Language teacher education for the internationalization of higher education: the potential contributions of a network of communities /

Formação de professores de línguas para fins de internacionalização do ensino superior: as potenciais contribuições de uma rede de comunidades

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ABSTRACT

The growing interest in the internationalization of higher education, combined with the recognition of the relevant role that proficiency in other languages plays in this scenery, has fostered programs focused on language development of Brazilian university communities. Because of the specificity of language courses for academic purposes, teacher education has also figured as an objective of such language policies. This study seeks to investigate the practices of continuous education of teachers of English for specific purposes during the second stage of the Paraná Speaks Languages (English) Program in a state university of Paraná. The research is anchored in studies about professional development in language teacher education, as well as in communities of practice and author-teachers. The results reveal that the production of teaching-learning material, adopted as the central practice of the group, was the activity that boosted the teacher education. Therefore, the group associated with different communities through various formative modalities seeking for new knowledge. The professional development approach indicates a hybrid configuration, with a predominance of theoretical knowledge in emergent modalities, which were interrelated with knowledge of practical order in permanent modalities. Evidence of the constitution of a community of practice could be perceived by the end of the process.
KEYWORDS: Language teacher education; Communities of practice; English for specific purposes; Paraná speaks languages; Internationalization.

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RESUMO

O crescente interesse pela internacionalização da educação superior, aliado ao reconhecimento do importante papel que a proficiência em outros idiomas desempenha nesse cenário, tem fomentado programas com foco na capacitação linguística das comunidades universitárias brasileiras. Dada a especificidade dos cursos de línguas voltados a propósitos acadêmicos, a formação de professores vem figurando também como objetivo dessas políticas linguísticas. Este estudo busca investigar as práticas de formação continuada de professores de inglês para fins específicos durante a segunda etapa do Programa Paraná Fala Idiomas (Inglês) em uma universidade estadual do Paraná. A pesquisa se ancora em estudos acerca do desenvolvimento profissional no que tange à formação de professores de idiomas, bem como de comunidades de prática e de professores-autores. Os resultados revelam que a produção de material didático, adotada como prática central do grupo, foi a atividade que impulsionou a formação. Para tanto, o grupo associou-se a diferentes comunidades por meio de modalidades formativas diversas em busca de novos conhecimentos. A abordagem de desenvolvimento profissional mostrou-se híbrida, com prevalência de conhecimentos de viés teórico em modalidades emergentes, interrelacionados a conhecimentos de ordem prática nas modalidades permanentes. Indícios da constituição de uma comunidade de prática foram percebidos ao final do processo.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: Formação de professores de línguas; Comunidades de prática; Inglês para fins específicos; Paraná fala idiomas; Internacionalização.

1 Introduction

The internationalization of higher education has been seen as a key change agent for universities around the world (De Wit, 2020). By seeking to make university education responsive to the demands and challenges of the globalized world, the process of internationalization of Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) usually relies on various strategies, such as international cooperation, academic mobility, dissemination of knowledge, among others.

The need for communication implicit in the activities embraced in this process means that linguistic and intercultural knowledge and competencies play a fundamental role in the success of those activities (Guimarães; Finardi; Casotti, 2019). Therefore, initiatives aimed at the teaching-learning of additional languages[1] to the academic communities assume a significant space in the list of actions that seek to strengthen the internationalization of higher education.

In Brazil, this movement has been notably boosted by the Science Without Borders Program (SwB), a federal government initiative focused on academic mobility which, from 2012 to 2016, granted approximately 104 thousand scholarships to students and researchers of Brazilian

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[1] In line with a contemporary view of the teaching-learning of languages, I adopt, in this article, the term "additional language" when referring to a non-first language, instead of traditional choices, such as "foreign language". This option is justified for considering the former term more inclusive, comprehensive and in alignment with an Applied Linguistics that conceives the user of a language not as a stranger to it. I, thus, corroborate, the understanding that the learning of another language is built based on the language/s we already know and that, in this relationship, there is a peaceful coexistence among them, as they respond to distinct purposes (Leffa; Irala, 2015), e.g. the use of English for academic purposes, discussed in this study.

HEIs in different countries[2]. In the wake of the SwB, government initiatives established language policies aimed at increasing proficiency in additional languages in Brazilian academic communities, such as the Language without Borders Program (LwB)[3] at the national level and the Paraná Speaks Languages Program[4] at the state level.

Aimed at promoting the language development of their participants for the specificities of academic activities, the courses offered by these initiatives differ from those focused on language for general purposes, once they consider demands intrinsic to the university sphere. As a result, language teacher education focused on practice in these programs has proven to be a field of study of major interest for considering specific competencies not commonly addressed in pre-service language teacher education, generally aimed at working in Basic Education.

As in the case of the LwB (Sarmento; Abreu-e-Lima; Moraes Filho, 2016), Paraná Speaks Languages was originally conceived with the aim of increasing the English language proficiency of students in the HEIs covered by the Program (Rios; Novelli; Calvo, 2021), with a view to expanding their chances of participating in mobility programs such as the SwB, and gradually reframed itself, incorporating other idioms and goals. In its first stage, which began in 2014, the Paraná Speaks Languages was known as *Paraná Speaks English* and focused on preparing students, professors and staff of the seven state HEIs in Paraná[5] for the TOEFL-iBT (Test of English as a Foreign Language - Internet Based Test) proficiency exam, frequently required for applications for mobility at Anglophone universities. In the second stage, which began in 2017, the Program was expanded to *Paraná Speaks Languages*, with the initial incorporation of the French language among its actions and, consequently, of other idioms in future stages.

In addition to the multilingual perspective that was then being outlined, the second stage of the Paraná Speaks Languages was also marked by other structural changes, such as the establishment of an international partnership with Canada, the incorporation of new course modalities, such as the ones focused on English for Specific Purposes (ESP), the hiring of language teachers through external selections[6], and the offering of in-service teacher education to the

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[2] Available at: https://revistapesquisa.fapesp.br/experiencia-encerrada/ Access on: 14 jan. 2025.

