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Teachers' expectations:
an intercultural discursive investigation

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My friends, for their support and understanding.

We must become the change we want to see.
(Mahatma Gandhi)

ABSTRACT

Teachers' expectations: an intercultural discursive investigation

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2010

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A growing attention on the development of students' academic performance has been noticed among recent educational studies. Assuming a relationship between students' optimal academic development and teachers' expectations and teacher-student relationship, this study aimed at clarifying the intricacies of such relationship according to the teachers' point of view. The corpus consists of answers from a questionnaire provided by 10 (ten) "minority" high school teachers in Brazil and the United States: five Brazilian teachers of Portuguese and the same number of American teachers of English. The questionnaire was designed to shed light on, primarily, teachers' expectations towards their students – more specifically, towards at-risk students – and on the differences and similarities of teachers' answers in the two cultural contexts. The analysis was carried out based on Critical Discourse Analysis (Fairclough 2005, 1994, 1991) and on educational views on teachers' expectations (Egyed & Short, 2006; Jussim & Harber, 2005; Muller, 2001; Hoy, 2000; Muller, Katz & Dance, 1999). Overall, the two groups of interviewees show a willingness to engage in a good relationship with students and also showed the importance of further attention when students present academic-related problems, for instance. The study also determined a difference in focus amongst the two groups: Americans demonstrated greater concern to the students' academic problems while Brazilians focused on the students' personal

problems. The results lead to a general and consistent attitude from teachers: concepts and actions are consistent with the hegemonic view of a prospect successful student, the one who eliminates personal background effects and with minimal academic deficiencies. Teachers' expectations refer to their relationship with the student. Students' engagement and sparse problems occurrence are rewarded. Hence, the reality of the attributed students at risk of failing is characterized by uninterested teachers and low expectancy. These findings were again revisited by answering the guiding question of this study. The results found from question 1 (How do teachers evaluate their efforts towards the students?) was that teachers demonstrated limited effort, closely related to their concepts and importance of shared responsibility, and mutual interest. Some attitudes are expected before teachers decide to engage in the relationship and withal a concern with being seen as caring and nurturing individuals. As far as question 2 (How important is the high school teacher-student relationship for the student to learn the proper skills needed for academic success in college?), we were unable to reach a final conclusion while in question 3 (What do teachers believe is most important for students' academic and personal success/development?), the results point to the students showing interest in self-development as the most mentioned. Question 4 (What is/are the difference(s) between "minority" high school student-teacher relationships in Brazil and in the USA?) was important for driving the study to find some interesting aspects and into concluding that Brazilians seem to take into account the students' personal, private lives whereas Americans were more concerned with providing their students with the academic skills required for personal, academic and professional success.

Keywords: teachers' expectations, teacher-student relationship, educational research, critical discourse analysis

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RESUMO

Expectativa dos professores: uma investigação discursiva e intercultural

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2010

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A crescente atenção no desenvolvimento do desempenho acadêmico dos alunos tem-se notado entre recentes estudos na área da Educação. Assumindo uma relação entre o desenvolvimento acadêmico dos alunos e as expectativas dos professores e o relacionamento professor-aluno, este estudo visou clarificar os entremeios de tais relações de acordo com o ponto de vista dos professores. O corpus é composto por respostas de um questionário constituído por 10 (dez) professores do ensino médio de escolas de periferia no Brasil e nos Estados Unidos: cinco professores de Português Brasileiro e o mesmo número de professores americanos de Inglês. O questionário foi elaborado para esclarecer, principalmente, as expectativas dos professores em relação aos seus alunos – mais especificamente, relacionado a estudantes em situação de risco – e sobre as semelhanças e diferenças nas respostas dos professores nos dois contextos culturais. A análise foi baseada na Análise Crítica do Discurso (Fairclough 2005, 1994, 1991) e em visões educacionais das expectativas dos professores (EGYED & Short, 2006; Jussim & Harber, 2005; Muller, 2001; Hoy, 2000; Muller, Katz & Dance, 1999). Em suma, os dois grupos de entrevistadas demonstram uma vontade de engajar em um bom relacionamento com os alunos e também mostram a importância de uma maior atenção quando os alunos apresentam problemas acadêmicos, por exemplo. O estudo determinou uma diferença de foco entre os dois grupos: as americanas demonstraram maior preocupação quanto aos problemas acadêmicos dos alunos,

enquanto as brasileiras focaram nos problemas pessoais dos alunos. Os resultados levaram a uma atitude geral e consistente das professoras: conceitos e ações são consistentes com a perspectiva de uma visão hegemônica de um aluno de sucesso, aluno que elimina os efeitos de problemas pessoais e com o mínimo de deficiências acadêmicas. Os alunos que se envolvem em um bom relacionamento e que apresentam raros problemas são recompensados, conforme concluído neste estudo. Assim, a realidade dos estudantes em risco se caracterizam por professores desinteressados e com baixa expectativa. As descobertas acima foram revisitadas, respondendo às questões norteadoras deste estudo. Os resultados encontrados referentes a questão 1 (Como os professores avaliam seus esforços para com os seus alunos?) foi de que os professores demonstram esforço limitado, estreitamente relacionado aos conceitos e à importância da responsabilidade compartilhada, e de interesse mútuo. Algumas atitudes são esperadas antes mesmo dos professores decidirem engajar em um relacionamento com eles, bem como, uma preocupação em serem vistos como indivíduos afetuosos. Quanto a questão 2 (Quão importante é a relação professor-aluno, no ensino médio, para o aluno aprender as habilidades necessárias e adequadas ao seu sucesso acadêmico?), fomos incapazes de chegar a uma conclusão final, enquanto na questão 3 (O que os professores acreditam ser mais importante para o desenvolvimento/sucesso acadêmico e pessoal dos alunos?), o resultados apontam para o interesse demonstrado pelos alunos em seu autodesenvolvimento como o mais mencionado. A pergunta 4 (Qual(is) a(s) diferença(s) entre o relacionamento aluno-professor nas escolas de periferia de ensino médio de no Brasil e nos Estados Unidos?) foi importante para a condução do estudo e em encontrar aspectos interessantes e concluir que as brasileiras parecem levar em conta a vida pessoal dos alunos, enquanto as americanas estavam mais preocupadas em proporcionar aos estudantes as habilidades acadêmicas necessárias para o sucesso pessoal, acadêmico e profissional.

Palavras chave: expectativa dos professores, relacionamento professor-aluno, pesquisa educacional, análise crítica do discurso.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1. CONTEXT OF INVESTIGATION

Contemporary educational research has been increasingly focused on issues related to human relationships (e.g., Biddle, Good & Goodson, 1997; Good, Biddle & Goodson, 1997) rather than merely examining teaching techniques and methodology (e.g., Anthony, 1963; Feldenkrais, 1972; Taylor, 1981; Taylor, 1981; Hirsch, 1984; Meade & McMeniman 1992). Studies show how important a good relationship between the teacher and the students is in order to reach the expected learning goals (e.g., Goddard, Hoy & Hoy, 2000; Lee & Loeb, 2000; Goddard & Goddard, 2001; Joyce & Showers 2002; Rowan, Correnti & Miller 2002; Aaronson, Barron & Sander, 2003; Rockoff, 2003; Wayne & Youngs, 2003). Students' self-confidence, motivation, interest; and teachers' attitudes, expectations and even burnout are some of the findings of recent research on high school students' lack of improvement and/or frustration[1].

Such learning failure in high school has brought some implications for students who try to go to college, for they do not seem to have acquired the needed skills for it. Hence, they are not ready or prepared for college, even though recent qualitative studies show that the amount of graduates from higher education is increasing over the years. In 2000, 9% of Brazilians[2] and 26% of Americans[3] had at least a college degree. In spite of the 'good news', the lack of preparation for college is still a problem. Brazil has, as many other countries do, a college admission test (e.g. *vestibular*, SAT Reasoning Test), which is not a guarantee that only well prepared students will pass.

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1 See further discussion on Chapter II.

2 See IBGE's Censo Demográfico 2000.

3 See US Census Bureau released July, 2002.

Accordingly, studies have shown that among the many problems which are being identified as possible causes for the generalized failure of high-schools in preparing students for college, one seems to have received growing attention: teachers' self-awareness as to their practice and their expectations in relation to the students, especially in high-risk communities, where problems such as drugs and violence may strongly interfere in the learning environment[4].

This study examines some of the aforementioned aspects, i.e. problems encountered in "minority"[5] high school – located in high-risk communities – and attributed as such for dealing with students at risk of failing (henceforth "at-risk students") and due to documented problems of student disengagement (Marks, 2000) and of teacher-student relationship (Muller, et al., 1999; Muller, 2001; Leitão & Waugh, 2007).

Therefore, this study focuses on the teacher-student relationship, more specifically on teachers' expectations and image of the students, in the context of "minority" high-school students both in Brazil and the US which may shed some light on this complex issue in an intercultural context. The participants consisted of female teachers working with language abilities: Brazilian teachers teaching Brazilian-Portuguese, in Brazil, and American teachers, teaching English in the United States of America.[6]

1.2. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE RESEARCH

In attempting to investigate the topic of teachers' expectations, in relation to their high-school students, this study may contribute, however timidly, to the understanding of one of the major problems affecting education – the lack of preparation for college – an issue which has been receiving a growing attention on the part of governments all over the world, especially in the so-called "developing" countries.

However, instead of taking foreign educational systems and procedures as models, supposing that education is unproblematic in so-called "developed" countries, this study seeks to investigate how

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4 See discussion on the matter in Chapter II.

5 Here "minority" stands for schools located in poor areas and that recurrently deal with problem students. "Minority" is called, in Brazil, "periferia".

6 This procedure was necessary to narrow down the research and lower the variables.

teachers establish a relationship with their students in a comparative perspective, by focusing on teachers' expectations and image of the students in the contexts of Brazilian and American high schools.

Since teachers' expectations are a fundamental constituent of the educational process, especially in environments with social and economic problems, in seeking to compare their views, this study focuses on Brazilian "*periferia*" and American inner-city high schools. This study thus hopes to contribute to a cross-cultural understanding of the attitudes of high-school teachers faced with the challenging task of preparing in-risk[7] students for college.

1.3. OBJECTIVES

Main Objective

The aim of this study is to investigate teachers' self-image along with their expectations and their image of graduating high-school students both in Brazil and in the USA in order to identify some issues that might permeate the possible problems in preparing students for university.

Specific Objectives

Regarding the specific objectives, the present investigation aims at defining the concepts of an effective teaching practice and of a 'good student' according to high-school teachers in Brazil and the United States; and also at identifying some of the major expectations of Brazilian and American high school teachers towards problematic students.

1.4. ASSUMPTIONS

[7] "In-risk" students are those who are in risk of dropping out of school or in risk of academic failure, at least to some degree.

In this study I assume that cultural aspects are relevant for the concept of ‘good teaching’ and of a ‘good student’, that is, Brazilian teachers' views are different from those of American teachers. Moreover, I also assume that teachers’ expectations towards problematic students are different in both countries.

1.5. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

In order to shed light on the relationship between (here you recap your main objective) the following research questions guide the present investigation/study:

– How do teachers evaluate their efforts towards the students?

– How important is the high school teacher-student relationship for the student to learn the proper skills needed for academic success in college?

– What do teachers believe is most important for students’ academic and personal success/development?

– What is/are the difference(s) between “minority” high school student-teacher relationships in Brazil and in the USA, if any?

