brazilian and 30 from other countries in Latin America, Europe, Asia and Africa. The majority are women (54.1%), with a predominant age range of 36 to 50 years old (UNILAB, n.d.).

The participants of this research were permanent professors of UNILAB, who, in addition to being willing to participate voluntarily, were developing at least one research or extension practice related to human diversity in the social sense of the topic. At the end, we carried out in-depth semi-structured interviews with five professors that, together, coordinate eight projects/actions that fit the defined framework. The five interviews totaled 285 minutes of audio stored in .mp3 and converted into texts through personal typing. We utilized, additionally, field notes generated with the help of the VoiceNotes application, whose contents were transported to a Microsoft Word file and composed a database of field notes to help understand the context of the interviews.

We tried different methods to identify the professors that fitted the research. Initially, we requested the institution an authorization to consult the register of active research and extension projects directly in the Proreectorates of Research and Postgraduate and of Extension.

As this method proved to be slow, we looked for other ways, namely: (i) we identified, in the websites of the proreectorates, extension and research projects, respectively, related to the topic of human diversity and their coordinators (even though the lists were not complete or updated); (ii) we identified, through the news posted on the institution website, the names of the extension or research projects that dealt with the topic of diversity and their respective coordinators, (iii) we visited the websites of the academic units, of the institutes and undergraduate courses and identified the names of the professors that had diversity as a topic of study; (iv) we consulted the Lattes curriculum of professors; (v) we requested indications from professors who were not participating in the research, but knew others that fit the profile; (vi) we utilized the snowball sampling technique, and in some cases, some interviewees indicated others.

At the end, four interviews were carried out outside of UNILAB and only one happened in a room inside the institution. With the purpose of protecting the identity of the interlocutors, their names were substituted throughout the text by the term “Professor_UNILAB_”, followed by an ordinal number. All of the participants signed a Free and Informed Consent Form.

Additionally to the interviews, we carried out non-participant observation in three campuses, participant observation in two events about diversity, on the intercampus buses and in the town of Redenção on different days and hours for a period of six months that correspond to the interstice of January to June of 2019. These observations also resulted in field notes containing registers that helped us in the definition of the context.

The data generated by the interviews with the professors were analyzed through the dialectical-relational perspective of the transdisciplinary model of the Critical Discourse Analysis (hereinafter CDA) of Chouliaraki &

Fairclough (1999), which sees discourse as one of the moments of social practice.

The dialectical-relational perspective of the CDA is interested in the role of discourse in social change and in the ways of organizing society around emancipatory goals. In this sense, the CDA is critical for leading subjects to reflexivity and thus reconstructing social roles (Melo, 2018). In the CDA, the linguistic analysis and the social critic analysis must be necessarily interconnected. It is in this sense that the Textually Oriented Discourse Analysis occurs (Magalhães et al., 2017). In this way, we followed the Chouliaraki & Fairclough’s (1999) CDA research planning, which involves: 1) Search for a social problem that contains semiotic aspects. 2) Identify obstacles so the problem can be overcome (analysis of the situation, analysis of the practice in particular, discourse analysis). 3) Social analysis (interpretation of the social roots of the problem). 4) Explanation (identify possible ways to overcome the obstacles, reflect critically about the analysis). On Figure 2 we present the framework of the research.

