

## **PARTNERSHIP BETWEEN UNIVERSITY AND SCHOOL AIMING THE FORMATION OF LIBRAS- BRASILIAN SIGN LANGUAGE- TEACHER**

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### **ABSTRACT**

**Introduction:** In the Bachelor's Degree in Arts / Libras we develop a project in a bilingual education for deaf perspective, linked to PIBID (Introduction to Teaching Scholarship Program), fostered by the Federal Government of Brazil through CAPES (Coordination for the Improvement of People of Higher Level Education). The team is composed by students and professors from the higher Bachelor's / Libras course and school teachers of basic education. **Objectives:** Provide training of teachers in higher level to act in public school and introduce students of Arts / Libras into the school routine. **Method:** Qualitative and action-research approach, prioritizing the action - reflection - action, regarding to the teaching of Libras, Portuguese language and writing of sign language using the Brazilian System of Sign Language Writing – ELiS. **Results:** It was possible to state the Libras fluency in deaf and hearing students, there was an improvement in text interpretation in Portuguese, in writing their name-signs and words in ELiS, students expressed interest, and responsiveness and enthusiasm in all activities. Regarding to the school organization, it was noticed the worthiness of Libras and deaf students, reorganization of the schedule and curriculum of the school, including Libras as a school component. **Conclusion:** the PIBID (Introduction to Teaching Scholarship Program) project in the Teacher Training Program of Letras:Libras allows both the school of elementary education and the teachers training for Libras education an integral and collective work partnership, with discussions and changes concerning bilingual education for the deaf and Libras education and teaching.

### **INTRODUCTION**

The main theme that guides this study is the training of teachers to teach Brazilian Sign Language (Libras) in a bilingual education perspective, aimed specifically at public schools that offer special/inclusive education programs and have, amongst their students, deaf students who use Libras as their mean of communication. The study has been developed with the Introduction to Teaching Scholarship Program (PIBID), provided by the Coordination of Personal Development of Higher Degree (Capes), entailed to the Brazilian Education Ministry (MEC), conducted by the Libras Teacher Training program at the Letras Faculty of the Federal University of Goiás (UFG).

Since 2002 in Brazil, the Law 10.436 recognizes and establishes Libras as an official means of expression and originating communication of the deaf community. It also determines that education professionals have the study of this language in their training courses. This law is regulated by the Decree number 5.626/2005. The former determines imperative mechanisms and public actions aimed at the training of professionals for teaching, interpretation and translation of Libras, affirmative actions for Libras users and its expansion. (Brazil, 2005).

The Decree 5.626 is an accomplishment coming from a historical, political and social context of movement for human and linguistic rights, with debates, actions and struggles of the deaf community, both nationwide and internationally. We bring Chapter 6 into focus, for it concerns the assurance of the right to education for the deaf people and the hearing impaired. Chapter 6 explains:

22nd Art. The federal teaching institutions responsible for basic education must assure the inclusion of deaf students or hearing impaired, through the organization of:

1 – Bilingual schools, open to both deaf students and listeners, with bilingual teachers, in child education and the initial years of elementary school;

2 – Bilingual schools or standard schools in the regular school system, open to both deaf students and listeners, for the first years of elementary education, high school or professional education, with teachers from different fields of knowledge, aware of the linguistic singularity of the deaf students as well as translators and interpreters for Libras – Portuguese.

§ 1º Those schools in which Libras and the written form of Portuguese are languages of instruction used in the development of all the educational process are determined bilingual.

§ 2º The students have the right to schooling in a different shift from the educational service specialized for the development of curriculum complementation, with access to equipment and information technology.

23rd Art. The federal teaching institutions of basic and higher education must provide deaf students with Libras/Portuguese translators and interpreters in the classroom and other educational environments, as well as equipment and technologies that enable access to communication, information and education.

§ 1º Teachers must be provided with access to literature and information about the linguistic specificity of the deaf student.

§ 2º The private institutions and the public institutions of the federal, state, municipal and the Federal District will seek to implement the measures mentioned in this article as a means of assuring the deaf and hearing impaired students the access to communication, information and education (Brazil, 2005).

The Letras:Libras teacher training program of the Letras Faculty at Universidade Federal de Goiás (UFG) has a perspective of teacher training that objectifies language, culture and deaf students' education, seeking to contribute to what is disposed in the said decree.

Along these lines, the Introduction to Teaching Scholarship Program (PIBID) of the Letras:Libras teacher training program aims at providing collective training between the university and the public school of basic education, seeking to develop transformative and meaningful actions for the specificity of the education of deaf students, in a bilingual perspective, mingling Brazilian Sign Language – Libras and Portuguese. It also seeks to analyze and consider the processes of teaching-learning of Libras in the school context.

For its development, we established a partnership with a state public school located in Goiânia, in the state of Goiás, in Brazil, which has deaf students taking the first and second levels of elementary school, open to the perspective of bilingual education. This partnership is seen as a possibility to establish a two-way association in which the university can contribute to the school as well as the school contributes to the training of our teachers. As members of the action-investigation, not only teachers and students from the Letras:Libras teacher training program are involved, but also teachers from the partner public school, through actions definitions and the Letras:Libras PIBID proposal forwarding in the school.

## **OBJECTIVES**

Provide teacher training in higher education degree to act upon the public school and insert the students from the Letras:Libras teacher training program in the school's reality.

## **METHODOLOGY**

The methodological background that guides the development of the Introduction to Teaching Scholarship Program (PIBID) of the Letras:Libras teacher training program at the Letras Faculty of UFG is guided by the qualitative approach and the action-research, prioritizing the action – reflection – action, concerning the teaching of Libras, Portuguese and the written form of the sign language, using the Brazilian System of Sing Language Writing (ELiS), in an investigation-action framing.