1.6. ORGANIZATION OF THE STUDY

This work starts with a contextualization and introduction in **Chapter I**, which also contains the guiding objectives, assumptions and research questions. The subsequent section, **Chapter II**, conveys the review of the main theories used both as background material as well as for data. In **Chapter III**, the detailed methodology (from data gathering to analysis procedures) is presented. **Chapter IV** presents the twofold analysis of the samples. First, an analysis of the individual samples is conducted, followed by the analysis of the samples divided into Brazilian Samples and American Samples. Conclusions are shown in **Chapter V** and finally the Final Remarks are found in **Chapter VI**.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

2.1. INTRODUCTION

Theoretical support for the present work draws upon Critical Discourse Analysis and educational views on teachers' expectations. The first concerns the theoretical approach and method for the analysis of the corpus, while the second provides the general conceptual framework for data collection and interpretation or, in other words, as background for the analysis.

2.2. CRITICAL DISCOURSE ANALYSIS

Norman Fairclough has provided a consistent theory and method of discourse analysis involving the significance of discourses in social interaction. Critical Discourse Analysis (henceforth, CDA) seeks to uncover “connections and causes which are hidden” in social relations (Fairclough, 1994, p. 9), through the investigation of the linguistic choices made by speakers or writers in different situations. In van Dijk's (1995a) words, CDA attempts “to *uncover*, *reveal* or *disclose* what is implicit, hidden or otherwise not immediately obvious in relations of discursively enacted dominance or their underlying ideologies” (p. 18, original italics).

Both Fairclough and van Dijk are part of a group of linguists who share similar ideas about how to and why analyze discourse. However different in approach or methodology, their main focus is to reveal the possible meaning(s) behind ideology and power through the study of discourse, or in Wodak & Meyer's words (2009), “CDA is characterized by the common interests in de-mystifying ideologies and power through

the systematic and retroductable investigation of semiotic data (written, spoken or visual)" (p. 3).

According to the methodology developed by Fairclough, in order to carry out an analysis, context must be taken into consideration. This means that all that surrounds a given sample of discourse (e.g. historical context, participants, circumstances, and so on) is important to fully understand what is being said and why. Hence, Fairclough's definition of discourse as "an element of social life which is closely interconnected with other elements" (2005, p. 3) must be heeded. Since discourse is a form of social practice, the analysis of discourse must be taken critically. These are two important concepts in CDA – discourse and critical – and are worked together in carrying out an analysis. In distinguishing between what he terms non-critical and critical approaches, Fairclough (1992) states that a critical approach differs from a non-critical approach mainly because it is concerned with revealing

> how discourse is shaped by relations of power and ideologies, and the constructive effects discourse has upon social identities, social relations, and systems of knowledge and belief, neither of which is normally apparent to discourse participants (p.12).

Accordingly, in discourse analysis, we are challenged to see through the text, to look for the meanings concealed in it. The text is only the threshold and the objective is to disclose its social, political or historical implications which are reached only through a careful text analysis.

The methods for analysis are varied, depending on the aspects to be unveiled. In assessing the relationship between teachers and students, for example, the linguistic investigation might include questions such as: Who appears as the responsible for the actions and who is being acted upon? Are there any words which might indicate an authoritarian position on the part of the teachers? Are the authors placing themselves as responsible or placing others instead? What the authors are saying places them in a dominant or a dominated position? It is through text analysis that these questions can be answered and thus disclose the processes embedded in them.

The analysis of a text may involve several aspects, from the simplest to the most complex (syntax, vocabulary, and so on). Among the range of possibilities of text analysis, some are more relevant than

others according to the particularity of the analysis. These choices are made to meet with the objectives of the problem under investigation and with corpus. That means, for example, that there is no point in asking and searching for ‘interaction control’ if the corpus consists of answers from a questionnaire.

Texts are writing or speaking instances of language constituted by (a) paragraph(s), which is/are constituted by sentences constituted by clauses, which in turn consist of “three main types of element: processes (usually realized as verbs), participants (subjects, objects, etc.), circumstances (commonly realized as adverbs)” (Fairclough, 2005, p. 213).

An author's style involves a set of choices made by him/her out of an almost infinite range of possibilities. These choices reflect the author’s “particular ways of being, particular social or personal identities” (Fairclough, 2004, p. 228). There is no such thing as an unmeant, unpurposed or unintentional linguistic choice. In a careful examination of a “text”, one can perceive individual values at work. The choice of how to represent social actors in a clause, for example, is part of the author’s style. There are many variables that distinguish the different ways social actors can be portrayed. Social actors may be included as pronouns or as nouns. They can be represented in different grammatical roles: as Participants (as Actor or Affected), within a Circumstance (answering questions like what, when, where, and how; usually adverbs and prepositional adverbial phrases), or as possessive noun or pronoun.

When the social actor is represented as a Participant, it can be either in an ‘activated’ or ‘passivated’ role, i.e. the one who acts (Actor) or the one acted upon (Affected or Beneficiary), respectively. This, specifically, shows who the author gives power to or who s/he takes it from and, according to Fairclough (2000), it is a matter of social significance. Another form of giving power to or taking power from a social actor is by representing them personally (by name) or impersonally, in terms of class/category, such as a profession, a nationality or any other group identity.

Still dealing with Participants’ representation, pronouns are important to take into consideration mainly since they differ in meaning and

> the difference between subjectively marked modalities and modalities which are not subjectively marked is that the former are 'first person' statements ('I-statements') whereas the

> latter are 'third-person' statements. ‘First person' statements can also be plural, 'we statements' – like the 'power of prediction', the power of making statements on behalf of 'all of us' is a power which has an uneven social distribution, and is important for identification (Fairclough, 2005, p. 171).

These differences in (self-)representation can indicate the extent of what the author is saying. The vagueness of writing in ‘We-statements’ is even lower than in ‘you-statements’: what Fairclough (2005) calls ‘we-community’ and ‘you-community’. These ‘communities’ do not necessarily include anyone and everyone, but the range may be inferred through the analysis of the linguistic elements immediately before and/or after the pronominalization and also the global meaning of the text.

Opposite to the above cases, there are cases of excluded social actors. This may occur by means of suppression (there is no mention of them whatsoever) or backgrounding (mentioned once somewhere in the text and needed to be inferred afterwards). These exclusions are linked to another category under analysis: nominalizations. Nominalizations are processes turned into entities. Instead of explaining ‘who does what’, the author chooses to depict the action with the use of a noun. Fairclough (2005) says that “there is a transparent link between ‘destruction’ and ‘people destroy things’, ‘creation’ and ‘people create things’” (p. 143). Hence, nominalizations are forms of generalization and they may entail the omission of other clause elements as the participant, the verb tense and modality.

As much as style is part of the author’s texturing of self-identity, so are modality and evaluation. Modality is the author’s commitment to truth and to what is necessary, while evaluation has to do with how the authors commit themselves according to what is desirable/undesirable, good/bad (Fairclough, 2005). There are many ways authors can commit themselves and, therefore, there are many markers of modalization, from modal verbs (‘must’) and adverbs (‘certainly’) to hedges (‘sort of’) and reported speech (‘I’m told’). Also, evaluation has a set of categories: evaluative statements, statements with deontic modalities, statements with affective mental process verbs, and value assumptions.

The first – evaluative statements – are about desirability and undesirability, good and bad. An evaluation may be explicit or assumed, e.g. in form of exclamations. It also has what Fairclough (2005) calls, a ‘scale of intensity’ (e.g. the difference between ‘like’, ‘love’ and

‘adore’). Statements with deontic modalities are obligational, while statements with affective mental processes are explicit and subjective marks of the author’s voice and commitment (‘I believe’). Value assumptions, on the other hand, are more subtle and often needed to be triggered by the interpreter (Fairclough, 2005). For these reasons, the study of modality and evaluation is also a matter of ideological interest since it is directly related to the author’s social positioning.

Since the analysis of evaluation involves the Hallidayan concepts of processes, a brief account of the different types of processes is necessary. As summarized by Dellagnelo and Meurer (2006),

> Material processes are processes of doing and happening. (…) Mental processes or processes of sensing encode meanings with respect to feeling, thinking and perceiving. (…) Verbal processes are processes of verbal action, of saying. Relational processes are processes of being (pp. 159-160).

Starting with the analysis of the actual text, we must move forward to the other two levels of analysis: the discourse practices and the social practices, as illustrated in Figure1 below. This movement from description to interpretation (as simplified in methodology) is needed to understand the process of analysis according to CDA. It is important to bear in mind, though, that these levels are correlated and are only dissociated for analysis purposes.

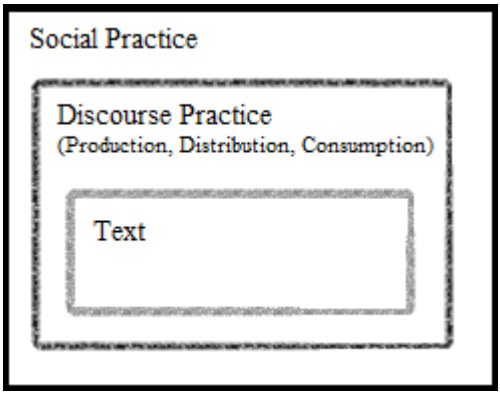

Figure 1 – three-dimensional conception of discourse according to Fairclough (1994).

The ‘discourse practice’ dimension involves text production, distribution and consumption; it is “like ‘interaction’ in the ‘text-and-interaction’ view of discourse” (Fairclough, 1994, p. 4). However some texts may have different authors – author, animator and principal[8] – and different consumers. The texts under analysis in the present study, for example, were produced under very specific and guided situational contexts: a questionnaire answered for a specific audience (the analyst) and with a specific purpose (to serve as corpus for an academic research). Such texts can be termed ‘simple’ in what concerns their production and distribution: they occur within an immediate context of situation. For that reason we need to consider their authors’ anticipations: they all knew in advance what the texts where going to be used for and, therefore, may have predicted what would be the possible interpretations, for example.

Also in this level of analysis (discourse practice), the ‘bottom-up’ – or higher level – interpretation is carried out. This is when the meaning of the whole text, of the paragraphs and sentences are analyzed. A broader view of the integral text is, then, taken under investigation. This is when text ‘coherence’, which is the whole sense of the text, is interpreted by the analyst, implying different possible interpretations, which “are generated through a combination of what is in the text and what is ‘in’ the interpreter” (Fairclough, 1991, p. 141).

The ‘social practice’ dimension regards forms of work, construction of social identity, and representation of the social world. Discourse production can be seen as a combination of the available means of production and the social relations involved. In order to understand these social relations, attention to the specific ‘positions’ of the participants is necessary. In the production process, together with social positioning, authors produce representations of the world and of themselves. The use of commonsensical expressions, for instance, is immediately related to the author’s positioning according to the current dominant ideology (Fairclough, 1991). According to the same author, “people never simply act, their representations of their actions and domains of action are an inherent part of action, action is reflexive. Different representations tend to be produced from different positions” (2000, p. 11-12).

Thus, departing from a close examination of textual features, the analysis of discursive and social practices seeks to discover not what seems obvious at a first glance, but what is hidden in discourse, such as

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[8] See a description on these different persons in Fairclough (1994).

the beliefs and attitudes of speakers and writers. CDA is, therefore, transdisciplinary. It works with language not merely from a linguistic perspective but concerns itself with how language is deployed in other areas. In this study, we deal with the combination of two areas – critical discourse analysis and educational views on teachers' expectations – that are used in mutual collaboration and not overcoming or diminishing one another, as Fairclough (2000) suggests.

Though Education has not been one of the major fields of investigation of CDA, some authors have recognized the need of approaching educational issues using the theory and method developed by Fairclough (see Rogers, 2004). Among them, van Dijk's (1981) article “Discourse studies and education” addresses some interesting points. Although his focus is not the same as the one in this study, some of his ideas about the relationship between discourse and education are vital. For instance, he acknowledges that studies should focus on real facts which could bring out some perspective on improving education. He mentions that most pieces of research deal with aspects of education which do not add much to such improvement as, for example, sentence (sequence) analysis. His perspective fully justifies our goal: to analyze samples of discourse in order to suggest new ideas and provide other ways to enrich teachers' perspectives towards their students (which would, consequently, strengthen teacher-student relationship).