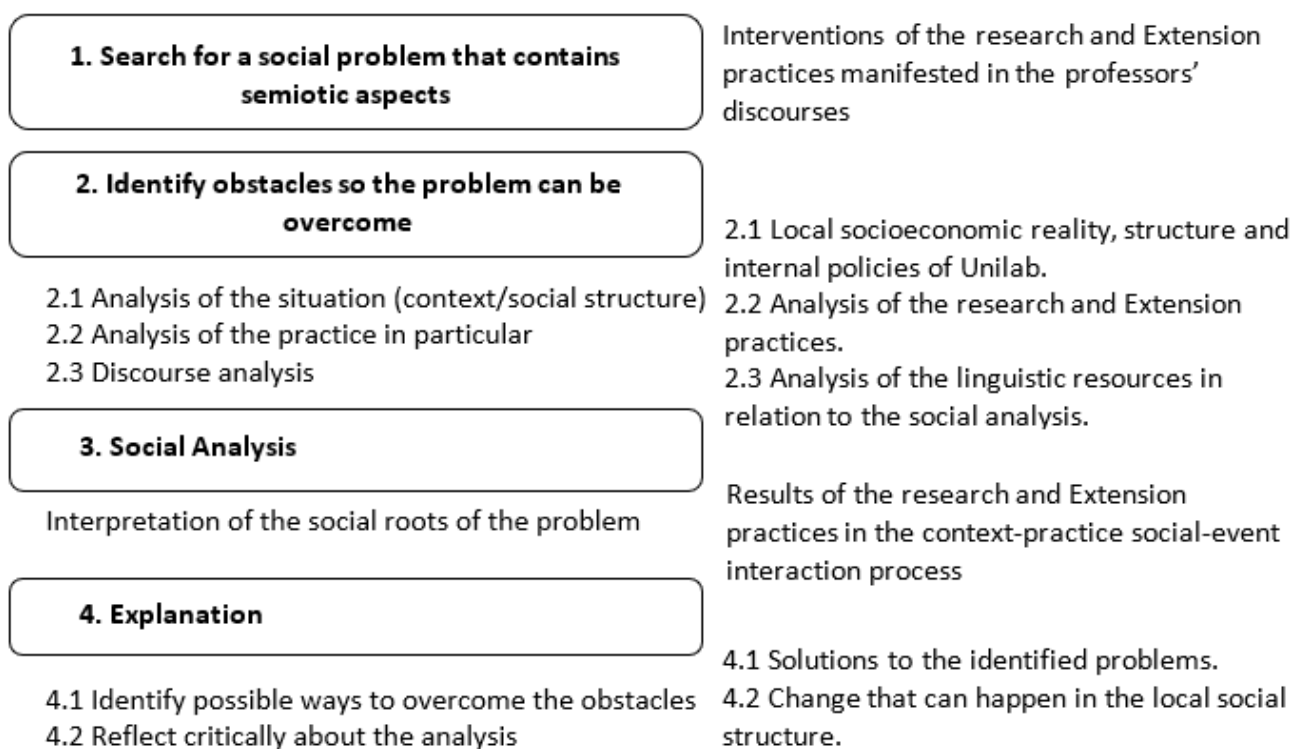


Figure 2. Framework of the research.
Source: Prepared by the authors based on Chouliaraki & Fairclough (1999).

Our social problem with semiotic aspects explores the interventions of the research and extension practices manifested in the professors’ discourses. In the second point, we divided the analysis of the context in: (a) situation (local socioeconomic reality); (b) structure (cooperation and integration inside UNILAB; and the structure of UNILAB for diversity and diversity practices - internal policies).

In the analysis of the practice in particular, we emphasized the moments of the research and extension practices developed by the professors. Finally, the analysis of the discourse was oriented towards structure and interaction (analysis of linguistic resources and their relation with social practice).

In the third step, we verified how the events in the interaction process of context/social practice/event occur. We paid attention to pronouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs, nouns and interdiscursivity used in the texts that describe the practices and their intersectional positions between context and events. The last point, the Explanation, corresponds to the change in polarity of the analysis. In other words, we moved from problems to solutions. This implies changes that can occur in the social structure. This stage reveals the position of CDA as an instrument of reflexive action for social emancipation, including academic practices.

4 ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

As the interviewees are Portuguese speakers, the authors have attempted to translate their statements into English in a manner that preserves as much of the original meaning of the narrative as possible, given that their discourse constitutes the subject of analysis. Certain specific terms are accompanied by footnotes, which are intended to enhance comprehension of the text.

4.1 Characterization of the participants

Here we present the participants' profiles, omitting their names and exposing their main characteristics. We interviewed three male professors and two female professors; four of them are in the area of humanities and one in the applied social sciences. The working time at the university in question ranged from two to six years. Two of them are from Ceará and the other ones are from other Brazilian states, having migrated to Ceará to teach at UNILAB. All of them had previous teaching experience in university education before getting the position.

Beyond these characteristics, three professors defined themselves as black and involved with the black cause in Brazil, this being the focus of their study since graduation. Moreover, a female professor defined herself as feminist.

All of them develop at least one research or extension project focused on human diversity from a social perspective. Two of them carry out, concomitantly, research and extension. The diversity categories focused on in the projects are race/ethnicity, gender, cultural, religious and social diversity.

4.2 Context: situation and structure of UNILAB

The creation of UNILAB was part of a strategy of Brazilian politics to insert university education in scenarios that were not priorities and to create training and research production centers focused on specific fields, geographically and culturally. UNILAB articulates movements of internationalization, designed to ensure harmony with the demands of Brazil and other nations that make up the Community of Portuguese Language Countries — CPLP (Angola, Cape Verde, Guinea-Bissau, Mozambique, Portugal, São Tomé and Príncipe and East Timor) (UNILAB, 2013), and of interiorization (with campuses located outside the capital and with emphasis on local development).

In Ceará, UNILAB has three campuses in Maciço de Baturité, a region of the central *sertão*¹ with 13 cities and with outstanding historical and cultural importance to the State of Ceará. Nevertheless, it is a region that suffers inequalities and poverty (Brazilian Statistics Institute [IBGE],

2017). The establishment of UNILAB in the region caused socioeconomic impacts, such as, for example, the demand for housing that led to real estate exploitation and the rising of rent values.

Among the cities of Maciço de Baturité, there is Redenção. This city is known for being the first city in Brazil to abolish slavery and the place in which the head office of the University is located. Even though there are some references to slavery in the city, the allusion to their African ancestors does not overcome some specific spaces. We did not perceive any mention of Afro-Brazilian culture in the city. There is not, in the routine of the city, any observable meaningful mention of African culture or history (field notes, 2019).

Although geographic equity is the main goal of UNILAB, there is still a long way to go in this direction regarding the teaching and studying staff, since the majority of both categories are Brazilians, as we highlighted in the methodological section. Moreover, we observed an absence of effective integration between Brazilian and foreign students, considering that in the common spaces of the institution there are groups of Brazilian students and groups of foreign students who do not interact (field notes, 2019).