[3] https://isf.mec.gov.br/

[4] https://www.seti.pr.gov.br/paranafalaidiomas

[5] State University of Londrina (UEL), State University of Maringá (UEM), State University of Ponta Grossa (UEPG), State University of Western Paraná (UNIOESTE), State University of Central-West Paraná (UNICENTRO), State University of Northern Paraná (UENP) and State University of Paraná (UNESPAR).

[6] On the first stage of the Paraná Speaks Languages, Paraná state universities initially had the possibility of carrying out an internal selection with professors and staff from the HEI itself to offer the courses within the scope of the Program (Santos; Tulio; Borges, 2021).

professionals hired. Through the aforementioned partnership, a list of courses for the Paraná Speaks Languages – English was created, from which each HEI would have the autonomy to choose the courses that best responded to its demands. Likewise, the institutional and pedagogical coordination in each HEI would be responsible for deciding on the format and conduct of the teacher education to be offered to the Paraná Speaks Languages teachers selected for their context (Rios; Novelli; Calvo, 2021).

This article presents the partial results of a broader study (Coradin-Bail, 2020) on the English teacher education promoted by one of the HEIs that integrated the Paraná Speaks Languages in its second stage. The study aims to: a) understand how the in-service teacher education offered by the Paraná Speaks Languages – English in its second stage at the State University of Londrina (UEL) was organized, considering the specificities of teaching English for the purposes of internationalization of higher education; and b) identify the view of professional development underlying the formative modalities carried out.

The article is divided into five other parts. In the next section, I present the studies and concepts that underpin the research. Next, I discuss the methodological procedures and ethical care adopted. I then present a contextualization of UEL's participation in the Paraná Speaks Languages. After that, I move on to the analysis of the data and discussion of the results and, finally, I present the final considerations.

2 Internationalization of higher education and language teacher education

Universities are historically affected by circumstances found beyond their walls and even the national borders. In this context, Altbach (2007) associates the term *globalization* with global trends of an economic, technological and scientific nature that directly affect education and which are, frequently, inevitable. Conversely, according to the author, the ways in which governments and institutions articulate themselves to deal with the effects of globalization and explore them to their advantage, by creating policies and programs, characterize the movement known as *internationalization*.

In general terms, the internationalization of higher education can be understood as the intentional process of incorporating an international, intercultural or global dimension to the purposes, functions and delivery of higher education, with the aim of improving the quality of

education and research for all students and staff involved, making a meaningful contribution to the society (De Wit *et al.*, 2015). Among the actions undertaken to engage in this process, the teaching of additional languages has received special attention in Brazil in recent years, as evidenced by the creation of government programs such as the LwB and the Paraná Speaks Languages. Through this strategy, it is expected that Brazilian academic communities will be linguistically prepared for the exchange of ideas with academics and researchers from all over the world. Consequently, by considering that the particularities implicit in the teaching of languages aiming at the internationalization of higher education require specific knowledge, these initiatives have also been incorporating teacher education among their objectives.

The teacher education investigated in this study focuses on qualifying for teaching English for Specific Purposes (ESP). According to Celani (2008), from this perspective, there is greater attention to students' reasons and particular needs in relation to learning, as well as commitment for building basic capabilities and skills for defined purposes. In addition, the previous knowledge of learners is considered, giving them a voice and seeking to make language use meaningful and the reasons for learning perceived by students. Finally, it seeks to help learners develop sound individual strategies for learning. In other words, learning English from this perspective means, according to the author, learning for a purpose and in an approach in which the reasons for learning are clear and relevant for both students and teachers.

By considering the academic purposes of language courses offered by programs aimed at strengthening the internationalization of higher education, the teacher education offered by those initiatives tends to focus on the teaching of languages for specific purposes, since this is a field which is generally little explored in pre-service language teacher education. Therefore, it seeks to qualify teachers for the teaching of languages from a perspective that meets the particular demands of students with regard to their academic activities.

Freeman (2016) argues that language teacher education is fundamentally a social proposition and that learning to teach an additional language is a process which depends on a set of understandings or "social facts". In the author's view, language teacher education should be guided by a descriptive understanding of what teachers know and do and of how they learn these things. Unlike prescription, description considers that two distinct forms of knowledge should be interrelated in teacher education. On the one hand, the *disciplinary knowledge*, which comprises what is acquired through academic disciplines and which advocates what the teacher *should* know.

On the other hand, the *knowledge-for-teaching*, which refers to the ways in which teachers use what they know in the daily teaching practice.

The understanding that human consciousness develops through the specific social activities in which we engage has driven the research agenda on teacher education recently. The so-called sociocultural turn conceives of learning as a social, dynamic activity, which is physically and socially situated as well as distributed across people, tools and activities (Johnson, 2006). It is considered that what teachers know and the ways in which they use this knowledge in their teaching practice are articulated through a personal interpretation which depends on the knowledge of self, setting, students, curriculum and the community itself (Johnson, 2009). Consequently, from this perspective, in addition to adopting a knowledge base of scientific order and valuing another one of practical order, teacher education should also include historical and social knowledge and experiences.

Still under this orientation, the knowledge of an individual is believed to be constructed from the knowledge inherent in the *communities of practice* within which he/she participates. (Johnson, 2006). Initially proposed by Jean Lave and Etienne Wenger in 1991, this concept emerged from efforts to develop accounts of the social nature of human learning inspired by anthropology and social theory (Wenger, 2010). It is, therefore, about shared *histories of learning* (Wenger, 1998). *Communities of practice* are currently understood as groups of people who share a concern or a passion for a particular activity and learn to make it better by continually interacting (Wenger-Trayner; Wenger-Trayner, 2015a, p. 2). From this perspective, learning is not found inside or outside our mind, but in the relationship that we establish with the world, in which the social and the individual constitute each other (Wenger, 2010).