2.3. EDUCATIONAL VIEWS ON TEACHERS' EXPECTATIONS

As mentioned above, the present work draws on some issues concerning teachers' expectations. Expectations, as addressed by many researchers, is coupled with other important issues as its influence on teacher-student relationships and, as a result, on students' overall academic achievement (also called “self-fulfilling prophecy” by some researchers).

What is commonly shared among the academics is that teacher's expectancy towards the students dictates how s/he addresses and invests in a relationship – since there must be an investment from both parties. Pointing out that the mismatch between teacher's and students' investment in their relationship has changed over time[9], Muller's (2001)

9 “The attribution of the source of the mismatch has progressed from blaming the student

article “The role of caring in the teacher-student relationship for at-risk students” deserves a closer look for dealing with the difficulties in approaching the matter.

The writer makes two statements: (i) that students invest in a relationship once they feel the other party (the teacher) also makes investments for believing in the student's chance for success and (ii) that the teacher's attitudes are directly related to the student's individual academic success. However, the author places on the teacher the responsibility of maintaining and investing in the relationship with the students even though she recognizes the efforts made to keep this relationship productive is a role played by both parties.

Students' effort, the same study found, is perceived and evaluated by teachers according to the students' (prior) performance and attentiveness no matter if students perceive their teacher as caring or not. Muller states that, even though caring teachers are motivators, at-risk students may not put any more effort because of it. He concludes that “teachers will not, it seems, get more classroom attentiveness or homework completion from their at-risk students (beyond what any other student would expend) if they are perceived as caring” (p. 250).

As in the article just mentioned, the attention has usually been on teachers and it is generally believed that it is the teacher who holds the responsibility for initiating a good relationship with the student. To do so s/he would need to be, as Leitão & Waugh (2007) put it, “pro-active in demonstrating acceptance, understanding, warmth, closeness, trust, respect, care and cooperation towards his or her students” (p. 3).

Likewise, studies found that teachers’ self-efficacy[10] is important because it is believed to be a good indicator that a teacher would engage in a good relationship with the students – something considered important because

> teacher efficacy has been associated with such significant variables as student motivation, teachers' adoption of innovations, superintendents' ratings of teachers' competence, teachers' classroom management strategies, time spent teaching certain subjects, and teachers’ referrals of students to special education. (Hoy, 2000, p. 2)

(e.g., for being lazy), to blaming the family, to implicating the lack of differentiation in the school, to the political economy, to the lack of match and understanding of cultural difference (Tyack and Cuban 1995)” (Muller, 2001, p. 242)

10 Concept defined by Hoy (2000) as “teachers’ confidence in their ability to promote students’ learning” (p. 2).

According to Hoy (2000), teachers' self-efficacy gets higher while they are in training but lowers once they start teaching. This is something to be studied and modified for the fact that it is hard to change a teacher's self-efficacy once it is established and because

> undergraduates with a low sense of teacher efficacy tended to have an orientation toward control, taking a pessimistic view of students' motivation, relying on strict classroom regulations, extrinsic rewards, and punishments to make students study. (p. 5)

What is sometimes the case, however, is that some authors consider the characteristics of effective teachers too close to those of a friend. Apparently, a good effective teacher must have qualities as: caring for the students; listening to their problems, and understanding them; trying to get to know the students 'formally and informally'; respecting the students and not embarrassing them in front of their peers, motivating the students; holding themselves responsible for the students' success; and being able to take in (self-)criticism and develop as a better professional from it[11].

What seems to be the case is that the teacher must be friends with the students, the one who understands them as a person and accompanies them throughout their lives. This is all to do with how teachers address the students, treat them, because it is believed that teachers' expectancies have great influence towards the students' academic performance.

Studies and experiments addressing the subject have been done for quite some time, with Rosenthal and Jacobson's work in the 1960's being a good example to demonstrate how this was a great matter at the time and is still today, only stressing the relevance of works dealing with the subject. Their study, once published[12], became one of the most cited among the academics working on similar works until today.

These authors were especially interested in explaining the concept of "self-fulfilling prophecy", that is, the belief that "one person's prediction of another person's behavior somehow comes to be realized" (Rosenthal & Jacobson, 1968, p. 4). The study, however,

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11 See Stronge (2002).

12 Rosenthal, R. & Jacobson, L. (1968). *Pygmalion in the classroom: Teacher expectations and student intellectual development*. New York: Holt.

generated different responses. It was considered hard evidence for some people who even went further on the subject and claimed that

> if this self-fulfilling process occurs, not only in elementary school classrooms, but in colleges, in the workplace, in government, and so on, the phenomenon is capable of accounting for long-term entrenchment of social inequalities. (Jussim & Harber, 2005, p. 134)

On the other hand, "among some researchers studying educational psychology and intelligence, the study generated a storm of criticism" (Jussim & Harber, 2005, p. 134).

Although it has been impossible to conclude if there is a direct link between teacher's expectations and student's achievement, it is undeniable that teachers' expectations have effects on students' academic performance. After many studies addressing the issue of positive and negative self-fulfilling prophecies,[13] it was found that "positive expectancy effects were generally more powerful than negative ones, and this pattern disproportionately benefited low expectancy students" (Jussim & Harber, 2005, p. 146).

One of the aims of the present study is to investigate how some teachers feel about the implications of their expectations towards the students and to help raise awareness about it. The starting point was the use of two articles as background material for the collection of data, one that talks about teacher-student relationship from the perspectives of both parts (see Muller, Katz & Dance, 1999) and one on teachers' approach to problematic students (see Egyed & Short, 2006).

The first, unlike most pieces of research, uses samples from three independent studies with different methodology:

> Dance studied adolescents of African descent in the urban Northeast; Katz focused on Latin American immigrants in a major metropolitan area of California; and Muller studied teachers and students in the National Education Longitudinal Study of 1988 (NELS) (p. 293).

All three concentrate on the same issue: what students think of their teachers and how they define their relationship, and how teachers

13 See a good review in Jussim & Harber (2005).

address and define their students. In a combined analysis cross-referencing the information, the authors concluded that social and economic differences help disrupt teacher-student relationship and lower teacher's expectations. The authors presented results concerning teachers' and students' role in maintaining a good relationship and each part's responsibility and investment.

Two of the main reasons why this article was chosen are that it deals with some of the topics we are concerned about – teachers' expectations, teacher-student relationship and “minority” high school environment – and that it provides a clear understanding of the importance of our subject in concluding that “the students shape their own educational expectations largely from their perceptions of their teachers’ expectations” (Muller et al., 1999, p. 292).

Some of the findings that led the authors to reach such conclusion involve the acknowledgement that there are many specific and individual factors involved, but some generalizations can be made. For instance, some students reported they prefer caring teachers and that caring would be evidence that the teacher holds high expectations from the student. The study also found that teachers usually observe the student's effort – as well as their test scores and grades – before investing further in their relationship. Power asymmetry and anticipation are also counted as variants: students are expected to learn by following the teacher's demands.

The environment and the student's other-characteristics (race, social status, and so forth) may also influence on the teacher-student relationship. The former, because it includes schools regulations which dictates even if the contact between the two parties is short-term (which usually is), and the latter, because minority racial groups, for instance, do not perform as well as other groups do on tests (which is, as indicated, a factor for the teachers' reluctance in investing in a relationship).

The second article focuses more closely on the teacher as s/he deals (or fails to deal) with disruptive students. The authors asked elementary classroom teachers if they would refer a hypothetical student. The answers were cross-referenced with the teachers' self-evaluations on the Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI) and the Teacher Efficacy Scale (TES), two instruments used to obtain the teachers' professional and personal characteristics. These instruments helped showing whether it would influence on students' lack of improvement and how these affect students' preparation for college.

Opposite to what the authors hypothesized, only burnout showed a significant and direct relation with the choice of referring a student. The other characteristics (self-efficacy and experience) proved irrelevant or unexpected – incongruent with previous research studies, according to the authors. This article, even if not conclusive, was selected to function as background, more specifically, to illustrate the way teacher's personal and professional aspects might significantly influence students' perspective and engagement.

Both articles deal with important aspects related to teachers' perspectives and influence and, even though they have different approaches and use different types of data, they provide a context or frame of reference for the questionnaires applied to a group of teachers, whose answers will be analyzed as samples of discourses on teachers' expectations, following the procedures provided by Critical Discourse Analysis.

2.4. SUMMARY OF THE CHAPTER

This chapter presents an overview of the main concepts and the method of Critical Discourse Analysis designed by linguist Norman Fairclough (1991, 1994, 1995, 2000, 2001, 2004, 2005, 2008) as well as of theories on the Educational views of Teachers' Expectations (Egyed & Short, 2006; Freebody, Maton & Martin, 2008; Hoy, 2000; James, 1999; Jussim & Harber, 2005; Leitão & Waugh, 2007; amongst others).

The first is shown respecting the underlining of this study, i.e. there has been done – as advised by Fairclough (1994) and discussed in the introductory chapter – a selection of the linguistic, discursive and social aspects according to the data under analysis.

The latter includes a selection of different theorists/linguists who discuss the issues raised here (teachers' self-image, teachers' expectations and their image of graduating high-school students) which include fundamental concepts as teacher-student relationship, burnout, and efficacy.

CHAPTER III

METHOD

3.1. INTRODUCTION

This chapter provides a detailed description of the methodological procedures adopted in the present study. For this in this chapter, the objective and research questions guiding the study are presented, followed by a detailed account of the criteria for selection of participants. The instruments used to collect data as well as the steps in data collection and analysis procedures will be presented.

Notwithstanding the importance of presenting the procedures mentioned above, it seems important to recapitulate this study's objectives and research questions. As previously mentioned, in the first chapter, this study attempts to explain and determine teachers' self-image including their expectations and their image of graduating high-school students inserted in two distinct cultural contexts: Brazil and the United States. Therefore, the following research questions guide the present investigation: (1) How do teachers evaluate their efforts towards the students?, (2) How important is the high school teacher-student relationship for the student to learn the proper skills needed for academic success in college?, (3) What do teachers believe is most important for students' academic and personal success/development?, and (4) What is/are the difference(s) between "minority" high school student-teacher relationships in Brazil and in the USA?

3.2. THE SETTING AND THE PARTICIPANTS

In order to select the participants of this study, I decided to search for schools in small communities, 'inner-city', 'minority' and *periferia*, as mentioned and discussed earlier in the introductory chapter of this

study. The decision to contact first language teachers was based on lay knowledge, primarily considering the broadly (and often informally) discussed issue among scholars[14] and in the media[15] over the linguistic deficiency of high school students.

Having selected high school experienced teachers as my population I narrowed down my selection by deciding on which locations from Brazil and the United States I would contact these teachers. The Brazilian cities were chosen according to personal history: Pelotas is my hometown and Florianopolis was the city I was living in at the moment of the data collection. Once the locations for data collection were decided, the process of contacting the participants started. Taking into consideration the importance of a face to face contact with the teachers, I have, personally, visited and talked with each participant in these cities. The search for the "*perifeira*" schools was carried out in a rather informal manner – conversations with other teachers, with parents, with the community and reading the local papers. The teachers were also approached under different circumstances – visits to many schools were made in Florianopolis until two teachers eventually accepted the invitation to participate in the research. In Pelotas, given that I was born and grew up in the city, I knew which schools would fit the objectives of this work and I could easily contact the teachers.