UNILAB has sectors and internal policies that promote equality, mainly the ethnic-racial, but also aimed at gender, sexuality and human rights. It also develops policies in the areas: qualification, human relations, management, structures and technology.

UNILAB seems to be a provocative instrument that encourages the local community to reclaim part of its history by putting it in contact with subjects that are able to retake memories of the region's past. It provokes a return to itself and gives significance to the title of the first region in the country to abolish slavery.

4.3 Teaching practice moments in the research and extension dimensions

The five interviewed professors coordinate eight extension projects/actions related to diversity. They represent a section of the 28 research/extension practices aimed at this theme identified inside UNILAB.

In the descriptions made by the professors regarding their practices, we identified their moments (Table 1), considering the social practice moments of Chouliaraki & Fairclough (1999), according to figure 1. Each moment of the practice articulated internal moments, as foreseen by Resende & Ramalho (2019). We included the category 'events', not as moments, but as results of the practices. There are events already completed and those still in progress.

¹ *Sertão* is an arid and semi-arid interior region of northeastern Brazil, distinguished by sparse vegetation, a dry climate, and high temperatures.

Table 1
Moments of the work practices of UNILAB professors in the research and extension dimensions

Moments	Internal moments
Material Activity	<p><u>Unilab internal spaces</u>: classrooms and meeting rooms</p> <p><u>Spaces outside of the university</u>: museums, Culture Department, interviewees' residences, terreiro² de Umbanda in Redenção, Porto das Artes Iracema, Centro Urbano de Cultura e Arte (Urban Center for Culture and Art) - CUCA do Mondubim, Brunilo Jacó School in Redenção, Maria do Carmo Bezerra School in Acarape, NGO Fábrica de Imagens (Image Factory), Federal University of Ceará</p> <p><u>Consumables</u>: paper, printer ink, office supplies</p> <p><u>Research materials</u>: documents</p> <p><u>Equipment</u>: printers, bus, car, laptop</p> <p><u>Financial Resources</u>: scholarships, funding from the Ford Foundation, from the professors themselves</p>
Actors and Social Relations	<p><u>Internal actors of the practices</u>: Professors and scholarship and volunteer students from the UNILAB undergraduate and postgraduate courses, professors from other universities, such as UFC (Federal University of Ceará) and UECE (State University of Ceará); black female professors, a female professor from Bahia, Brazilian students, foreign students</p> <p><u>External actors of the practices</u>: descendants of slaves, public authority actors, the community of Maciço de Baturité, members of quilombo³ communities, female teachers from Brunilo Jacó School</p> <p><u>Mixed actors</u>: these are subjects from the university and act as members of the practice, but are not investigated during the practice (scholarship students and members of the terreiro de umbanda)</p> <p><u>Internal relations</u>: relationships between the researchers in the concretization of the practice (tranquility, relaxation, assertiveness, articulation and involvement, autonomy, sharing)</p> <p><u>External relationships</u>: relationships between internal and external actors of the practices (critical tension, slow deconstruction, comprehension, understanding, truthfulness, friendship, reception)</p> <p><u>Mixed relationships</u>: conflict, loss of naturalness, respect</p>
Mental Activity	<p><u>Internal</u>: reflection, pleasure, internalization, inclusion, perception, resistance, realization, confusion, delivery, partnership, self-affirmation, identification</p> <p><u>External</u>: universalism, denial, resistance to the origins, memories</p>
Discourses	<p><u>Production</u>: idealized by the professors, in the interior of the practices</p> <p><u>Distribution</u>: personal disclosure of the professors, notices, the social networks Instagram and Facebook, personal invitations, scientific productions, word-of-mouth, in a research group in UNILAB</p> <p><u>Consumption</u>: targeted students, general public, self-declared black women</p>
Events	<p><u>Accomplished</u>: research projects, extension projects, master's projects, participation in congresses, publications of abstracts and full articles in annals of events, presentation of works in university weeks, in Anthropology Week, articles published in periodicals, publication of three books with articles on cultural expressions present and that still resist in each municipality of the Maciço de Baturité, courses, events</p> <p><u>In progress</u>: researches, interviews data and documents in analysis, an article in progress, report, reading circle and text debates</p>

Source: Prepared by the authors.

It is important to highlight that the construction of these moments is the result of the interviewees' narratives, because according to Chouliaraki & Fairclough (1999) these moments articulate with each other and manifest in the discourse. In this sense, discourses revealed moments of practice and internal moments exclusively from the perspective of the coordinating professors and the implicit discourse in their texts. Discourses from other actors involved in the practices were not contemplated, like for example, students and society in general. It is possible that these people have other perceptions regarding the moments of the practices, especially the most subjective ones, such as mental activity and social relations.