Our engagement in social contexts involves, according to Wenger (1998; 2010), a dual process of meaning making: on the one hand, through our participation in activities, conversations and reflections; on the other, through reification, that is to say, the production of physical and conceptual artifacts that reflect our experience and around which we organize our participation. Reification literally means "making into an object" and may refer to the production of words, concepts, tools, methods, stories, among others. Thus, according to the author, meaningful learning in social contexts requires participation and reification to be interconnected.

Nevertheless, Wenger (1998) highlights that, for a community to be considered a *community of practice*, one needs to identify and evaluate three dimensions of the relationship through which the practice becomes a source of coherence in a community: a) *mutual engagement*,

which emphasizes the fact that the practice becomes evident because the community members engage in actions whose meanings are negotiated among them; b) *joint enterprise*, which results from a process of collective negotiation that reflects how complex the mutual engagement is, being defined by the participants throughout the process and creating relationships of responsibility among them that become integral of the practice itself; and c) *shared repertoire*, which refers to the resources developed when seeking an enterprise for meaning making and which joins participative and reifying aspects.

Transposed to the context of teacher education, this view converges with that of Garcez and Schlatter (2017), according to whom, teacher education takes place in activities of self-reflection in practice and through the living of situated teaching experiences and collective reflections on lived experiences. Based on the premise that the general principle that guides education is the development for the exercise of citizenship, the authors argue that teacher training should foster the development of author subjects. In their view, authorship implies building a person's own singularity in the activities in which he/she participates and assuming the responsibility for the singularity produced (Garcez; Schlatter, 2017)[7].

Authorship materializes in the taking of public positions, expressed to peers, having an impact on classroom practice. More clearly, it manifests itself in the production and shared appreciation of teaching and learning assessment materials and instruments, as well as in the systematic reporting of pedagogical practices experienced, of decisions taken collectively and of the ways in which challenges related to teaching and learning were addressed (Garcez; Schlatter, 2017).

Based on the studies presented in this section, this research investigates the formative practices of English teachers within the scope of a government language policy aimed at the internationalization of a public university in Paraná. The nature of the study, the participants, the methodological procedures and the ethical care adopted are presented in the next section.

3 Methodological procedures

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[7] The concept of "authorship" presented by the authors was originally included in the text regarding the "educational principles" for the area of Languages, codes and technologies in the *Referenciais Curriculares do Rio Grande do Sul* (2009), section in which they are expressly nominated authors.

This is a qualitative, exploratory and interpretative research (Schwandt, 2000), of the case study type (Yin, 2001). In compliance with the ethical precepts recommended for studies of this nature, the project of this study was appreciated and approved by the Ethics Committee in Research with Human Beings of the HEI investigated and all the procedures were followed in compliance with the standards established by this body. The study context consists of the English teacher education offered by an extension project[8] associated with the Paraná Speaks Languages Program at UEL in the period corresponding to the second stage of the Program (between the second semester of 2017 and the first semester of 2019). The 11 professionals who worked in the project during that stage were invited for the study, 10 of which agreed to participate fully or partially: the institutional coordinator, the pedagogical advisor, as well as eight English teachers.

In the stage covered by this study, the project coordination was composed of two professors from the area of Modern Foreign Languages (MFL) at the HEI – a regular and a temporary faculty member, who worked as coordinators throughout the period investigated. The institutional coordinator had already worked as a teacher in the Paraná Speaks Languages in the previous stage, which means she integrated the group in the second stage with a more extensive *history of learning* in the scope of the Program. The graduates hired to work as English teachers who agreed to participate in the research had from two to 18 years of experience teaching the language. Of the eight teachers participating in the study, six had a degree in Languages and one was taking a course in the area[9]. Six of the participating teachers were students of *stricto sensu* postgraduate courses in the areas of Language Studies / Modern Foreign Languages (4), Literary Studies (1) and Education (1). Their working time in the project varied from two months to one year and a half, and all teachers taught at least three different language courses. To protect their identities, the participants are identified in this study by pseudonyms, most of which chosen by themselves[10].

Data generation was carried out between May and July 2019 through the following instruments: 1) a collective interview (CI) with the institutional coordinator and the pedagogical advisor, recorded in audio; 2) an electronic questionnaire (EQ) applied via Google Forms to the eight English teachers; and 3) a focus group (FG) with the three teachers working in the final phase of the period investigated, recorded in audio and video. After transcribing the data from the

[8] In this study, I use the term "Program" to refer to the Paraná Speaks Languages Program at the state level and "project" to address its actions at UEL, since, in this space, the initiative is registered as an extension project.
[9] The hiring of this teacher was enabled for the fact that she had a previous degree in another course.
[10] Only one participant opted to let the pseudonym choice to the researcher's discretion.

collective interview and the focus group, the analytical process began, based on a thematic analysis.

Based on an eclectic approach for data coding (Saldaña, 2013), themes that corresponded to the initial purposes of the research were established, with the following being important for the present study: 1) *teacher education*, referring to the formative modalities carried out, the content covered by them, as well as the decision-making process of the activities to be proposed; and 2) *professional development*, consisting of the individual perceptions of learning, resignification of beliefs and changes in perspectives on language and/or teaching. Due to the fact that some participants identified themselves as belonging to a *community of practice*, this theme was later incorporated into the purposes of the study. Therefore, in a new coding cycle, we sought to identify the dimensions of the relationship through which the practice becomes a source of coherence in a community: *mutual engagement*, *joint enterprise* and *shared repertoire* (Wenger, 1998).

After the research was completed, the data analysis was sent to the participants, who were invited to express their impressions and manifest any discomfort regarding the interpretations present in the study results, so that any adjustments could be made prior to their publication. Therefore, in addition to the formal ethical care adopted, an *emancipatory ethic* (Chimentão; Reis, 2019) was sought, with the aim of ensuring a distribution of power between the researcher and the research participants so that the voices of the latter were also incorporated into the final report of the study.

4 Study context

Established in 2014, the Paraná Speaks Languages is part of the strategic actions of the Secretariat of Science, Technology and Higher Education of Paraná (SETI) and is supported by the Paraná Fund Management Unit (UGF). Aiming at boosting the internationalization process of local state universities, the Program currently offers free Spanish, French and English courses to the respective internal communities, as well as courses of Portuguese as a host language[11].