The participation of the subjects of the investigation locus is considered an essential requirement and allows the investigation-action to happen under a critical perspective.

The critical action-research takes into consideration the subject's voice, her/his perspective, his/her meaning, but not only for record and later interpretation of the researcher: the subject's voice is part of the tessitura of the investigation methodology. In this case, the methodology does not happen through steps of a method, it is

organized by relevant situations that emerge in the process (Franco, 2005, p. 486).

For the development of this purpose, we use a perspective of teacher training with autonomous and reflexive skills that minimize the impact of social changes in teacher's work, with a more reflexive attitude. Along these lines, the teacher is encouraged to develop skills to question her/his own practice with an inquisitive inclination, "with a watchful and inquisitive attitude, which allows them to make decisions about what to do and how to do in their teaching situations, marked by the urgency and uncertainty" (André, 2001, p.59).

## **RESULTS**

The Brazilian sign language – Libras is a language of modality space visual-manual and has very specific characteristics that make it different from hearing and oral languages. With the Letras:Libras PIBIC project we had the opportunity to unite the theory to the teaching practice. Libras is considered the natural language of the deaf people and learning this language was not an easy task for the students from the partner school. It was not easy either for the Letras:Libras students in the PIBID project to develop the activity of being a teacher in a classroom of regular education. Nonetheless, this experience was extremely important for their academic development.

For the teaching practices of Libras, we adopted methodologies with communicative approaches to teaching, playful classes, using games and dynamics. Bearing in mind the encouragement of teaching and practice of Libras in classrooms in a more playful way, we promoted the communication and interaction amongst pupils, rendering them more active in the teaching-learning process. Games and dynamics can be pedagogical and educational, depending on the circumstances, since they can raise in students the openness for the progress of learning-teaching (Gesser, 2012).

All games, dynamics or activities were recorded daily in reports. We realized that playful games offer students conditions to experience problem-situations, from the development of planned and free games that provided the students an experience with logic and reasoning. Besides that, the use of games and dynamics favored physical and mental activities that contributed to sociability and the stimulus of affective, cognitive, social, moral, cultural and linguistic reactions. We realized that the dynamics help maintain active reflexes, making learning Libras fun and spontaneous.

Promoting conversation, discussions and storytelling was the method adopted by the PIBID teachers to make teaching happen in a spontaneous way, for it is in the classroom that deaf students have the opportunity to express themselves in their own language. The Letras:Libras Teaching Scholarship Program (PIBID) is an important milestone for the linguistic development of deaf students that need differentiated strategies for learning.

The learning-teaching process of these students happens on a day-by-day basis, for their needs are different and, to achieve the objective of effective learning, we also adopted multiple strategies, such as the use of videos, games, dynamics and so forth. Creativity and study are necessary to plan and adapt classes according to the each student's reality, helping her/his learning process.

We observed a good performance from both listeners and deaf students in the comprehension of Libras and its expression, making the communication between the listeners and deaf possible. The students could identify some signs and even phrases. Teaching Libras made learning possible for both students and teachers.

Until the 1970's, we believed that the sign languages could not be registered in written language, in other words, the belief that these languages were unwritten was predominant. However, this belief has been altered thanks to SignWriting creation, a writing technique based on a system of dance steps notation. (Stumpf, 2007).

In 1997, the Sign Languages Writing System was created and it was called ELiS. It allowed us to register the signs that make up the visual-spatial languages in an alphabetical and linear way. This is the writing system of sign language adopted in this project (Barros, 2008).

The experience of teaching the written form of the Brazilian Sign Language as an integral part of the PIBID Letras:Libras project from UFG was based on the idea that written expression can propitiate the student certain autonomy, an ELiS workshop was developed based on action-research. This work was developed with deaf students from the partner school. Our main objective was to present the group of deaf teenagers the basic notions of this technique. The workshop allowed us to present the four parameters used by ELiS, using signs, the logical sequence of writing and its visual graphemes (name given to graphical symbols of ELiS), through practical activities, with dynamics that involved the students in active and collaborative learning. We noticed that the students assimilated ELiS, since they could produce the writing of their sign-names and words; they also showed interest, receptivity and enthusiasm in finding out the possibility of graphical registration of their own language.

## **FINAL THOUGHTS**

The Letras:Libras PIBID Project makes possible for both the basic education school and training teachers a work partnership in a collective and integral way, with discussions and changes concerning bilingual education for deaf students and Libras teaching.

In every environment and in the most diverse occasions, every situation that brings up novelty can raise, initially, surprise, awe, curiosity, expectation, a certain discomfort and

even distrust. And these were the exact feeling that, according to our perceptions, dominated the school environment on our first days in the field school.

Little by little we performed the planned activities and could see changes coming from the school community that let out a timid trust that bloomed and revealed itself more clearly as we succeeded in the development of our activities.

The fortification of the relationship between us, PIBID researchers and the teachers' body from the school, our great ally, seems to have been really consolidated during our participation in the pedagogical meeting that took place in October, 2014. Our actions there were strategically planned to cause impact showing that we are a united group, aware of our objectives and willing to make a good job. From this day on we could count on the participation of students, mainly listeners, who showed a great interest and performance.

Given the above, we noticed a positive outcome in the activities performed by the Letras:Libras PIBID project group at UFG, since, through Libras classes and workshops, we could promote learning and development of potential skills, some even unknown, as in the case of the written expression of sign language – ELiS, of deaf students. Consequently, we raised in these students new horizons to make them independent. All of this reaffirmed in us the importance of contact with school practices that generate knowledge, so crucial for professional training of teachers who are aware of their role in society.

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