As an example, here is a speech from Professor_UNILAB_01 regarding a situation experienced in a data collection interview for a research practice. He reports a situation that involved different moments of practice (discourse, actors, social relations and mental activities):

We went to do an interview with a 90-year-old lady, and

then at some point *we asked* her: "Are you a descendant of slaves?". And she said: "Not me, sir. I am not a descendent of slaves; whoever it is, it's that one over there", and she pointed to the *African student*. It wasn't malice. It wasn't malice. It was construction. The elaboration, right? She saw the African and associated him with slavery and then she laughed, but at the same time we could see the shame of talking about her past associated with slavery. [...] *We laughed*. A little old lady, right? *We laughed, right? We let it pass*. But later, this is being debated in the project (Professor_UNILAB_01).

In pronouncing "we laughed, right? We let it pass", the professor indicates an air of collective relaxation. However, the laugh is presented as an instrument of exception and empathy from the perspective of the professor. The laugh could have had another meaning for the student. Proof of this is the fact that the debate was extended posteriorly to the research group, which makes us believe that a moment of reflection was created from this situation. It is from this perspective that moments are defined and positioned inside

² *Terreiro* refers to the place where the rituals and ceremonies of Afro-Brazilian religions, such as Candomblé and Umbanda, are performed.

³ *Quilombo* refers to settlements formed by people fleeing slavery during the colonial period in Brazil. Nowadays, the term refers to communities left over from that time, which are recognized and protected by the Brazilian Constitution as having specific territorial and cultural rights.

of the context, in other words, unilaterally, based on the professors' statements.

4.4 Research and extension practices aimed at the university as inclusive social practices

Here we present the analyzed social practices as inclusive social practices, taking into account their intersections between the context and the events (Chouliaraki & Fairclough, 1999). That is to say, they are practices that intervene in the local socioeconomic and educational context and provoke alterations in it.

With this proximity to the socioeconomic context, the Professor_UNILAB_01, who coordinates a research project whose title is "From the abolishment to the new diaspora: history and experiences of the Brazilian and African black populations in Acarape and Redenção", reveals some resistances to the African students present in the city of Redenção. He uses nouns and expressions such as "commodification of the spaces", "stigma" and "inflationary rise" to depict a scenario in which the local people, especially the merchants, benefit economically from the arrival of African students, but do not free themselves from prejudices rooted in the local culture, as the discrimination against the black population, associating them to marginality.

There are common projects with the municipality, education projects with some courses, institutes, there are these relations, economic relations, but at a daily level, there is also a *commodification of the spaces* in there, right? So, for example, from the moment the Africans start to come, more students start to come, then some people start, for example, to inflate the prices of dormitories, the city, as well as some people, starts to see that as a form of profit. Ok! There is no problem at all. The problem happens when you have an *inflationary rise* of these living places and many times the stigmas remain, right? So, this is missing. Understanding that, new things were created with UNILAB in the region, there are benefits, but on the other hand, *we must also create other ways of seeing* these people, of relating to these people, of *understanding* these worldviews and this *would require more harmony* between institution, public authorities and perhaps the institution would be more present in this sense, but the public authorities, we also *have to understand* the municipalities, many of them depend on resources from outside and it seems to me that there is a lot of that in Redenção, there is no investment power. *Now there is necessary* a political will for this to be more balanced, their presence, their experience in the municipality, and then UNILAB *would be necessary*, it *would need* the constituted public authorities in a more articulated manner. It seems to me that this is missing. This increases the challenge (Professor_UNILAB_01).

Professor_UNILAB_01 demonstrates his relation of knowledge about the context of the region of Maciço de Baturité regarding blackness and the events that marked slavery in this region. In the text, the professor presents the local scenario through his perspective and proposes solutions to what he sees as problems.

It would be possible to investigate if the overpricing of properties stimulated inflation in other areas of consumption

of goods and services in the city and the impact that this had on the cost of living in the local community. It is also possible to reflect if, and how much, this reality reinforces the derogatory vision against the new inhabitants.

When Professor_UNILAB_01 says "we must also create other ways of seeing these people", he indicates more than a real necessity for new relational mechanisms and shows us that there is a unilateral belittling vision, granted to the foreigners. The use of the indefinite pronoun "other" indicates different forms in addition to those that already prevail.

Based on this reality, Professor_UNILAB_01 starts to propose solutions to reverse these stigmas by recommending UNILAB, while structure, and other public agents as articulators of these new possibilities. At the same time that he uses the structures "we must also create" and "there is necessary" to indicate a necessity, he uses the structure "it would need" with the modal verb "would", indicating an action that is a consequence of the current reality, but conditioned to the interests of the public authorities. It also indicates politeness on his part in proposing and articulation that is uncertain. It is a possibility, a proposal that can happen or not. By using a structure with this modal verb, he reduces his commitment to this proposal.

Professor_UNILAB_01 also utilized interdiscursivity to portray the association that is made between descendents of freedmen and urban precariousness, ghettos and criminality. In the search for these subjects from the living memory of the community, he describes this association as he reproduces the speeches of local people:

I went asking and interviewing employees, these people of the public power or related to public institutions, to know if they knew a descendent. In the interviews, there was always that thing [...] "Ah, I know someone that lived on the hill, in the quilombo", but never there, around the center, where the effective market relations, the strongest relations happen, it was more about the outskirts, [...] There came something like this: "Ah, they live but it is a place dominated by factions", "Ah, there are descendents there, but there is also criminality" [...] And then, look how funny, when I started to interact with these people, I was afraid, because before I went there, other people said this: "look, if you go there, go with the car window down because of the factions" [...] After a while I went after these people, I had no problem, no faction shot me, nor my scholarship students, they were super enriching interviews with descendents, great-grandchildren of slaves, they told me a lot of things. So it was a very interesting experience, a very rich one (Professor_UNILAB_01).