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[11] The Paraná Speaks Languages – Portuguese was created in 2022 with the aim of supporting the Paraná Program for Welcoming Ukrainian Scientists, from Araucária Foundation, seeking to promote the linguistic and cultural inclusion of these researchers and their dependents (available at: https://www.fappr.pr.gov.br/Noticia/Parana-Fala-Idiomas-lanca-edital-para-atuacao-no-Programa-de-Acolhida-Cientistas-Ucranianas - access on 09 dec. 2024). Currently, the Paraná Speaks Languages - Portuguese seeks to assist a broader audience comprised of international members of state HEIs in Paraná.

UEL has participated in the Paraná Speaks Languages since its first stage, which began in 2014, in addition to having had the active participation of an institutional representative in the initial phase of the Program's design with SETI, between 2012 and 2013. In the first stage of the Paraná Speaks Languages, restricted to the English language only, the HEI offered preparatory courses for the TOEFL iBT proficiency exam at intermediate and higher-intermediate levels, as planned for all participating HEIs (Marson; Gimenez; Furtoso, 2021).

Amidst the discussions about the expansion of the Program for the following stage, a survey applied to the internal community of UEL, carried out between August and June 2017, through an online questionnaire, sought to identify possible future courses in order to respond to specific demands of the community. Among the university staff who responded to the invitation to participate, the majority expressed a preference for courses of English for general purposes (34,1%) and for their specific working areas (33%). On the other hand, the course focusing on academic English was the main choice of undergraduate students and professors (39,4%), with an even more significant percentage among those in postgraduate programs (48,7%) (Marson; Gimenez; Furtoso, 2021).

According to the institutional coordinator of the project, in the collective interview (CI) for this research, the results of that survey and the evaluation that another initiative in the HEI – the Language Laboratory – already met the institutional demands for language courses for general purposes allowed the Paraná Speaks Languages team at UEL to decide to offer only courses aimed at teaching English for specific purposes and preparatory courses for TOEFL in the second stage of the Program, from the range of courses proposed by the Paraná Speaks Languages at the state level. Therefore, the courses offered by the project in the period investigated can be classified into four distinct categories.

a) *Academic English:* courses focused on specific academic genres, such as oral presentation, *abstract* writing, reading, research projects and preparatory courses for international exams;

b) *English for internationalization purposes:* courses with focus on English for mobility and development of oral and writing skills for internationalization activities;

c) *English for specific areas:* instrumental reading courses for professionals in Education, in the Nursing area, as well as English for teachers;

d) *English as a medium of instruction (EMI):* courses aimed at teachers interested in giving classes in English, which could have a specific focus on developing oral skills and strategies for EMI.

The second stage of Paraná Speaks Languages began in June 2017 and consisted of four semesters, ending in mid-2019. As previously mentioned, this stage differs from the first with regard to the focus of the courses offered, the hiring of graduates through external selection processes to teach the courses as well as the beginning of the teacher education developed by the Paraná Speaks Languages. Another notable feature of this stage was the establishment of a partnership between the Program, at the state level, and the Canadian government through Languages Canada, a national language education association in the country. Due to this partnership, the Paraná Speaks Languages – English started to adopt the Smrt English[12] teaching-learning material for the courses offered in all state HEIs involved.

In the context investigated in this research, the adoption of this material was evaluated as inconsistent with the objectives of the courses offered by the Paraná Speaks Languages at the HEI. For the coordinators and teachers working in the first semester of the stage, the teaching-learning material adopted at the state level did not correspond to the aims of the courses of English for specific purposes that had been selected in the local context[13]. Therefore, as informed by the institutional coordinator of the project (CI), the team opted to complement the teaching-learning material adopted by the Program with authorial material focused on academic purposes, in order to adjust the teaching practice to the objectives of the courses. In the team's view, this experience was received by the students in a very positive way, arousing greater interest in the courses then when the material of the Canadian partner was used, which motivated the institutional coordination to negotiate with the state coordination of the Program that this HEI, starting in the following semester, would no longer be required to use the Smrt English platform, assuming autonomy to produce its own teaching-learning material. Consequently, the production of authorial material, which began experimentally in the first semester and became essential in the other academic

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[12] Institution responsible for an English language learning system developed by the Pedagogical Department of the *Canadian College of English Language*.

[13] Convergently, when analyzing the adequacy of this teaching-learning material to the global purposes of the Paraná Speaks Languages, Sanches (2019) points out that the language perspective adopted by *Smrt English* is associated with that of "language as a code", which would not respond to the objectives of courses aimed at teaching language for specific purposes, for which a discursive perspective would be more appropriate.

periods of that stage, guided the teacher education in this stage of the Paraná Speaks Languages – English at UEL, as will be seen in the next section.

5 Collaborative teacher education and the centrality of authorial practice

Since the first semester of the investigated stage, the decision to develop teaching-learning material focused on the purposes of the courses offered locally, although, at first, complementary to the use of the Smrt English material, served as a basis for the teacher education developed by the project throughout the stage. At the same time, the high turnover of teachers[14], their different *histories of learning* built in other communities, as well as local and superior decisions regarding the focus of the courses to be offered throughout the period guided the decision-making regarding the design of the teacher education in the whole stage. To address the different formative actions revealed in this study, I use the concept of *formative modalities*, proposed by Costa (2018), which refer to roughly planned actions focused on teacher learning.

Even though the production of teaching-learning material may have an important formative potential, as has been evidenced throughout this research, this study revealed that this activity was decided based on the evaluation of a specific need in the context investigated regarding the expectations of the internal community, and is therefore not characterized as an action designed specifically for *professional development*. Therefore, for the purposes of this study, the production of teaching-learning material is considered not a *formative modality*, but rather a *practice* agreed upon by the group, which proved to have a central role in the teacher education.