Therefore, the participants of the present study consist of: first-language, female, Brazilian teachers working at minority high schools from Pelotas/RS and Florianópolis/SC. However, the possibility to visit the United States arose and triggered an interest in comparing some aspects of education in the two countries (Brazil and the United States of America) – believing that a comparison between two cultures might also bring some contributions for understanding the relationship between teacher and students and its importance in students' optimal academic achievements.

The American cities were the locations where I could have hospitality in or around it. With an early planned travel route, and with an approximate number of cities and towns I would be able to visit (the ones around Fresno, Santa Cruz and San Diego in California and around Lanikai in Oahu/Hawaii), I was able to conduct a research with data retrieved from Internet websites with American schools ratings[16]. Once

[14] See Mattos (2009).

[15] Examples include Villela (2009) and Garcia (2008).

[16] See http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/ac/ap/

the schools that fit the "profile" – low-rated high schools near my travel route that had a webpage with staff information – were sorted and via electronic mail[17] the teachers were first approached. A total of 34 female American English-teachers were contacted.

Hence, the choice of cities to gather data in Brazil and the United States of America was made under very different manners. And it is valid to add the discrepancy of collecting the answers from each group. The Americans who denied participating, did so politely, however most of them replied the letter positively. Considering the number of interested American teachers, a selection had to be held. Such selection was made in terms of physical distance and schedule incompatibility. Contrarily, most of the contacted Brazilian teachers refused to participate, transforming this part of the data collection a nearly onerous quest.

Finally, the setting and participants were outlined as a selected group of participants consisting of five (5) Brazilian high school teachers of Portuguese working with "minority" students in the "*periferia*" of Florianópolis/SC and Pelotas/ RS (identified in the analysis as B1, B2, B3, B4 and B5), and the same number (5) of American teachers of English (referred to as A1, A2, A3, A4 and A5) working in a similar context (inner-city schools) in the San Francisco and San Diego areas in California and on the island of Oahu in Hawaii – both US states.

3.3. DATA COLLECTION

Having described the participants and the criteria for selecting them, now the focus is on the instruments that were used to gather data for the present study. I decided to use a questionnaire, mainly for practical reasons. This instrument seemed to be suitable, especially considering the time teachers had to devote to answering my questions (especially the American group).

Prior to the answering of the questionnaires, the participants were asked to read Muller, Katz & Dance (1999) and Egyed & Short (2006) – briefly reviewed in Chapter II –, articles that dealt with teachers' approach to at-risk students and with teacher-student relationship,

[17] A copy of the model of e-mail sent to the American teachers is available in Appendix I.

respectively. These articles were summarized also because of time constraints. Ergo, the two articles summaries[18] were presented to the teachers – in English for the American teachers and translated to Portuguese for the Brazilians. After reading the excerpts, which focus on issues identified by previous research, the teachers answered a questionnaire (Appendix III) developed to address the specific interests of the present investigation and produced with the purpose of answering this study's research questions.

In order to avoid possible problems during data gathering, prior to administering the articles summaries and questionnaires, both were piloted. A friend and colleague[19], agreed to analyze and give feedback on the instruments. Fortunately, there were no content problems, but only a few typing errors, promptly corrected. With the procedures mentioned above, and the proper changes made, the final versions of the instruments were elaborated.

The meetings themselves also contributed to verifying that the schools would be in small inner-city communities. Such meetings lasted an average of 20 minutes with the Brazilian participants and of 45 minutes with the Americans. The participants were accompanied by me, on an individual basis and I was with them throughout the procedure, in case any clarification was necessary. Again, fortunately, no participant needed extra help after I have explained the procedures as described above.

3.4. DATA ANALYSIS PROCEDURES

As previously mentioned, the article excerpts are not part of the analysis, but served as background material to direct the focus of the participants in answering the questions. The analysis itself is based on the answers provided in the questionnaires (Appendix IV), following Fairclough's theory and method of discourse analysis which

> involves a progression from interpretation to description and back to interpretation: from the

[18] See Appendix II.

[19] Cristina Rodrigues is graduated in Portuguese and English Languages with a Masters in Applied Linguistics.

> interpretation of the discourse practice (processes of text production and consumption), to description of the text, to interpretation of both of these in the light of the social practice in which the discourse in embedded (Fairclough, 1994, p. 231).

The analysis is undertaken in two parts: starting with (i) the analysis of each response of each teacher, made individually; followed by (ii) the analysis of the answers divided into two groups – American teachers and Brazilian teachers. A detailed analysis of each answer is undertaken with the upmost attention including all linguistic evidence of all sorts of social and discursive meanings. In this part of the analysis are considered the method described by Fairclough (2005, 1994, 1991) and drawn on Halliday's Systemic Functional Grammar (1994).

The textual analysis focused on some of the aspects designed by Fairclough (2005, 1994, 1991), as mentioned in the previous chapter. The chosen linguistic aspects analyzed were selected according to the corpus and include from the representation of social actors, modalization and evaluation, to choices in self-representation. The procedure itself was of first identifying all the modalizors in a sample, for instance. With the modalizors distinguished in each sample, they were brought together into the second part of analysis: interpreting the findings which, eventually, met the specifications of the social and discourse practices. A case of overgeneralization through the use of modalization, for example in the hypothetical sentence "most teachers avoid problem students", may indicate the author's tendency towards the ideological belief of teachers who are weary of failed attempts in helping students.

Thus, these aspects were analyzed previous to the concluding findings in the social practice and discourse practice levels. These levels have a close relationship and are only dissociated for analysis purposes. The text level of analysis is of the utmost importance to uncover hidden aspects related to the social and discourse practice levels. It is possible to perceive the

The analysis, however, initiated in a quite informal manner, leading to an interesting initial finding: for the reasons previously mentioned, the collection of data started in Brazil, and soon I realized that the teachers' responses were relatively short in extention. However, the fact appeared itself in bigger propositions once I have started gathering the samples from the American high school teachers. The

discrepancy on the number of words between the two groups triggered a heightened interest in proceeding with the analysis according to Fairclough's theory and method.

3.5. SUMMARY OF THE CHAPTER

In this chapter I have described the choices in setting and body of participants as well as the method used for data collection and analysis used in this study. In the next chapter, the analysis itself is undertaken.

CHAPTER IV

ANALYSES

4.1. INTRODUCTION

As previously mentioned in the methodology chapter, the experience of collecting the answers was very different for each group. The Americans seemed more receptive and understanding. Those who could not answer the questionnaire were polite in their denial. Most of the teachers replied the e-mails with a positive answer and showing interest in the research. Considering these many positive replies, the participants were chosen in terms of physical distance and schedule incompatibility.

The Brazilian teachers, on the other hand, were not as receptive. Most of them refused to help and turned the search into a long and frustrating quest, especially in Florianópolis/SC. Some of them did not even care to listen to the proposal and straightforwardly asked if it was "mandatory", that is, if they had no other choice but to answer the questionnaire.

This early observation – that American teachers may be more receptive to educational research – can also be drawn from a general look at the samples. Brazilian answers ranged from 66 to 310 words, with an average of 179, whereas American teachers wrote from 344 to 803, with an average of 629 words. Another factor that might signaled such different cooperation between the two groups is the occurrence of single-word answers (yes/no). There were six of such answers in the Brazilian samples while only one the in American samples.

In order to carry out a more deeply discursive analysis, the study starts with a closer look at each of the individual samples. In the next chapter, the results are compared and concluded.

4.2. INDIVIDUAL SAMPLE ANALYSIS

Analysis of B1's questionnaire answers (122 words)

With brief answers – short sentences and nominalizations (which can perhaps be justified by the type of questions that were asked) –, this interviewee is quite concise, with some of the answers consisting of a mere list without further explanation. This attitude may indicate either a strong feeling about the topics or an assumption that they are known concepts and need no further explanation.

The answer to the first question – as to whether B1 identifies with any of the problems raised in the articles[20] – consists of only two short sentences dealing with the topic of emotional exhaustion:

> *Sim, o de exaustão emocional. Falta de motivação, ânimo, paciência com os alunos que necessitam de maior atenção.*

The key words are lack of "motivation", "energy" and "patience" on the part of the teacher, emphasizing her personal role and her responsibility over the students' necessities – what she believes to be the students' need, of course – which she apparently cannot fulfill because of her emotional exhaustion. She puts herself as the Actor in the sentence – as an omitted subject – and the students within the Circumstance – as Affected. However, she addresses only the students in need of special attention, excluding all others. This might indicate the teachers' sense of fulfillment regarding the other students, the ones who don't need such special attention.

The next question addresses the major problems dealt with the students, and again there is the occurrence of short sentences, a listing of the students' problems:

> *Pouco interesse pelo estudo. Desinformação. Atitudes grosseiras no tratamento com os professores e colegas. Não gostam de ler, desmotivação.*

Here, also, there is the use of nominalizations – 'demotivation' and 'disinformation' –, congruent with the question asked. However, in this case, the students are in the role of Actors of the clause, and the

[20] See Appendix II

problems cited range from academic performance to personal issues. Interestingly, there are no explicit social agents in any sentence: a case of suppression. Even though there are no markers of modalization, the tone is one of detachment, even lack of interest, as if the problems exist as natural phenomena, independently of any agency on the part of either students or the teacher.

In the third answer, the issue of motivation is raised again by the interviewee. But in this sample, the responsibility is more clearly placed on the teacher herself, especially by the use of a verb in the first person singular ("tento"/ I try) – an affective mental process.

Tento motivar-me/motivá-los para que se interessem por cultura e educação.

She is the one who needs to be motivated *and* motivate the students. But the semantic choice of "try" adds a somewhat negative turn to the answer, implying dissatisfaction or lack of success. Another semantic aspect that deserves attention is the way she brings education and culture together, as connected and interdependent. Though she also implies the students are not interested in those, she nevertheless adds a personal view to the problems raised by the texts.

The next two answers – 4 and 5[21] – are constituted by a single word: "yes." This may mean that the interviewee did not feel the need to develop her answer due to the type of question presented to her. Or it might indicate that she has not given much thought to the issue presented in them: perception.

In the next question, when asked about the students' future, there is the occurrence of longer, more developed sentences. The teacher's expectation would be for her students to "stop wasting their time with frivolities", which can be read as an assertion that they do waste their time with frivolities, "to develop an interest in something that will make them grow", indicating that they are not interested, and "transform themselves into conscientious and capable citizens", which they are not. Seeing thus her students as incapable and irresponsible, B1 can only speak in general terms, reasserting what has been said over and over again by educators and the general public.

Finally, when asked about any success stories, the answer

[21] Questions 4 and 5 are "Do you believe that the time of teaching help the teacher notice problems more easily?" and "Does the perception of the problems make the teacher more sensitive to them?", respectively.

presents what could be called the goal of this interviewee as a high school teacher: to prepare students to pass the *vestibular*[22]and start college, especially by those who are not financially able to enroll private test prep courses[23]. Choosing this topic as an example of "success" may indicate the interviewee's belief that grades and academic success are intrinsically correlated, i.e., a successful student is one that passes tests.

Overall, this interviewee was quite democratic in her responses. She took responsibility over some issues and rested others on the students. However, there are a few overgeneralizations on her part, since she did not use words such as 'most' or 'usually' when talking about the students. Also, when using the verb 'need' in answer 1 (a desideration mental process), she assumes that they do need special attention, but she doesn't explain the grounds of such assumption (the reason why she thinks they need special attention). And even though we can see that her answers are based on personal experience, there are no explicit markers of modalization, indicating a very weak subject position on her part.

Analysis of B2's questionnaire answers (310 words)

This interviewee's first answer is evidence of her self-image as a responsible and caring teacher, one that does not neglect or quits trying to help her students. Asked if she had any problems with burnout, low self-efficacy, experience and preparation, she is quite succinct with a straightforward, non-modalized "No", revealing a high degree of involvement with the proposition (Fairclough, 2001). Notably, she does not see herself as part of the students' problem(s) and that she is playing her role perfectly.