He articulates different discourses of people from the region as a discursive strategy to confirm the pejorative vision observed. It is a mechanism to support his personal representation of the context and proposals for change based on his own vision, as predicted by Resende & Ramalho (2019).

The research practice developed by Professor_UNILAB_01 revisited local history, identified descendents of slaves in Redenção and demystified these

people. So, it transformed the abstraction of the context around these people in research data and materialized them in articles and projects, or practice events. In this sense, this research practice, as a social practice constituted by moments, served as an intersection point between the Redenção's local context and the research events, as predicted by Chouliaraki & Fairclough (1999). Such intercession points out a reality that needs to be modified and that universities can and must act in order to fulfill their role, both in the local development and in the overcoming of prejudices and inequalities.

In the same sense, Professor_UNILAB_02 explains that the extension action named "Black Women Resist: a theoretical-political training process for black women" was born from her personal reading of an event of wide national repercussions, the assassination of the politician Marielle Franco. From this fact and from the commotion generated from it, the professor explains that she decided to develop an action that could collaborate to alter the local reality, as she reports: "*All of that moved me in some way. Then I started thinking: I need to do something with this [...]. I thought about something aimed at black women, precisely thinking about the idea of female protagonism [...]*".

Professor_UNILAB_02 puts herself as a protagonist in the interpretation of the social context when it comes to black people and the motivation that led to the idealization of the practice. She constructs the narrative about the project's creation trajectory utilizing the subject pronoun "I" and verbs conjugated in the present simple tense, indicating her personal experiences, her reflections and decisions.

The professor once more is placed through her mental representation of the current scenario of university education in Brazil through figures of speech such as: ontological metaphor (Resende & Ramalho, 2019) and personification in the construction of her positions of struggle and resistance (Fairclough, 2016).

[...] now I would tell you that the great challenge is for us to get through this now, at the very least, this *tsunami of setbacks, keep us alive* to continue the trajectory. And then I say that *the institution needs to keep itself upright*. We need to do everything possible to *keep the institution standing*. That is why I believe in mobilization. *I don't like the idea of crossing arms*. I think that *the university must not cross its arms*. We have to intensify our proximity with the academic and non-academic communities. We need to compete for the narratives. If they speak against us, we have to be the ones to speak well and demonstrate it. *It is not by crossing arms that we'll achieve something different*. This is my position (Professor_UNILAB_02).

Professor_UNILAB_02 sees the current political moment of Brazilian education entering into decline at a high level when she compares it to a tsunami — a gigantic natural phenomenon that has a large volume of energy and strong destructive power. It is important to remember that tsunamis result from a combination of natural phenomena. By analogy, we can understand the tsunami referenced by the professor as the result of diverse articulations that have as consequence the calamity in education.

At various points, she uses the verbs "keep" and "stay" in personifications that remind elementary conditions of existence, such as "keep us alive" and "stay upright", to portray her perception of positions that should be taken by the academic community. The verb "keep" brings the ideas of conservation and continuity. Therefore, it is not just about starting a movement to fight for higher education. In the professor's view, it is necessary to keep it that way.

She also uses the figure of speech personification in the expression "crossing arms", as a way of assigning a behavior of giving up or a possible voluntary stop. Even though this expression possesses various meanings, in the text it is used to convey submission or passivity. Therefore, she believes that the University or the academic community should not have this kind of posture. As a result, she intervenes in the context in order to tense it through the extension practice.

[...] This project was born from a partnership between black female intellectuals, black female professors, especially the ones from UNILAB and UECE (State University of Ceará) [...] focused on *stimulating the female and black protagonism* of women from Ceará. [...] the idea is that *you do whatever you want with this, you can go to activism, you can enter a post-graduation*. The idea is to provide tools for these paths, for the *protagonism* of these women [...]. The course started in 2018. In the occasion, we offered 20 places and we had 92 registrations. In the second edition now, we offered 40 places and had 808 registrations (Professor_UNILAB_02).

Professor_UNILAB_02 works with the aim of giving protagonism and empowering black women and this is revealed in the expressions "you can", "you do".

We also find a discourse of resistance in Professor_UNILAB_03's speech about the research project "Afro-Brazilian cultural expression in Maciço de Baturité-CE":

[...] *we had* as a goal to produce an historiography of the 13 municipalities of Baturité by collecting data, especially on Afro-Brazilian cultural expressions. Of course, at the same time, *we couldn't help but also do it* on indigenous ones, because we considered them cultures that are ours, the first ones. In this project, *we produced three* books with articles. From each municipality we tried to write an article about the expressions, identifying and describing the cultural expressions that exist in the municipalities that *still resist and survive, despite* cultural agglutination, *despite* lacking recognition, *despite* the public authorities, most often, not paying due attention. But *whether you like it or not, culture does not die*. Culture is always present in some form, in some way and it depends on who is looking for it, right? (Professor_UNILAB_03).