The initial experiences with this practice unveiled, however, particular difficulties for the team, as revealed by Anna, institutional coordinator, in the collective interview:

> Excerpt 01
> ANNA: [...] Yes, so much so that we had, then, teachers who came in and, the major difficulty we had was in producing material, because they did not have much knowledge on this specificity of producing material for a specific course. [...] Which I think is part of our own teacher education. We did not have much of this in the curriculum of Languages [undergraduate course], especially in the older curricula (CI)[15].

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[14] Each semester had three teachers, who, once hired, could remain in the project until the end of the stage. However, for personal reasons, many teachers left the Project before the deadline, most of them due to their involvement in *stricto sensu* postgraduate activities, generating the need to hire new teachers. Throughout the period investigated, nine English teachers made up the Paraná Speaks Languages team at the HEI investigated.
[15] My translation from Portuguese, for all excerpts.

Anna's arguments are used to justify the decision to hold thematic workshops with expert professors from the area of Modern Foreign Languages (MFL) at that HEI during the first term of the stage investigated, based on the evaluation that the Paraná Speaks Languages English teachers had a lack of knowledge for teaching English for specific purposes. The understanding that teaching English for internationalization activities requires a specific type of knowledge, not usually covered in the Languages undergraduate courses, is corroborated by other studies in the field of language policies for internationalization (Sarmento; Abreu-e-Lima; Moraes-Filho, 2016).

In addition to the workshops with expert professors, this formative modality also included the contribution of English Teaching Assistants (ETAs)[16], who participated in a program linked to the Department of Modern Foreign Languages at the HEI and were, therefore, invited to offer workshops focused on English language development throughout the second semester of that stage in the project. Considering that the ETAs were already engaged in activities within the LwB at the HEI, the formative meetings were held together with the LwB English teachers, since, according to Anna, the purposes of both projects were convergent (CI). In the case of the Paraná Speaks Languages, specifically, one of the ETAs also worked with individual assistance to the English teachers in an academic writing support service, known as Writing Center, which was offered to the HEI's internal community in the aforementioned semester (CI).

The third semester of the stage was characterized by what Anna defines as "a more organic teacher education" (CI), the decision for which was based on the evaluation that the three teachers working in the project in that period had greater professional experience for the project's activities and were involved in postgraduate programs in the area of MFL. For this reason, given that the three teachers were having classes in a discipline offered by Anna at a professional master's degree, whose focus was aligned with the purposes of the teacher education within Paraná Speaks Languages and in which the production of material was a frequent practice, the coordination opted to incorporate the discipline into the list of *formative modalities* considered in the project.

> Excerpt 02
> ANNA: I had this discipline that was called Teaching English in Contemporary Times, in which we explored issues such as the post-method with Kumaravadivelu, we went through all the approaches... we studied the theory and... they had to produce based on that. So, we studied didactic sequences, genre approach – they produced... instrumental reading – they produced... critical literacy – they produced... So we did that throughout the course. And

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[16] ETAs are recent graduates from the United States, with experience in educational environments and in classroom teaching, who are selected by Fulbright, a United States government educational exchange program, to work as fellows supporting cultural and linguistic activities in educational institutions in other countries.

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> the three teachers were taking the course, so we came to the conclusion that...
> we could have another type of teacher education, valuing the things that they
> did within the [postgraduate] program, that we did not need to create something
> specific for them, due to this profile (CI).

Additionally, in face of the perception that they would soon be required to offer teacher education in the perspective of English as a Medium of Instruction (EMI), the pedagogical advisor suggested that the teachers took an online course on this subject on the Future Learn website[17] as part of their continuing education (Anna – CI). In fact, in the following semester, the last of the period investigated, the state coordination of Paraná Speaks Languages introduced EMI as one of the courses to be offered at the participating HEIs, assuming that this area had a knowledge gap, which resulted in new formative actions on the subject. Through a partnership established between the Paraná Speaks Languages, at the state level, with the Federal University of Paraná (UFPR), together with a professor specialized in EMI from this HEI, a course on this teaching perspective was offered to different members of state HEIs, in which a teacher from the context investigated participated.

With the teacher education focused on EMI, the last semester of the period in this context is characterized by the resumption of formative actions together with the LwB project at the HEI. Thus, in response to the influences of the state coordination of the Paraná Speaks Languages, a new formative modality emerges at the institutional level, in which the teachers in the LwB project are also included, since both projects were focused on the teaching of English for internationalization purposes. Considering that EMI was seen as something "new for everyone" (Anna, CI), including for the coordinators, the formative modality was based on meetings guided by the contribution of each participant, based on the expectation that they could "learn together", which signals to the constitution of a *community of practice*.

> Excerpt 03
> ANNA: So, how did we organize this teacher education? [...] We are going to
> have this teacher education, but no one has experience in EMI, so we are going
> to learn together and see what we have... We made, of course, an initial
> proposal, but it... also keeps changing... So, we agreed that Lia [=Paraná
> Speaks Languages teacher], who took that one-week course [at UFPR] of 40
> hours, would start by sharing what she saw there with everyone. [...] So, in the
> first meetings of this teacher education, Lia brought everything she had seen
> there, she prepared a presentation and... and did it with us... Fernanda
> [=Paraná Speaks Languages teacher] was responsible for giving everyone
> feedback on the course that the teachers from the Paraná Speaks Languages
> had taken on Future Learn online, which the LwB team had not. [...] John
> [=pedagogical advisor from Paraná Speaks Languages - English] is also

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[17] www.futurelearn.com

finishing a course proposed by the Program which is... from that platform, Cambridge Assessment... about... EMI [...], and when he finishes it, he will also give us feedback on [incomprehensible] this course... what about it is different and what is the same... and now we are discussing, based on all this, based on the courses that we are taking, based on the readings we are doing... The idea is to create principles of what EMI is... and... of how this could guide us in the production of teaching-learning material [...] to see if in the second semester [of the year] we could already have a course designed by the LwB and the Paraná Speaks Languages to offer EMI at UEL (CI).