However, in the answer[24] to the next question – on students' problems – she develops a paragraph with the major problems being mainly related to their personal lives, emphasizing what she considers their unpromising future. This conclusion is based on her choice of

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22 The Brazilian College Enhance Exam (equivalent of the US SAT).

23 Called 'cursos pré-vestibular'.

24 "São aqueles oriundos da falha de alimentação adequada, da desestrutura familiar, alto índice de drogadição e falta de perspectivas quanto ao futuro que lhes parece pouco promissor.

Ministro aulas em duas escolas periféricas (manhã e noite) e estes problemas são característicos (nas) [em] ambas as escolas."

words with a negative weight: “failure”, “dysfunction”, and “lack of” – all with a negative connotation. She finishes by adding that she works in two schools and that the problems are the same in both. This affirmation may indicate an overgeneralization on her part, i.e. all problematic students face the same, or at least similar, issues.

When asked about how she faces and acts upon these problems, she lists everything she does, from encouraging them to improve as students to “asking for enhanced meals” (probably to the authorities, but not mentioned in discourse). In this part, perhaps due to the type of information requested, she is the Actor of every sentence and the students are put in the role of Affected. Still, that does not mean she takes responsibility for student failure, seeing herself possibly as the catalyst to their development.

As with the preceding interviewee, the answer to question 4 is quite short – with a few important differences, nonetheless. This is when she uses an evaluation marker and dodges taking responsibility for her discourse. By simply saying “I think so” – an explicit and subjective ‘statement with an affective mental process’, a marker of evaluation – she either opens up the possibility to other ‘beliefs’ or she is uncertain of her own positioning towards the issue raised here.

Even more curious is to be able to see this answer as triggering something in the interviewee to the point she starts using a different approach in the very next answer. The answer starts with “certainly yes.” She is emphatic and doesn’t leave room for doubts or second guesses. And, as she continues the paragraph, she shifts from ‘I-statements’ – used in most of her previous answers – to ‘We-statements’. She, here, includes herself in a category, “the teacher”, a category that “tries”, that is “impotent”, with such a “Herculean job”, where “we are not always met with our requests” because “we need help” from others. She depicts teachers as victims, ones who try to help students but can’t do it by themselves, taking up the negative tone of answer 2. Another change in discourse is that she starts using explicit subject pronouns instead of omitting the subject. That may be also another way to be more straightforward as to whom she is talking about: the entire class of teachers that deal with problem students.

The use of assumptions, a religious expression and another example of the problems faced with the students summarize the interviewee’s answer to the next question – question number 6. Her expectations toward the students are that they achieve what she assumes and believes to be “basic” in life: a “good job”, a “living wage” and a

“less painful life”, all commonsensical expressions which generalize instead of specifying. She finishes the line of thought with the expression “our daily bread”, which she wishes they never go a day without, apparently. And, on a scale from good to bad, she ends the paragraph raising a moral issue: promiscuity. She points out that girls can have a better life and future if they don’t get pregnant in their teens. By introducing this other problem, the interviewee connects the students’ future (this question) with their present (discussed in question 2).

To the last question, the interviewee’s answer is intriguing. She divides her answer into four paragraphs dealing with different topics. She starts by saying that she had success stories “if” this is taken to mean when a student started/graduated college. In this sentence only, she implies either that she *had* no other types of success stories or that there *are* no other kinds of success stories. This is a one-sentence paragraph, followed by another that starts with “but” – indicating contradiction. She, then, digresses about other stories without explicitly indicating whether they are success stories or not, with the reader inferring they are not because of the use of the conjunction “but”. Her example is of former students studying to become teachers – “because they loved what I did”, she says – adding up to her high self-image. She goes on talking about what seems like rewards from her hard work which – she states – keep her from feeling stressed. Lastly, she switches back to using ‘We-statements’ and discusses the students, and the relationship with them, more generally. She concludes by explaining that in order to help students, teachers must learn about their lives as a whole and ends with such an interesting sentence: “so we [teachers] can insert ourselves in it” [students’ world].

Differently from the previous interviewee, this one develops her answers a little further and tries to explain most of her statements. Also unlike B1, she appears to put all responsibility onto the students when discussing the students’ failure. She claims that she does work hard to make sure they grow academically and personally, and that her work transcends the school.

Altogether, this interviewee addresses most of the social actors – both student(s) and teacher(s) – as Actors of the sentences. Only in answers 3 and 7 there are examples of students within the Circumstance, as Affected in 3 and Beneficiary in 7. She didn’t take responsibility for the students’ problems at any moment, she only listed the ways she tries to help them. Contrary to B1’s answers, this interviewee made use of

assumptions, markers of modalization and of evaluation. She seems to have tried to position herself as a good, caring teacher and leave all the problematic aspects to the students.

Analysis of B3's questionnaire answers (283 words)

Answering the questions with, at least, one long sentence, this interviewee depicted herself as an optimist. She does not list her or the students' problems, but seems to have just discussed them superficially. In the answer to question 1, she starts with a single non-modalized "yes", followed by a very general sentence, as seen in:

> *Sim. Inevitavelmente em algum momento de nossa carreira nos deparamos com alguns dos problemas mencionados, ou até mesmo todos, mas o bom é que eles ocorrem em diferentes épocas.*

However, there are a few interesting points to rise. Firstly, even though the question is asking for her opinion and what she feels or does not feel, she made the choice to use 'We-statements', thus placing herself in a category rather than individualizing her experience. Secondly, by using the adverb "inevitably" (a high level of commitment to what is being said), she claims that the entire category faces these problems. But, finally, she can still see the good side of it by adding that fortunately, they do not go through all these problems at once.

Like said previously, this teacher chooses not to list the students' problems, but decided to show only *her* major problem, which is "to make them see that the opportunities in life are proportional to the educational level". Even if she points out that the students have such problem, she still puts the responsibility of "making them see" on herself.

When asked about her approaches to dealing with these problems, another issue is introduced: motivation. Her tactics would be for her to find ways to make them motivated. Relating this answer to number 2, we may be able to make a connection: if she sees students that do not go ahead with their studies as the problem, she may believe the reason for that is that they feel unmotivated (by their teachers, maybe). Again, like answer 2, she is put as the Actor of the sentence while the students are the Beneficiary.

An apparent change is seen in answer 4. Starting the sentence with a marker of modalization ("certainly"), B3 is highly committed

when saying that teachers (the category) feel “more comfortable in making a link between the subject contents and the students’ reality”. Hence, the solution is to make students interested in class and the responsibility is the teacher’s, according to this interviewee.

This next answer – to question 5 – presents an interesting example of intertextuality. The interviewee places herself by pointing out that others (not specified who, which may implicate in an overgeneralization, meanings range from ‘all teachers but me’ to ‘a certain group of teachers’) think teachers only teach content and ignore the student as a human being. It is, therefore, assumed that this interviewee sees herself as the opposite of ‘these others’ and that she does value the students’ personal lives and interests. This is an example of low level of commitment to what is being said, which is only understood as such because she is not including herself in this group (the others). And again we see the students as the Affected, being acted upon by ‘the others’.

Questioned about her expectations towards the students’ future, B3 places the responsibility on the students, as Actors in the sentence. Highly optimistic, the expectations consist of a list of positive developments. She expects them to be “better people, better behaved, with clear objectives and opinion”, again avoiding any kind of specificity and implying that she does not think they have those qualities at present.

In the answer to the last question, the interviewee confesses to have witnessed many success stories. She chooses to tell about a boy whom she has helped in his personal life (getting him a job). Here there is also the use of a marker of evaluation – statement with affective mental process – when she says ‘from my understanding’ (or ‘To my knowledge’). This is a way of distancing herself, by not fully committing to what is being said. An interesting linguistic choice, when describing the student’s story, occurs in the use of two antonyms in the same paragraph: ‘misfit’ (vagabundo) in the beginning, and ‘honest’ at the end. The former appears as an adjective given to the boy by his family, the latter as an adjective attributed to his achievements by the teacher (‘an honest job’ which makes him an honest boy).

In sum, this interviewee was quite an optimist when discussing her own experiences, but appointing ‘others’ as less responsible than her. She seems to believe that the best way to help students develop in life would be for teachers to acknowledge their personal lives as well, and with such information mold their classes and subject contents. Another

evidence of this claim is that whenever she is about to argue on teachers' problems, she uses 'We-statements' (in questions 1, 4, and 5) although there is wide use of omitted subjects.

Another issue concerns commitment to what is being said. At times she is not fully committed to what she says: using a case of intertextuality ('some people think that' or 'there are those who think' in question 5) and a marker of evaluation ('from my understanding' or 'to my knowledge'). At other moments, there are high-level commitment markers of modalization (adverbs 'inevitably' in question 1 and 'certainly' in question 4).

Analysis of B4's questionnaire answers (112 words)

This interviewee answers the questionnaire in just a few words – a little over 100 words. Mainly using 'I-statements' and semantically incomplete sentences, she leans on the use of assumptions. The answer to the very first question consists of two words: "Yes. Persistence." This nominalization is another evidence of the many omitted semantic elements throughout this sample. A curious occurrence is also that the answer to this question was supposed to be about the problems she identifies with among those pointed out in the articles presented to her, and there is no mention of 'persistence' being a problem in any of the articles.

The answer to question 2 is also different from what was found in the other interviewees'. She decides to divide the category "students" into elementary and high school students. For the high school students, she claims she has no problems with them – which may suggest she is either unaware of their issues or she is just uninterested. As to the elementary school students, she mentions their misbehavior, for which she blames the parents. The student is the Actor of the sentence while the parents are within the Circumstance, in a 'passivated' role. Furthermore, it is at this point that the occurrence of "no"s is first noticed. There are two in this answer – all within longer sentences. This may indicate a negative point of view towards the students and/or their relationship and/or the image she has of her own profession. Also, we must remember that every negative implies an underlying affirmative statement. For example, when she says she does not realize any problems with her high school students, that may entail that other teachers may have discussed issues about these students. Also, by

blaming the parents for not educating their children, she affirms that they are the sole responsible for that.

Asked about how she deals with the student's problems, B4 presents a solution – respect – which she claims is vital for a good relationship "in the classroom". The use of the verb 'try' (an affective mental process) is another important word choice, since it may mean she does not succeed in every attempt. This statement may also suggest this teacher does not desire a good relationship with the students outside the classroom, nor an understanding or acknowledgment of their personal, private lives, which is quite different from what the other teachers have indicated.

The answer to question 4, however, is similar to some of the previous samples analyzed. A single "yes" is found and the implications may be the same as discussed in the previous analyzed samples. The answer to the question that comes next is also vague and underdeveloped. From her answer it is possible to assume her straightforward answer would be also *yes*, but she decided to use a few more words with the same meaning. However, she still avoids a subjective response, she does not commit herself to it, and she does not describe which kind of teacher she believes she is. This interviewee says merely that those teachers who believe they are mere "knowledge agents" do not get any more sensitive to the students' problems. Here is the occurrence of the third 'no' in the sample.

Once more, this answer – to question 6 – is unusual (and its meaning is not easily understood either). B4 divides the students' identities into two: students and citizens[25]. To each 'identity' she points out what are the students' quests. However, this first part of the answer starts with a marker of evaluation – "in my experience" – which indicates a low level of commitment. Such vagueness and abstractness is enhanced by the next sentence: "I have a single expectation: that they be happy".

In the final answer, the interviewee starts with a "Yes" and adds another sentence. This sentence has many omitted elements; there are no connectors, articles, conjunctions. And the 'story' is also of a student who went to law school and became a district attorney. Intriguingly, even excluding clause elements, she decides to add the student's social-economic status (middle class).