The use of the preposition "despite" indicates opposition from the events of the research practice in relation to the context. Even with all the difficulties, the practice broke expectations and produced the register of the local cultural expressions. Besides the released books, the professor reported his participation in various events and publications of articles in periodicals. We observed that, in

his speech, the professor also uses verbs in the first-person plural (the personal pronoun “we”) in the simple past tense and combined with the modal verb “could”, which indicates a past collective fighting action: “we had”, “we tried to write”, “we couldn’t help but also do”. This tendency is also observed when he explains that his research subject, the cultural expressions, “resist” and “survive”, conveying an idea of opposition against a force in conservation.

Professor_UNILAB_03 also highlighted that his research projects are relegated to the list of little understood topics, because they dislocate the academic community from the traditional perspective that supports it. He uses different adjectives, nouns and verb tenses to explain this relationship between context and research practice.

We have a management problem, not only at UNILAB, but also at any other university education institution that wants to develop different projects in the area of recognition of cultural diversity in the country. Why? Because we have a history of *conservative* and *traditional* universities that always work with an eye towards *Eurocentrism*. It has been one of the *biggest barriers*, not only at UNILAB, but also at UNILA or any other university education institution that wants to work outside this *Eurocentric* perspective, that wants to work towards the dissemination of recognition of cultural diversity, it will always face a barrier. Both official *barriers* and even *barriers* on the understanding of the part of society. Because for a long time we *have been influenced by Eurocentrism*, by culture coming from outside, especially from Europe. Our literature has been cluttered up by this. The classics we read are *always* classics from *outside of our cultural reality*. It’s no wonder that, sometimes, for you to have cultural recognition, you have to create laws for it. So, it is *hard* not only for UNILAB, but it is *hard* for any institution that wants to work in this new perspective, because our universities follow this *rite* regarding the *myth of Eurocentrism*, which is *something implemented* since our formation (Professor_UNILAB_03).

He defines the characteristics of the current university structure as “conservative and traditional” because of the “myth” and the “rite” of “Eurocentrism”, nouns used by the professor to appoint the academic tendencies in Brazil. He broadens this reality to other contextual elements, beyond universities, through the expression “outside of our reality”, indicating the displacement of the interests of segments of the context that do not dialogue with the local culture. The noun “barrier” is used many times to reinforce the difficulties related.

He also uses the adjective “hard” to make clear the impact that this contextual reality has on the research practice and on the universities. The implementation of a cultural perspective, beyond Eurocentrism is, if not improbable, at least complicated. This requests excessive work from those that dedicate themselves to the cultural diversity and, despite their efforts, there are chances that it will not be achieved.

Furthermore, the professor uses structures in the passive voice, such as “has been cluttered up”, “have been

influenced” and “implemented” (passive voice/ past participle), to indicate the power relations and hegemony of the Eurocentric perspective, as a passivizing agent. Nevertheless, the professor highlights the practices developed and its events as counter-hegemonic discourses (Fairclough, 2001).

Regarding this scenario, Professor_UNILAB_04 advocates that these ideological discourses precede universities. It starts in children’s schools, as she highlights:

We have a curricular history in Brazil that is *very whitened*. We don’t see who the *black heroes* are, who the black male writers and *black female writers* were. This all gives a margin so that the black population does not meet, right? They don’t see themselves represented, right? You know, like the black girl at school, how can she identify herself with the princesses who are *all blonde*, who are *all white*. It is not possible that there are no *black princesses*, *indigenous princesses* anywhere in the world. But why don’t they become a reference within the school? In the school curriculum? (Professor_UNILAB_04).

Professor_UNILAB_04 also positions her extension practice as a counter-ideological discourse that aims to alter this domination scenario that erases references and interferes with children’s identities. She articulates textual constructions between the dominant ideological discourse, as “very whitened”, “all blonde”, “all white” and others that are related to a counter-ideological discourse, such as “black heroes”, “black princesses”, and “indigenous princesses”. At the end, she highlights how her research and extension practices interfere with the context: “So what I do today is this: *reposition* the curriculum [...]. I want other girls to reach the place where I am, put these works in their proper place, because they also need to appear as sources of learning and sources of knowledge” (PROFESSOR_UNILAB_04).

In the same sense, the spaces chosen to carry out the practices also advocate in favor of the repositioning aimed by her. The actions occur in public elementary and high schools in the cities of Redenção and Acarape and in the NGO Fábrica de Imagens (Factory of Images), located in a neighborhood on the outskirts of Fortaleza that escapes the noble and cultural zones of the city.

Regarding the structure, Professor_UNILAB_04 highlights the absence of financial and structural incentives to develop her extension action in Fortaleza public schools, as has occurred before. One of the crucial factors was the unavailability of the university bus, because she had to pay for travel and food for five students of the project, as they did not have the financial means. This scenario limited the action to the schools of the region around UNILAB. In that regard, she raises many reflexive questions: “How can I maintain a project like this without money? How can we have a Ministry of Education that does not pay attention to this kind of project?” (Professor_UNILAB_04). Thus, we observed that the context is also a limiting factor for the practices.