The objective of this formative modality, which brought together coordinators and teachers from both projects (Paraná Speaks Languages and LwB), was to share with each other the knowledge acquired through other formative modalities about EMI, although primarily from a theoretical point of view, since the group members themselves did not have much experience teaching on this perspective. Part of the knowledge shared, however, was provided by the accounts on a pilot course focused on EMI offered by Lia at the Paraná Speaks Languages that term. Even though the objective of "creating principles of what EMI is" in the formative meetings is highlighted, it can be noted in Anna's speech that, once again, the production of teaching-learning material was the activity that drove the teacher education.

The formative modalities presented so far composed the formative proposal for the stage considered at specific moments throughout the four semesters of the period, and are considered *emerging*, since they were decided based on the informal evaluation of the demands and potentialities of the teams working in distinct semesters, as well as on higher influences. In addition to those, biweekly pedagogical meetings were held to address routine educational and administrative issues, as well as individual guidance (in person or online) by the coordinators, aimed at addressing issues of teaching or production of teaching-learning material and solving problems regarding the practices of the group. These two last formative modalities are considered *permanent*, since, according to the participants, they took place in all the semesters of the stage. Box 1 presents a synthesis of the teacher education design proposed throughout the period investigated.

Box 1: Teacher education design

Formative modalities	Semester				Participants
	1	2	3	4	
Pedagogical meetings	•	•	•	•	Conducted by the project coordinators to the Paraná Speaks Languages teachers.

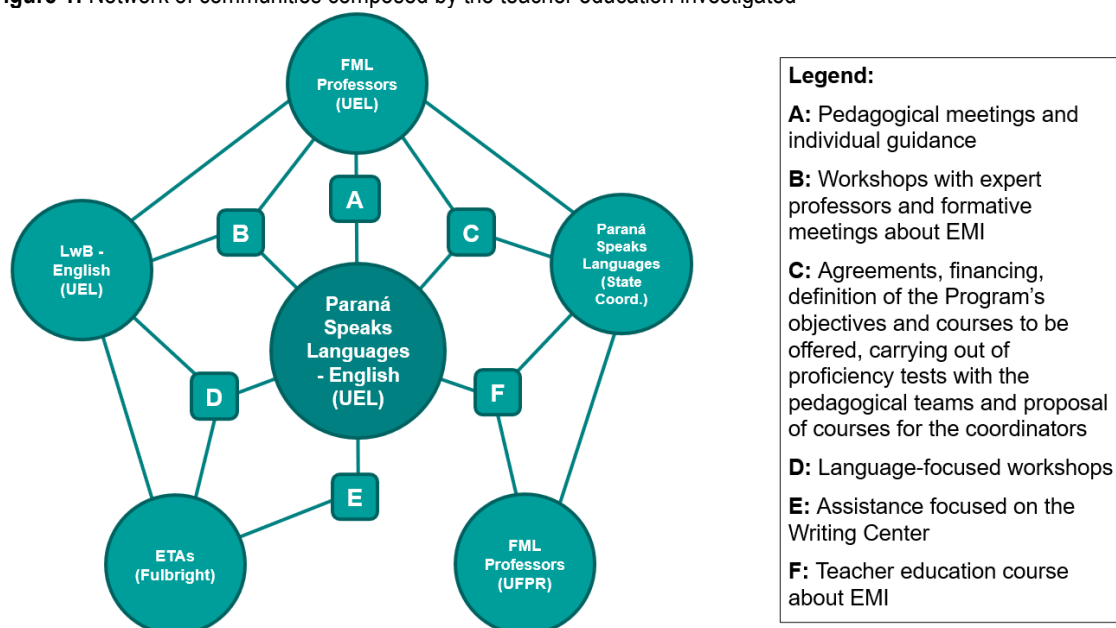| Activity					Description
Individual guidance	•	•	•	•	Given by the project coordinators, alternately, to the Paraná Speaks Languages teachers.
Classroom assistance	•				Given by the pedagogical advisor to a Paraná Speaks Languages teacher.
Thematic workshops	•	•			Given by MFL professors from the HEI invited by the local coordinators of Paraná Speaks Languages and LwB, offered to the teachers of both projects.
Language-focused workshops		•			Offered by ETAs to the teachers of Paraná Speaks Languages and LwB.
Assistance focused on the Writing Center		•			Offered by an ETA specialized in the subject to the Paraná Speaks Languages teachers in events of assistance to the internal community.
Modern Foreign Language Professional Master's degree discipline			•		Taught by the institutional coordinator to master's degree students, among whom were the three Paraná Speaks Languages teachers of that term.
Online course about EMI on Future Learn website			•		Suggested by the pedagogical advisor and taken by the Paraná Speaks Languages teachers.
Online course about EMI on Cambridge Online platform				•	Taken by the pedagogical advisor according to the Program's proposal.
In-person course about EMI at UFPR				•	Taught by a specialist professor from UFPR, through a partnership with the Program, offered to two members of each HEI participating in the Paraná Speaks Languages, with Lia representing the group at UEL.
In-person course about EMI at UFPR				•	Taught by a specialist professor from UFPR, through a partnership with the Program, in which the three Paraná Speaks Languages teachers working in the last semester participated.
Formative meetings about EMI				•	Held by professors from Paraná Speaks Languages and LwB, together with the coordinators from Paraná Speaks Languages and the pedagogical coordinator of LwB.

Source: the author.

The report presented in this study allows us to identify the participation of different groups in the teacher education promoted by the project in the second stage of Paraná Speaks Languages, corroborating the view of Wenger-Trayner and Wenger-Trayner (2015b) that the *body of knowledge* of a profession may be better understood through a complex landscape that brings diverse communities of practice together, which the authors call a *landscape of practices*. These communities are involved not only in the practice itself, but also in research, teaching, management, regulations regarding the profession, associations, among many other relevant dimensions, and all of these practices have their own histories, domains and regimes of competence. According to the authors, the composition of a *landscape of practice* is dynamic,

since, over time, communities emerge and disappear, evolve, merge and engage with others, but also split, compete with each other and, at times, ignore the others (Wenger-Trayner; Wenger-Trayner, 2015b).