This is a very instigating sample, the issues raised and the choices

[25] "As students", she writes, "they are merely seeking to be perceived as people" and "as citizens, they want to be appreciated for who they are".

made by this interviewee are atypical. She seems to be distant from her students and only worried with what happens inside the classroom, which would contradict her answer to question 5, but corroborated when analyzing the sample as a whole.

Analysis of B5's questionnaire answers (66 words)

This interviewee's answer to question 1 is a short sentence, in fact, a fragment, that merely indicates she does not identify with the problems mentioned in the articles. She chooses not to share the problems she does face, which implies she does have other problems. She also uses the marker of modalization "exactly". The adverb is linguistic evidence of the assumption that she has problems.

The next question is about students' problems. B5 answers it with, again, a fragment with only the problems of "heterogeneity of literacy and age". She focuses on issues related to external factors, all assumedly result of previous academic problems – the snowball effect. She does not explicitly place the responsibility on anyone, but implies the problem is caused by the school system or by the students' previous teacher(s), who have allowed some students to pass to higher grades even if some do not have the necessary academic skills. Other students, having supposedly failed, belong to different age groups, a fact that adds to the problem of heterogeneity. She does not mention any other problems students may face inside or outside the classroom, such as personal (family) or behavioral problems.

The interviewee's answer to the third question shows more interesting aspects. She admits to rely on the students' mutual help whenever she does not have available time to prepare "different activities". This affirmation may entail in the interviewee's belief that designated, planned activities do not attend to the needs of every student, corroborating the problem pointed out in answer 1. Supposedly, it also provides a better interaction among students.

Answers to both questions 4 and 5 consist of a single non-modalized "yes". As seen in previous samples, this may have different meanings, ranging from the belief that a single yes or no would be enough (strong affinity with the questions) to the interviewee's lack of motivation to further develop an answer. Differently, in answer to the next question, B5 presents a full sentence – with subject, verb and complement – discussing her approach to the problems mentioned:

literacy and age difference. Her method is to "try" to stimulate them to "broaden their knowledge and enrich themselves culturally". The choice of "try" is symptomatic of a lack of awareness as to the success of her practice. Besides, the vagueness of her goals (isn't this what education is all about?) reinforces her lack of awareness of the real problems faced by her students. Perhaps this means she does not believe they have the qualities required for success, inside and outside school.

The answer to the last question presents a quite brief description of a success story:

> *Lembro-me apenas de um aluno que conseguiu passar no vestibular para uma licenciatura sem precisar fazer cursinho pré-vestibular.*

B5 admits to "remember" a single case, which involves a student who has passed the *vestibular* without having taken a private test prep course. This is the second occurrence of an interviewee pointing out the importance of a student entering college without the test prep course and the fourth occurrence of an interviewee showing the importance of starting college.

In conclusion, in this sample all the answers were no longer than a sentence. This interviewee did not introduce many topics or issues. She appears to make a lot of assumptions and to overgeneralize facts – for instance, by saying the activities planned are not enough, or when she mentions she needs to motivate them to grow culturally.

Analysis of A1's questionnaire answers (803 words)

In answer to question 1, this interviewee does not raise any personal problems (burnout, low self-efficacy, and so forth), but focuses on the problems she has in developing and nurturing a relationship with in-risk students – which she affirms is how she deals with behavior and academic problems. In most of the sentences in this paragraph, students are the Affected and the teacher is the Actor of the sentences. There is one case of omitted social actor in this answer: "If recommendations were made, it was based on students' reading/math levels…". Although it is possible to assume these recommendations were made by the interviewee, there is no clear evidence that this is so. Still, the fact that the teacher – more often than not – positions herself as an Actor reinforces the assumption that she sees herself as an important agent in the educational process. She also acknowledges that it is easier to realize

that a student “needs greater help” once one gets more experienced. And using a modal verb – “may” – the interviewee accepts the fact that there is the possibility that students would not need such “help”. This part of her answer can be related to question 4 as well, and for that reason it will be later reconsidered.

When answering the second question, the interviewee listed a few student problems she has encountered – “with some of the freshman”. With this statement – with a marker of modalization (‘some of’), she lowers her level of commitment by admitting there are students who do not show these problems, thus escaping from overgeneralizing both the students and the problems. However, when describing what she calls “disruptive behavior”, she uses the modal ‘should’ twice. Having such a strong meaning, expressing obligation, this word choice may be seen as evidence of an authoritarian position. Confirming such prediction there is the recurrent use of the evaluative marker ‘poor’. She disapproves of these students and makes this clear in the linguistic clues.

The choice of adjectives and verbs in answer 3 is what makes it possible to believe that A1 sees herself as someone who is content with her accomplishments and secure of her methods. She is confident enough to use adjectives – clear markers of evaluation – to describe herself as “sure”, “personable”, “fun-loving” and “happy”. The verbs chosen – material and mental processes – also indicate a strong will to create a position of both authority and of helpfulness: “establish”, “trying to gain”, “trying”, “help” (an assumed value), and “care”. She is always the Actor in the processes, the one who makes things happen. However, when analyzing the content in this answer, she appears to be overemphasizing herself as the caring, loving teacher, and the one on whom students can rely. Another evidence of this is that there is the extensive use of ‘I-statements’, except for the sixth sentence where she switches to a ‘we-statement’ and addresses the issue of mutual respect between ‘students and teacher’.

As noticed in previous analyses, this question – number 4 – produced different kinds of responses because, as in this case, some did not fully understand what was asked. A1 interpreted the question as related to classroom hours. And the wanted answer is partially found in answer 1, as mentioned before. In this answer there is an interesting occurrence, however. When discussing the opportunities she has had to observe students outside the classroom, she claims to have noticed some “unwanted behavior”. Since this answer is not directly related to the question, there is no chance to make conclusions, but hypotheses. She

may be trying to say that she observes students inside and outside the classroom, usually trying to find those problematic aspects of her pupils. Hence, it would be easier for her to notice these disruptions once she was in a different environment.

Throughout the next answer, the interviewee's choice is to use 'we-statements'. She uses social actors in categories – teacher and adult – and places them as the Actor of the sentences while the students – she also calls them "our children" – as the Affected. The adjectives and metaphors chosen show a high commitment to what is being said. She claims that "teachers are role models" and that they "need to behave the way they want students to behave". Therefore, A1 sees teachers as adult role models who are life coaches, who "need to show" what should or should not be done, and that "standards of behavior always need to be set" – by them, teachers and adults, assumingly. It is because of the number and the chosen adjectives that this answer is instigating; otherwise it does not show much.

The interviewee is quite abstract and uses common sense to answer the next question – number 6 –, but the chosen adjectives – "contributing", "law abiding", "resourceful", "literate", "responsible", and "loving" – presents her view of a perfect future for her students. She probably expects this from everyone, including her students. Except for "literate" there is no direct correlation between the words chosen and a strictly academic environment. On the other hand, her choices illustrate a much broader understanding of education: a process intended not only to prepare students for college, but to prepare them for full citizenship.

One of the interesting aspects of this last answer is that A1 decided to tell two stories, one in 35 words and another in 170 words. The first, evidently, does not have many details such as: how she convinced and/or encouraged the student to continue coming to class; how s/he "excelled" in her/his work; as well as what was keeping her/him from coming to class. Nevertheless, in this report the student is always the Actor of the sentences differently from the second story which shows shifts between the interviewee and the student as Actors and Affected in the sentences. The adjectives used here are also interesting. The ones qualifying the student – "sweet", "comfortable", and "secure" – are positive and have a low intensity, while the ones qualifying the interviewee – "appalling", "friendly", and "pleased" – show a higher intensity in the evaluative scale. There is a single occurrence of an adjective qualifying both the A1 and the student – "thrilled" – another example of a high intensity evaluation. These

linguistic elements may indicate that the interviewee sees herself in a parental and guardian role, besides being quite confident as to what is being said because at the beginning of the answer to this question she said she had "many" stories to tell.

Summarizing, this interviewee developed every answer fully. It is the most extensive of the samples (with over 800 words). She portrays herself differently in each answer: from authoritarian to parental. She cares about the students' academic development, but never mentions a personal problem. She is interested only in what happens inside the classroom or she does not feel comfortable sharing the students' private lives. She is quite democratic, balanced, taking responsibility for some aspects and putting the responsibility on the students at other times.

Extensively using 'I-statements', there are rare occurrences of 'we-statements' and of omitted social actors. There is the use of lots of common sense statements and general opinion on students. However, there are interesting inferences in a few of the responses, especially in terms of the choice of adjectives – characterizing her and the students. There are interesting markers of both modalization and evaluation throughout the sample and they show different sides of this interviewee's views. Still, they are quite congruent and seem to point out that students need to be good listeners and observers. Evidently, A1 believes teachers and adults are responsible for guiding the "children" into behaving properly and becoming good citizens. Overall, as a teacher and an adult, A1 takes most of the responsibility and sees students as receivers.

Analysis of A2's questionnaire answers (784 words)

In answer 1, this interviewee indicates a high commitment to what she is saying mainly because of the use of 'I-statements' and the emphasis given by punctuation with the use of (two) exclamation points – an 'assumed' evaluation marker. Although admitting to relate to "several problems", she decides to develop further on "emotional exhaustion" because, as she writes, the job can be "draining" – probably, by believing this is the one problem she struggles most with. Yet, in spite of acknowledging problems, she adds a "but" and starts on a positive view as well. The use of words such as "love", "affection" and

"good thoughts" corroborate that. The entire last sentence, shown in the sequence, brings quite a lot of interesting clues to what kind of teacher A2 may be and, therefore, deserves closer consideration and analysis. A2 states:

> *I know personally that when you truly[26] care about the well-being of the student, teaching them comes almost naturally (to me).*

This is an 'I-statement' sentence with a case of impersonalization (the generic "you"). She uses the verb "know" followed by the adverb "personally" which can be considered a medium commitment statement – including the clause "to me" in parenthesis at the end. The sentence, as a whole, seems like an advice to all teachers to engage the students and perform better as professionals. Actually, by using the underlined adverb "truly" and ending the sentence with "almost naturally", she somewhat commits herself to what is being said, but not completely because of the adverb "almost".

The interviewee's answer to the next question – number 2 – is divided into two parts: the first where she lists the students' problems and does not make many comments; and the second with an, again, positive view, as seen below:

> *Laziness, procrastination, and negative attitude toward our literature (i.e. "I hate this book")/our material.*
> *But – I have super, amazing students – I really do! I'm lucky. I love them – I love them too much sometimes! One other problem I have is with loud, squirrelly, silly, "shouty-type" kids. They get annoying! But it's really my fault – because I'm very flexible and patient and I let them express themselves too much! But – we do have fun a lot of the time and I know my kids are learning!!*[27]

In the first part of the answer, the element that deserves attention is the use of the possessive adjective "our" – in "our literature" and "our material" – which implicates an attempt to account for a larger community and highlight the importance of what is being said. All the 'problems' cited are related exclusively to the students' attitudes in the classroom, for she does not raise any personal problems that could influence the students' academic performance. In the latter part, A2 extensively uses adjectives – markers of evaluation – to characterize

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[26] Original underlining.
[27] Original underlining.

both the students and herself: the ones chosen for herself are all positive – "lucky", "flexible" and "patient" – while the ones addressing the students are mixed – "amazing", "loud", and "annoying" are some of them. However, she still affirms that these problems are her "fault" – emphasized with the underlined possessive adjective "my" before the noun – and that ultimately they are learning – something she "knows"[28], she appears to have no doubt. Lastly, to confirm such strong commitment to her statements, the extensive use of exclamation points and underlined words are combined with three interesting clauses: "I really do!", "I love them too much sometimes!", and "I let themselves express too much![29]"

Still taking the responsibility to find and implement solutions to the students' problems and difficulties, A2 answers question 3 bipartitely. There is the continued use of abundant markers of evaluation and of modalization – such as "can", "just mainly", "exactly", "usually" and "not necessarily" – including many examples of underlined words and of exclamation points. Notwithstanding the occurrence of adjectives, they are used differently in this response: within conditional sentences. Therefore, the students can be/become "confident", "smart", "mature", and "open-minded", but they would (i) become such when they achieve their purpose or (ii) be as such in order to achieve a purpose. A possible interpretation is that she believes they have not achieved these qualities yet, but she expects them to. It is when she is describing how she deals with such issues that 'we' and 'you' pronouns appear. However, they are not working as 'we-' or 'you-communities', but she is apparently trying to transcribe a model of a conversation with the students, trying to motivate them and to help them overcome their problems.