Professor_UNILAB_05, in his turn, placed the difficulty of developing his research work practice in both extremes: context and events. Regarding the context, he says:

It is a project with an interdisciplinary conception due to *religious racism* and *violence* against African-based religions. It has personally aroused my interest [...] and, knowing the dynamics of this specific terreiro in the city of Baturité, we were able to see how the community relationships between the regulars take place, as well as the ones between the filhos da casa (children of the house) and the priests [...]. This terreiro is a terreiro in which many students, many students here at UNILAB participate. It is Pai Ricardo's terreiro. [...]. It is a well-known terreiro, given the seriousness and also the friendship and welcome that Pai Ricardo shows to everyone who is there [...]. There was *misunderstanding*, a *resistance* at first on the part of Pai Ricardo himself, who is the priest of the house, the greatest one. Exactly so that umbanda and, much less his terreiro, would not be confused with "as something for fags" or "as swearing" or "bitching" or whatever. There was a certain *misunderstanding* initially about what the purpose of the research would be. If it was just to, let's say, make the house "this is a place for fags". So, we had to follow a certain path, *we had several interviews, we made several visits, several trips to the field* to try to explain to Pai Ricardo that it was not about denouncing anyone's homosexuality there. So the title of the research is out of date. We are not researching homosexuality more specifically [...]. In fact, today we are researching male corporeality and the rituals of Dona Pomba Gira (Professor_UNILAB_05).

Professor_UNILAB_05 describes the local structure and explains the difficulty he had with the locus of the research, utilizing many nouns and adjectives to describe the behavior and, consequently, qualify the subjects and the confrontation that occurred in the research locus itself. Thenceforth, Professor_UNILAB_05 starts to highlight the research practice by repeating the term "several" (adjective), trying to show that the resistance of the field made the work of research construction harder, slower and laborious. This intensity attributed to the actions of the research practice is the result of the non-acceptance on the part of the religious leader.

About the position of the *terreiro*, locus of the research, the professor describes it using adjectives related to the idea of dishonor and indignity and as a local community, but "[...] very *marginalized*. The community there is very *poor*, it is a *periphery*, and as every *poor* and *peripheral* place, it has its social problems. Anyway, they are people who, let's say, are not on what we would call the top of society" (PROFESSOR_UNILAB_05).

The non-acceptance of this kind of research also appears in the other extreme of the practice: the events. According to the professor, he also faces the incomprehension of the academic community inside and

outside of UNILAB, which has been, by its turn, interfering in the research results.

Talking about Umbanda, Exus and Pomba Giras⁴, *that already causes a certain feeling, right?* So, because it is a research that talks about the festivities of Dona Pomba Gira, which talks about male corporeality, that talks about homosexuality, then *this already causes a reticence* in people. We always notice, when we present, when we have the opportunity to communicate the research results, *a certain reticence, the majority prefers to remain silent*, they put on a *face of apparent understanding*, but we notice there a *denial* and a certain tendency, if not a *condemnation*, at least an *estrangement*. So, when faced with what is strange, most *people prefer to remain silent*. So, in the opportunities we had to make the research results public, we only really had participation, interaction, dialogue with other professors who also research religions of African origin, who also research gender relations. So, the part of the research object that concerned interdisciplinarity, we have to confess to you, was, until now, below what we expected [...]. There is then a *reticence, a silence, an estrangement. It's something veiled*. Do you get it? "No, that's a macumbeira⁵ fag thing"; "It's better, we, well, we applaud [...], we don't want dialogue, we don't really want to be part of, right?" We understand this. When we present the work at tables, the questions come from people who belong to the religion. Ever. In other words, what is academically proposed for dialogue has a *very evident limitation*. We notice the *reticence* (Professor_UNILAB_05).

The professor highlights many times that the research has the power to provoke. He uses the verb "cause" in the active voice – "causes" (present simple) – to highlight the capacity his research has to generate or awaken, most of the time, negative or indifferent feelings and behaviors. On the other hand, it is important to note that the professor himself assumes that this conclusion comes from his perception regarding the postures of the audience in academic events. He understands the silence of the majority of the spectators as an escape from the debate on a topic that bothers or does not attract attention. This silence is only broken by the ones who have some familiarity with umbanda or gender issues through research or the practitioners of religions of African origins.

Regarding the reactions of the academic community, the professor believes that they reside in conceptions, values and predispositions that precede the academic life. They are part of a previous social construction that is ingrained in popular culture and that stigmatizes certain beliefs. And the academy is not without responsibility, because it replicates this construction in the university environment, as he explains:

[...] due to the theme, the presentation of the boys, because they go as umbandistas, with their clothes [...], so people have an idea of umbanda too, the presentation of umbanda, according to their *predispositions, religious racisms, as something*

⁴ *Exu* and *Pomba Gira* are spiritual entities that are venerated in some Afro-Brazilian religions.