Fig. 1 depicts the network of communities with which the investigated group interacted in the context of English teacher education during the period covered by this study. Each circle denotes a group (even if occasionally represented by one or two individuals) that, by some type of association, influenced the teacher education in the context investigated. The letters *A* to *F* indicate the formative modalities through which these relationships were established. In this representation, issues of administrative order were also considered, due to their importance for maintaining the actions in the Program at the state level.

Figure 1: Network of communities composed by the teacher education investigated

Legend:

A: Pedagogical meetings and individual guidance

B: Workshops with expert professors and formative meetings about EMI

C: Agreements, financing, definition of the Program's objectives and courses to be offered, carrying out of proficiency tests with the pedagogical teams and proposal of courses for the coordinators

D: Language-focused workshops

E: Assistance focused on the Writing Center

F: Teacher education course about EMI

Source: the author

The way in which the teacher education investigated in this study was designed allows us to state that most of the formative modalities adopted emerged dynamically throughout the project, due to the high turnover of temporary members of the group, since the teacher education was based on the profile of the teachers working in each term, as well as on higher decisions within the scope of the Paraná Speaks Languages. Seeking to identify the perspective of learning underlying the formative modalities carried out, the voices of the participating teachers were incorporated to this discussion.

In the case of the first formative modality that emerged in the stage, the thematic workshops with expert professors, what can be inferred from the data provided by the institutional coordinator is that, initially, those meetings aimed to mobilize a body of knowledge based on theoretical content, selected by the coordinators of the two institutional projects (Paraná Speaks Languages and LwB) as they were considered favorable for the process of constructing meaning about teaching English for specific purposes. In the view of the Paraná Speaks Languages teachers working in the first semester of the stage, those meetings were characterized as "conversations with guests", in which "they presented teaching techniques, their researches, worldview and classroom experiences" (Alanno, EQ[18]), or as "a process in which guest professors talk about their own experience or bring very valid arguments to reinforce aspects of teaching or add new content" (Européia, EQ). Although the term "conversations" implies a dialogical relationship between the guest professors and the Paraná Speaks Languages teachers, the data provided through the electronic questionnaire (EQ) by teachers working in that semester do not reveal a participative role on the part of the latter, suggesting a conception of teacher education which relegated to the teachers the role of attendance in meetings which prioritized *technical rationality*.

This conception seems to be supported by Anna, who considered the content presented in the workshops to be the basis for discussions about teaching practice emerging in other formative modalities:

> Excerpt 04
> ANNA: But along with these workshops, then, we had what we called meetings with the pedagogical advisor, which is where we could see the specific demands, what had happened in the classroom during the week, how what he had seen in the workshop could make sense for... for that moment... "Oh, he's been having difficulty assessing"... and then we always managed to recap... "But didn't you see with [guest professor who gave a workshop on assessment], what was it like? What did she say about assessment of written production? So, how are we going to assess this?" So, we could recap those questions, you know (CI).

Just like the pedagogical meetings, as described in Exc. 04, the individual guidance sessions were also spaces in which the coordination mediated the knowledge covered in the workshops and the one considered necessary to deal with the challenges of the practices agreed upon by the group (Anna, CI). On those events, *disciplinary knowledge* and *knowledge-for-teaching* (Freeman, 2016) interrelated.

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[18] EQ: Electronic questionnaire

In this sense, in the case of the workshops held in the second semester of the stage, the themes addressed point, once again, to a concern with teaching theoretical content. According to the pedagogical advisor, the meetings with university professors during that period were based on the following themes: production of didactic sequences, English for reading, use of digital tools in language teaching, lexicography, assessment of oral and written production and production of teaching-learning material. On the other hand, the meetings with ETAs were limited to issues related to language, the Writing Center and technological tools in language teaching.

Notwithstanding, the themes addressed in the workshops seem to have had positive effects on the identity of some teachers, as can be noticed by the learning accounts in Box 2, in which two teachers who participated in the focus group (FG) express their perception of changes in perspective regarding English language teaching.

Box 2: Perceptions of changes in perspective caused by the teacher education

"These workshops, they were AWESOME, I mean, I had, we had 'dictionary use' [...] Wow! It changed my perspective on the use of dictionaries [...], including things that I later took to the Instrumental Reading class" (Jessica, FG).
"Yeah, these really, really simple things that change your language perspective, right, it's really cool!" (Jessica, FG, referring to the topics covered in the workshops).
"[...] in fact, many of the things presented in this [reading] workshop I used in my first Instrumental Reading class at the Paraná Speaks Languages, [...] so, it was like... a turning point for me to understand what reading is" (Jessica, FG).
"And then you ask yourself: 'How come I didn't do this before?' [referring to the analysis of students' needs at the beginning of the course, a topic addressed in a workshop] [...] Or that one, after learning questions related to assessment, you ask: 'How did I assess before?'" (Lia, FG).
"Before I, before teaching the Reading course, I would say: 'Ok, interesting!' [...] Then, after about two months, the students were flying! You say: 'My God, it's not possible!' [...] I say: 'Wow, that's wonderful! It's like magic!'" (Lia, FG).
"How wrong was the idea we had of what ESP was at the beginning!" (Jessica, FG).

Source: the author

As in the case of the workshops, emerging formative modalities in the last two semesters of the stage reiterate the group's search for new knowledge, with a theoretical bias, as exemplified by Anna, in Exc. 02, when describing the postgraduate course discipline she offered. In the same direction, both the online courses held in international educational platforms and those offered in person by UFPR through a partnership with the Paraná Speaks Languages, with a common goal of focusing on EMI, reaffirmed the need to learn content about a subject that was not part of the *histories of learning* of the team as a whole.