The answer to the fourth question is a single "yes", as it happened with some of the other samples and was already discussed extensively. The answer to the following question, however, showed a misinterpretation problem at first, but her answer is actually satisfactory, since it does fulfill its purpose: to understand if the interviewee feels more sensitive to the students' problem once it is noticed. Amongst the linguistic elements that deserve attention is the use of 'I-statements', 'you-community', and naming a category – "teachers". When writing with the pronoun 'you' and the noun 'teachers', A2 is extending her experience and sharing what she believes are the attitudes which work

[28] Original underlining.
[29] All original underlining.

and which do not – hence, the students are always the Affected of the sentences and all other social actors – “I”, “you”, and “teachers” – appear as Actors. She uses different markers of modalization and evaluation: modals (“can”, “might”, and “have to”), affective mental process (“I think”), adverbs (“really”, “actually”, and “potentially”), assumed values (“help”), and modal adjective clause (“lots of possible”).

In answer to question 6, A2 is very democratic: she mentions the students’ promising future and also mentions that she worries some may struggle because of their life choices. This is the first moment she refers to any problems related to the students’ private lives – “drinking and using drugs”. However, she does not appear fully committed to what she says, for there are many markers of modalization and evaluation in this response. Some show a low level of commitment – modals (“can”, “might”), reported speech (“I hear”, “I’ve heard”), hedge (“a little”). Nevertheless, some elements are heightened by others – like the adverb “genuinely” before the affected mental process “believe” – and the occurrence of the idiom “of course”, which somewhat increases the level of commitment to what is said.

Since this question requests the interviewee’s opinion, there is a wide occurrence of ‘I-statements’ in the position of Actor of the processes, and the kids/students/citizens as Affected – except for the example she gives on her “little thoughts” and in the last sentence. In in the choice of wording, it is interesting to observe the use of verbs according to the ‘scale of intensity’ of markers of evaluation: there are examples that are high on the scale – “know”, and “thrived” – and that are low – “worry” and “support”. Additionally, the choice of adjectives is rather interesting: “awesome”, “happy”, and “successful” to characterize the students; “only human” to herself. These choices show again that the interviewee recognizes her ‘flaws’ but keeps trying to make excuses for the students’ ‘flaws’.

In the answer to the last question, there is the only occurrence of a personally represented social actor in the entire corpus of this work – “Peter”. Interesting expressions are used to describe this student – “from the ghetto” and “gangster Mexican” – followed by a “but I was tough on him”. This is a clear case of assumption: the interviewee believes that by using these expressions to characterize the student, many other values come to the fore and that whoever has these ‘qualities’ needs to be tough on. Nevertheless, she uses one positive adjective to the ‘changed’ student – “good” – not a high adjective in the ‘scale of intensity’ of

evaluation, but still consistent with the development of the narrative. Even though A2 decides – possibly unconsciously – to use adjectives of such strong social values, she makes other choices that mitigate such commitment. Thus the many markers of modalization and evaluation throughout her response: hedges ("the supposed", "a kind of"), adverbs ("really", "basically"), adjectives ("tough", "great", "little good"), nouns ("stereotype", "courage", "skills"), and modals ("could", "will"). Furthermore, the verb choice presents an intriguing self-image: she seems to be portraying herself as a parental model to students using material and mental process verbs such as "tried", "foster", "channel", "persuaded", "love", "provide", "need", and "notice".

All in all, this sample is somewhat different from the others. The interviewee seems to portray herself as having a nurturing and emotional, but fun, personality; as someone who is highly dependent on what her experience has taught her, on which she relies. That is corroborated by the extensive use of markers of modalization and evaluation. Her writing is considerably informal and close to spoken language because of words and expressions such as "Gee!" in answer 6 and "Wow!" in answer 7, and the emphasis obtained by underlining and using quotation marks and exclamation points. She seems quite involved in teaching and in motivating her students. Also, she puts most of the responsibility of engaging the students in a good relationship and in class onto herself by developing an informal and fun environment; she seems to be a spirited teacher but she continually shows both sides of the problems/difficulties mentioned. Thus, it is understandable that she uses "students" and "kids" interchangeably.

Analysis of A3's questionnaire answers (690 words)

This interviewee answers question 1 in a rather positive tone. She admits she experiences burn out and that she "doubts" her skills, eventually, but she points out that her methods are molded according to her own experience and "intuition". Her level of commitment is somewhat low. For instance, the markers of modalization used – modal ("might"), adverbs ("often", "appropriately", "especially", "habitually", and "generally"), affective mental process ("I feel", "my own way", "I think"), determiner ("most") – all leave a margin for opposition. Even her choices of verbs and of nouns are closely related to her personal view on her method to refer (or not) the students: "need", "rely",

“doubt”, “care”, “know”, “offer” (verbs); “intuition”, “positivity”, “kindness”, “humanity” (nouns). A3 points out the students’ academic and personal issues and makes that clear by saying “they know my interest about them extends well beyond the borders of the classroom and the discussions and what we do reflects the diversity of the topics regarding our lives.” This may indicate an attempt to establish a strong connection with her students and her interest in their lives which she may believe as influencing their academic development. Widely writing in ‘I-statements’, among the three occurrences where the students are the Actor of the process – see table below –, two are in conditional sentences which broadly indicates hypothetical situations. These situations represent a certain result (potentially acted by the interviewee) dependent on a certain condition (the student’s attitude, for instance).

I-statements	“I identify with being able…” “Yes, I feel that I am often capable…” “Also, I rely on my intuition: Do I sense a blockage, a lack, or inability to process? “ “Then, I might refer for special testing…” “I do doubt my skills.” “I do doubt my ability to “go on” as a teacher.” “I feel burned out.” “But I still remember…” “I think most of my students feel that I do care for them.”
Students as Actors in sentences	“[…]is the student behaving appropriately? Comprehending the majority of the material? Interacting with others in a social setting in appropriate ways? Being an active listener? Using coherent methods to communicate ideas? […] They know my interest about them extends well beyond the borders of the classroom and the discussions and what we do reflects the diversity of the our topics regarding our lives. [...]”

Table 1: excerpts from A3’s answer to question 1.

Differently from all other samples, this interviewee’s answer to question number 2 does not address any of the students’ problems. Instead, she chooses to point out the cause of the problem as the educational system, which is accounted as the reason why students “disengage with reading and writing”. This is a clear case of personification: the system is not an agent; those responsible for ‘pushing’ “the curriculum down the students’ (and teachers’) throats” and her own feeling of “entrenchment” are not acknowledged here. This entire statement appears to be a manifesto against the ‘system’ as well as

an excuse for her lack of self-motivation or even lack of interest in teaching. Even pointing out so many negative aspects of the educational system, she still includes herself in it by using the possessive adjective "our".

In opposition to the negative connotation of the verbs used in the previous response, in this one – to question number 3 – the interviewee introduces a positive view on "her own way of teaching" – which she admits not to know what it is exactly at first – using verbs (all mental processes) such as "like", "know" and "love". There is a single occurrence of "try" – a statement with an affective mental process – when A3 is starting to develop her answer. After this (apparently) premature acknowledgement, she does explain what her approach really is: to develop different kinds of activities with her students, to hold "theoretical discussions", and to read aloud. The presence of an informal expression – "drill and kill" – at the end of the response is interesting since it shows the beginning of a more informal writing that continues in the answers to the next questions. This interviewee seems not to rely on tests and grades to relate to the students' development, which may be seen as her way of going against what the "system" imposes. Consistent with the question asked, the sentences are mostly in first person singular placed as Actors of the sentences; the single occurrence of a "we" is when the A3 is talking about group discussions, which is also consistent.

In answer 4, the interviewee describes herself when she first started teaching and herself now, 14 years later, with a metaphor – of a war zone. She used to be a 'militant' in favor of educational development, and is now in favor of "the humanity of learning" and "the joy of reading". These statements give sequence to the previous responses, keeping to the topic related to the system of education. She also continues using expressions – "join the ranks", "step into line" – and markers of modalization – adverbs ("absolutely", "entirely", "especially"), modal ("can") – and of evaluation – statements with affective mental processes ("I don't believe", "I believe"). At times, as in the case of the choice of adverbs, she is quite committed and at others, with the use of statements with affective mental processes, she lowers the level of commitment. The latter appears when she switches from what she used to believe (or who she used to be) in the past, to the now. The last sentence deserves more attention for its linguistic elements:

I am disillusioned with our system, but not its people, you see.

In this sentence, the interviewee characterizes herself as being "disillusioned" with the educational system she calls "our". The possessive adjective is a reference to all people in the world, which she tries to narrow down by adding "especially in the Western world" which emphasizes that in the Western world the system may be 'worse'. Since answer 2, the system has been personified, and here A3 acknowledges there are people 'inserted' in the 'system'. And these people are not disillusioning her, which can only mean she does not believe or recognize the true responsible for the 'system'. Ending the sentence with "you see", an informal expression, adds up to her change in discourse started in answer number 3.

Probably another case of misinterpretation, the interviewee does not answer the fifth question. She simply indicates that the question has already been answered previously. However, to question number 6, on the students' future, she produces a reasonably lengthy response. Making clearer statements, now A3 puts the responsibility for the educational system (as it is at present) on everyone (which can be taken to be the world population or the entire group of teachers, since there is no explicit indication of either) – "the world we've built for ourselves here". Corroborating the affirmation that this interviewee seemed to be writing a manifesto (question 2), in this answer she admits there is no chance for teachers (represented as "we") to discuss the issue openly. And similarly to some of the answers from the Brazilian interviewees, A3 shows that there is a preoccupation with preparing the students to start (and succeed in) college. It is at this point that A3 uses high level markers of modalization – modals "must" and "will" – in counterpoint to all other markers used: of modalization – adverbs ("misguidedly", "relatively")–, and of evaluation – statement with affective mental process ("I believe").

In the last question, instead of sharing a student's success story, A3 decided to share a group of students' success story. Nevertheless, this story in summarized in a successful classroom activity. She recognizes their efforts especially by calling the students "authors". Unlike the other responses, in this one the students are placed as Actors of the processes, they are the doers, consistent with the narrative and what was requested in the question. The only new occurrence is the fact that she does not overgeneralize her statements; in here she uses the determiner "part of" when discussing the stories written.

This interviewee, A3, had a different view, from the other samples, on the questions and did not discuss the students' problems

specifically. Actually, there is no mention of a single student whatsoever – always using the third person plural or the category ‘student’. Instead of answering the questions, she diverted to the issue of the educational system being imperfect – as in writing a manifesto. And even in the answer to the last question – that asks for success stories – she described an activity she applied to all her students.