⁵ *Macumbeira* is a word that often carries a pejorative and discriminatory connotation to refer to those who practice or are associated with Afro-Brazilian religions.

demonic, as something that is meant to do evil. So we realized that, even at UNILAB, that it would be the place, so to speak, the place where we would be authorized to talk about this Afro-Brazilian African matrix and these religiousnesses. Even here, we notice these, so to speak, resistances (Professor_UNILAB_05).

In the perception of the professor, umbanda is a not-clearly-defined representation in the imagination of the academic community. He portrays this perspective through the indefinite pronoun “something”, as a thing that is not-clearly known, but is reprehensible. These apparent nuisance and indifference generated by Professor_UNILAB_05’s research may be based on views of inferiority regarding racial issues (Carvalho, 2007). We should not forget the stigma placed by the Catholic Church on religious practices of African origin which, in the end, “forced” them into religious syncretism.

The research and extension practices developed by the interviewed professors reveal very clearly the social function of the teaching work highlighted by Piletti (2008), because it keeps these professors in a constant dialogue with the social environment in order to transform contexts and produce new realities (Barros, Brito & Clemente, 2018). It is in this aspect that we perceive teaching practices as inclusive social practices.

In various moments in the professors’ texts, we identified a dual posture of affliction and motivation. Affliction when they report the difficult reality of the context, and motivation when they believe that their work can help transform this scenario (Barros, Brito & Clemente, 2018). Their discourses are full of ideologies (Fairclough, 2016) that reflect their social preferences.

These practices are aligned with the UNILAB project, but they are not restricted to it, because they go beyond the internal policies when they take into account the ethnic-racial questions of the local context. They bring these questions to the daily debate in the region of Maciço de Baturité, provoke reactions and latent feelings regarding the local origins and history. In this configuration, the protagonism of the foreign students get merged with the local community, through the perspective of comprehending and modifying their surroundings, and at the same time they modify themselves individually.

Their reflexive discourses also reveal a concern with universities and with the university education in a broader sense. At the same time, they reveal that they face the context as an arena in which they need to fight and survive. At no point during the interviews the professors demonstrated apathy or discouragement due to the context. On the contrary, there is a resistance bias that is constantly reinforced in different moments during their individual speeches. All of these latent discourses are vital to the process of social significance in the work of these professors and in the inclusive position inside of their practices.

Even with difficulties that sometimes come from the structure, the professors reinforce that UNILAB is the adequate space to the research and extension practices

they develop and that in other universities, perhaps, they would not have the same freedom or, at least, would not be seen through the same perspective.

The research and extension practices developed by the interviewed professors represent the university in the life of the community, because they dialogue closely with it. The practices are constructed by subjects that, before being part of UNILAB academic community, are part of the community, which is often invisible.

The context in which the teaching practices are developed is impregnated with hegemonic ideologies, as a strategy for maintaining power, naturalizing domination, exclusion and the erasure of certain subjects. The professors’ practices represent counter-ideological discourses that foster inclusion, visibility, empowerment and the protagonism of people that are kept on the margins by the social system. These practices relocate such subjects so they can escape the silence imposed by the context.

5 CONCLUSIONS

In this research, we tried to understand how the teaching work practices can constitute inclusive social practices. To achieve this goal, we identified the moments of research and extension practices of five professors of UNILAB and highlighted how such practices work as intercessions between context and events, thus promoting the breaking with current structures that are exclusionary and discriminatory.

The work practices of university professors, which go beyond the teaching, get materialized through research and extension as strategies that aim to qualify citizens conscient of the social reality around them. Observing the local contexts that surround UNILAB’s academic community, the interviewees foresaw means to interfere in such reality aiming to alter the current hegemonies. Despite declaring difficulties and resistance, not only from society, but from the very academy, the professors showed enthusiasm with the practices they develop and the beliefs that they can produce micro changes through these practices. These are significant findings that make us understand how work practices constitute inclusive social practices.

The extension and research practices developed by the interviewees are aligned to the essence of UNILAB, both when we refer to the prevalence of the ethnic-racial category and regarding the interiorization. The professors seek to alter local contexts and provoke social and individual changes. Their research and extension practices aimed at social minorities demystify stigmas and concede protagonisms to subjects who are ignored by society. This way, the teaching practices act in the context through its events, characterizing themselves as inclusive social practices, what answers to the question raised at the beginning of this work.

This research contributed to highlight that the teaching work can be not only an important tool in the process of breaking paradigms, but also as an instrument to

practice diversity in public universities. Such practices must be institutionally aligned with the university, but they can go further, becoming daily practices and surpassing the institutional limits and focusing on urgent realities as a way of fostering attitudinal inclusion.

As a limitation we highlight the fact that this research is based solely in the speeches of the coordinators of the practices, leaving aside other important actors, for example the students. This way, the interviews with students represent a possibility for a research agenda, as well as its replication in other public and private university education institutions. Moreover, we reassure that the theme, not exhausted here, must be enlarged through the reflection regarding the importance of the teaching performance as a pedagogical inclusion agent for social minorities, and the discursive change regarding differences and attitudinal micro changes.

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