Regarding the last semester of the teacher education, what can be noticed is that the courses focused on EMI and the readings proposed by the coordination about the subject acted as

sources of knowledge of *technical rationality* that the members of the Paraná Speaks Languages shared in formative meetings in which the LwB team also participated. Since that was a space in which there were no experienced peers on the subject chosen as the focus of the teacher education, those meetings were reported by the team as moments of "joint construction" (Jessica, FG), in which they sought to "create principles of what EMI is" (Anna, CI – Exc. 03), so that this could guide them "towards the production of teaching-learning material" (Anna, CI – Exc. 03), evidencing the theoretical bias adopted in the teacher education as the basis for the central practice assumed by the group – the production of teaching-learning material.

This practice, however, was initially perceived as a challenge by some teachers, since it made them face the unknown and even question their teaching capabilities, as can be seen in Fernanda's report when comparing this experience to previous ones in other teaching contexts:

> Excerpt 05
> FERNANDA: [...] [I] had never taught like that before, you know? – Creating the teaching-learning material myself. Everything, always, the material was ready, I just made little adjustments. It was much easier! And when I entered the project... I was shocked: "My God! What now? I don't think I'm a teacher!" You get a little scared, don't you? But then, I remember that I talked... I talked to [Prof. X[19]], to Lia, right? So, like, we exchanged information, right at the beginning. Then after the semester was over: "Wow, I believe now I... I already know how to walk, you know?" But like, every time, like, I'm always asking: "Oh, how do you do that?" [...] and vice-versa. So, like, I try to pass on what I think I know, right, like: "Look, I prepared this, take a look! What do you think?" So, we try to exchange ideas. That's very important! (FG)

Fernanda's account highlights the important role played by her colleagues in reifying their previous experiences in the project, welcoming the new member of the group amidst her insecurities. It can be noticed, therefore, that after a semester in the project, Fernanda felt more self-confident, starting to contribute to the group through her participatory and reifying experiences. Exc. 05 also presents evidence that the practices of the group included the dimensions that, according to Wenger (1998), underpin belonging to a community of practice: the *mutuality of engagement*, the *accountability to the enterprise* and the *negotiability of the repertoire*.

It can be observed, therefore, that the teacher education developed in the context investigated was configured according to a hybrid approach in relation to the knowledge mobilized, focusing on the practices defined by the group. In general, the formative modalities that emerged

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[19] Prof. X=Paraná Speaks Languages teacher who did not participate in this study.

throughout the period served as sources of theoretical knowledge or, as named by Freeman (2016), *disciplinary knowledge*, which aimed to contribute to the learning of specificities related to the English courses to be offered by the Paraná Speaks Languages teachers. On the other hand, the formative modalities that were kept throughout the stage – pedagogical meetings and individual guidance – proved to be spaces in which the *disciplinary knowledge* covered in the other modalities supported discussions on the practices of the group, interrelating with the *knowledge-for-teaching*.

The way in which the formative practices were decided suggests a hierarchical teacher education model, proposed grounded on decisions based on evaluations by the local project coordination, sometimes influenced by resolutions from the state coordination of the Program, with little decision-making participation on the part of the teachers. Furthermore, the choices made reinforce the understanding that the professional knowledge considered essential for the practices agreed upon by the group was, to a large extent, produced by more experienced peers sought in other communities.

On the other hand, it is fair to recognize the relevance of the questioning stance adopted by the local project coordination when contesting the imposition of a one-size-fits-all teaching-learning material for all the HEIs involved in the Program, a position that reflects the recognition of the uniqueness of each context in terms of its members, aims, and needs. In this sense, this stance could be associated with a critical view of internationalization (Stein, 2021). On the other hand, while this resistance reflects a particular motivation to carry out distinct and unique work, it is, in a certain way, limited by the external policy agenda, presupposing a passive institutional internationalization (Lima; Maranhão, 2009).

Final considerations

This research aimed to investigate the continuing education of English teachers provided by an extension project linked to the Paraná Speaks Languages Program at the State University of Londrina during the second stage of the Program. The study evidenced that various motivations led the group to focus their efforts on a *joint enterprise* – the production of teaching-learning material for classes of English for specific purposes and EMI, which, in addition to being a central practice of the group, was the basis for the teacher education developed throughout the period investigated.

Initially decided by the project coordinators, not all teachers engaged in this enterprise equally, largely due to the departure of some during the period, motivated by various reasons, such as demands related to academic activities in other contexts, as well as new job opportunities. Although many participants identified themselves as belonging to a community of practice, the high turnover of teachers may have contributed to the fact that it was not possible to identify the dimensions that define such a community throughout the period investigated.

By associating with different communities over the course of two years, the group sought professional development in the practices it had agreed upon in order to establish its own *regime of competence*. The search for knowledge in external instances organized the relationships between different groups into a complex network of communities, similar to a *landscape of practice*. According to Wenger-Trayner and Wenger-Trayner (2015b), while the dimension of knowledge negotiated in a community of practice is defined as *competence*, in a landscape, the multiplicity of practices in which an individual engages constitutes his/her *knowledgeability*. It can therefore be inferred that teacher education through a network of communities may have contributed more comprehensively to the professional development of the participating teachers in the context of teaching English for internationalization purposes.

Throughout the process, the production of teaching-learning material, assumed as the central practice of the group, gained momentum and gradually began to be undertaken jointly, with a more evident shared repertoire and greater engagement on the part of the teachers. In particular, by the end of the stage investigated, motivated by a common purpose, the group engaged as a whole in the search for knowledge that had not been part of its members' *histories of learning* until then, at which point their participatory experiences served as motivation for their engagement in an authorial practice that could be shared with teachers in other communities, thus seeking to reify their experiences in the project in different instances.

Based on the reports of the participants in this research, it can be stated that, by identifying *joint enterprise*, *mutual engagement* and *shared repertoire* in the actions of this community, in the final phase of the period investigated, the unity formed by the duality between participatory experiences and reifying projections of the group signals to the constitution of a *community of practice*.

The limitations of the study lie precisely on the fact that, since it was not possible to observe the formative practices developed, the understanding of the teacher education was limited to data from the participants' reports. In this sense, an ethnographic study would have greater potential to

understand the proposal in a more comprehensive manner, in addition to being a possibility for rethinking future stages of the Program.

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26