Analysis of A4’s questionnaire answers (344 words)

This is perhaps the interview with the most straightforward answers. In question number 1, this interviewee admits to relating her effort to help students with their own engagement in class. She also acknowledges that she experiences burnout and, therefore, is not especially interested in the students’ private problems. She uses a few markers of modalization – modal (“can”), adverbs (“habitually” and “often”), verb of appearance (“seems”), and determiners (“not as much”, “amount of”) – and one of evaluation – assumed value (“help”). In agreement with the question asked, all sentences have the first person singular as Actors of the processes.

Omitting some linguistic elements, the first sentence of the next answer – to the second question – is written as a topic, only listing the major problems. The interviewee, however, develops a full, complete sentence in sequence where she briefly explains why “lack of grade-level skills and truancy” are the major problems she encounters. This response resembles the one given by B5, but A4 tries to have the reader understand why it is a problem. There are no markers of modalization or evaluation, and the only social actor represented is “the group of students” which is quite vague and does not address anyone specifically, a hypothetical statement.

The response to question 3 is also short and intriguing. Asked about the strategies she uses to deal with the previously mentioned problems, she answers that “sometimes” she works out the problem with the group as a whole and “sometimes” with the problem student. The interviewee uses an interesting idiom to describe what happens when a student is not given attention: “fall through the cracks (*less*)”. The determiner leads to the assumption that some students will inevitably not be dealt with.

In a very optimistic view of her development as a high school teacher, A4 affirms to have improved her ability to find and implement

solutions. In her answer to the following question – number 4 – there is the occurrence of a marker of modalization ("definitely") that brings the statement with the affected mental process ("I think") to a higher level of commitment, without however depersonalizing, overgeneralizing or overpowering the affirmation.

In answer to question 5, the interviewee gives her opinion – by writing down a statement with an affective mental process ("I think") – on the entire category of teachers. Using the modal "can" combined with the adverb "definitely", she states that once the teacher understands the students' problem, it can be handled in a better way. In a Utopian attempt to familiarize the reader with the teachers' struggles, A4 adds a sentence starting with "in a perfect world". Assumingly, she is trying to be realistic by saying there is no chance for teachers to "get to know each student and where he/she was coming from", mainly because they would need "a lot of time" to do so.

Asked about her expectations towards the students, the interviewee is again quite realistic with a pinch of optimism. She seems to believe some students' problems are solved only whenever they are mature enough to understand how to deal with them. Nonetheless, she also seems to believe there are some problems that cannot be solved so easily once they reach a certain level of gravity. This is clearly her own experience since she uses markers of evaluation such as "I think" and also her commitment to what she is saying by using adverbs such as "often", "especially", "mostly", "unfortunately" and "badly".

Her answer to the last question is not very satisfactory for a reasonable reason: she explains she did not have the opportunity to follow her students because she has changed schools three times in her six years of teaching. Still, she could recall a story which is about a student who had improved academically over his high school years – from "constantly in trouble" to "an officer" with "good grades". With this last remark, she may show herself as one teacher who does rely on students' grades – at least in part.

Apparently being true to herself and answering the questions in a personal way, this interviewee presents herself as a realistic and optimistic professional, even though she may be struggling to maintain her willingness to help problem students. She admits to face some burnout issues as well as to not want to help those who don't help themselves or who don't show interest and commitment to her classes.

Analysis of A5's questionnaire answers (525 words)

Describing a few problems she faces, from students' issues to burnout, this interviewee answers question number 1 with an interesting linguistic and content material. She acknowledges the students' personal problems – "coming from socio-economically difficult lives" –, but also admits to feeling unmotivated when the student does not show an interest in her classes. Even recognizing that students with a problem background relate better with a teacher that "cares" for them not only academically, A5 does not explicitly position herself in this group of teachers (who care). This can be inferred since right after she mentions this issue, she writes about her unwillingness to engage with uninterested students, as seen in the excerpt below:

> *I do find myself not wishing to put effect towards a student who is often absent or who refuses to do work as my energy dwindles often anyway. I guess I do feel that it is a 2 way street; the student shows a desire to try (even if they will have difficulty), I am happy to help them + push them, but it's hard to extent that energy when the student is reluctant to try or if they are apathetic.*

In this same answer, there are both markers of modalization – adverbs ("especially", "truly", "simply", "often"), and a modal ("will have") – and of evaluation – affective mental processes ("care", "find" [myself], "guess", "feel", and "connect"), and verb of appearance ("seem") – all showing the (overall) highly subjective tenor of the statements. Another interesting linguistic element that deserves attention is the choice of words to characterize the students – "absent", "reluctant", "apathetic" – which have a negative connotation, and the ones chosen for her own characterization – "happy", "overwhelmed" – which are examples of both positive and negative connotations. Pronominalization is another element to be analyzed. There are the expected occurrences of 'I-statements' and impersonally categorized 'students' in most clauses, but in the excerpt

> *[Students]…truly seem to connect with an adult who cares for them vs. simply a teacher who pushes them academically.*

there are two other impersonalizations through categorization: "an adult", "a teacher". The indefinite article used before these nouns is not necessarily specifying the social actor, but it is limiting the generic group of adults (those who care) and the generic group of teachers

(those who push them academically).

Referring to students' problems, this interviewee's answer to the second question addresses merely their 'school issues' ("from tardiness to apathy to refusal to do work. Many students do not do homework"). Her brief description shows a single marker of modalization – the adverb "often" – and an attempt not to overgeneralize her students by adding the determiner "many". This response may add to the impersonal tone perceived in the preceding answers.

When discussing her methods to overcome the students' lack of enthusiasm in class, she admits some *attempts* to highten their interest, to motivate them. This conclusion may be corroborated by the existence of verbs such as "try" and "keep", and the adjective "more". Her attempts may also mean that at times she does not succeed and at others she does not even try, which is connected to her answer to the first question. However, she is still optimistic to the point she uses the adverb "hopefully".

On the issue of experience as a help to noticing problems, the interviewee makes two opposite observations. She "feels that to an extent" – which means she subjectively and partially believes in her statement – that experience may increase the chances for teachers to notice problems and *also* – showing quite a commitment by using "have"/"don't have" – that some experienced teachers are burned out and that this makes it difficult for them to notice these problems. She does not mention her own experience on the issue, but rather chooses to use "a teacher" (any teacher) as a subject: a generic, unmarked, impersonalized social actor.

In the answer to the next question, A5 continues on the idea that more experienced teachers are less likely to try to help students contrary to less experienced teachers, who are more willing "to try to 'fix' the issue". She tries to explain why she believes in this statement by exemplifying that teachers sometimes need help from other school employees – specifically "administrators" – and are not attended. However, the interviewee does not overgeneralize her statements; she uses "many" when addressing the teachers and "often" in the example given. Analyzing the response as a whole, there is only one occurrence of a first person singular and it is a reported speech – even though she decides not to use quotation marks.

Quite differently from other samples, A5's expectations towards her students involve confidence and work ethics. She does not mention any specific academic skills, but personal aspects. For her, work ethics

seems to be a rather important and “larger aspect” in order for any person to succeed in life. Hence, she uses the determiner “all of” when talking about her students. She also uses the modal “can” twice when she is discussing the importance of work ethics and how it works in life. Since the question involved her opinion on the matter, she uses both first and third person as Actors of processes, alternatively.

Unlike the previous answer, A5 exclusively mentions academic related topics in this answer – to question number 7. The interviewee describes the development of students’ academic skills throughout a school year – with the example of “one girl”. She writes she “can’t necessarily narrow down success stories” but does not explain why. There are a few markers of modalization in this response – adverbs (“[can’t] necessarily”, “often”, “simply”, “[doesn’t] really”, “truly”, “specifically” and “awesomely”) and modals (“can” appears twice in this answer). Amongst those, “truly”, “specifically” and “awesomely” are not modalized and present a strong commitment to what is being said, quite a subjective and emphatic account of the facts.

In sum, A5 puts the responsibility of the students’ engagement on teachers, students and school administrators alike. It is possible to assume she would attempt to guide a student in case s/he shows some level of interest. She admits it becomes more difficult to decide to help students the more experienced the teachers are – and she explains it by affirming it would be because teachers start feeling burned out with time. Hence, she may be trying to put the responsibility on others rather than on herself.

4.3. BRAZILIAN SAMPLES

The Brazilian teachers answer the first question quite similarly. Firstly, none of them mentions any of the problems dealt with in the articles (burnout, low self-efficacy, and so forth). Secondly, most write in short, vague sentences – only B3 develops the sentence a little bit further – and there are three occurrences of non-modalized ‘yes’ or ‘no’ amongst the samples – in B2, B3 and B4 – corroborating the interpretation that they are probably not interested in developing their answers perhaps because they felt it was unnecessary. There is a single case of ‘We-statements’ – in B3 – while the others choose to write

omitting the subject of the sentences.

The answers to the second question are quite different among themselves, except for the fact that they all had few problems to mention. Some of the problems mentioned are restricted to academic issues (B3), others to personal issues (B1, B2, and B4), and others to external factors that relate to both academic and personal issues (B5). The responsibility over these problems is placed on the teachers themselves (B3) or on the students' parents (B4). Overall, all the answers have a negative connotation, which is justified by the type of question asked.

As to the answers to the third question, some pattern can be observed among the Brazilians: they (try to) motivate, encourage, and build mutually respectful relationships with the students. And two of them – B3 and B5 – mention academic-related solutions: to develop/plan different classroom activities. Since they represent themselves as the Actors of most sentences – with the exception of the responses of B2 and B5 in which the responsibility is shared with the students – we could infer that they take the responsibility upon themselves.

Except for B3's answer, all responses to question 4 are rather short. Three occurrences of a single non-modalized 'yes' are found (B1, B4 and B5) as well as the occurrence of an "I think so" (B2). This question seemed not to raise the interest or curiosity of the interviewees and it is possibly a case of a potentially rewritable question. Or, as mentioned before, the teachers did not feel the need to develop their answers or have not given much thought to the issue. In all samples, there is one highly committed statement (B3 uses the adverb "certainly") and one with a low level of commitment (B2 writes "I think").

The non-modalized adverb 'yes' as answer to the fifth question is found in two of the Brazilian samples (B1 and B5). Thus, the focus of interpretation falls mainly on the three other interviewees, who develop at least a full sentence. Two of them (B2 and B4) are highly committed to what they are saying, leaving minimum margin for other opinions and/or interpretations (Fairclough, 2005) – one uses "certainly" and no hedges or markers of modalization or evaluation; and the other chooses to answer the question with no markers of modalization or markers of evaluation whatsoever. None of the answers use 'I-statements', but only impersonalized, categorized social agents (Fairclough, 2005) – "the teacher" in B2 and B4, and "those who believe" in B3, thus placing

themselves within a larger community and possibly mitigating their share of responsibility. Also, these three interviewees share the concept that teachers (must) consider the students as human beings with different backgrounds and personal histories; they agree that teachers are not merely passing on knowledge, but possibly helping students grow both personally and academically.

Interviewees overgeneralize and use commonsensical expressions and values which impart a tone of vagueness and abstractness (Fairclough, 1991) to the answers to question number 6. All answers show an optimist view of the students' future, but at the same time denigrating their present personal and/or academic status. Students are the Actors of the sentences in these answers, taking most of the responsibility for these 'improvements'.

In the answers to the last question, some interviewees have to "remember" a success story while others affirm to have "many" to tell. But more interesting is that four of the five interviewees answer that a success story is directly related to the student's passing the vestibular without enrolling in a private test prep course. Brazilian teachers show a high correlation between good grades and good students, even if this issue has been extensively discussed in educational theory (Muller et al., 1999) as a whole and included in the articles used as background material for the questionnaire. The only case that does not fall into this 'pattern' – B3 – discusses a student who has improved his personal life by getting an "honest job" and escaping a negative family environment.

Concluding, all the Brazilian samples show overgeneralization at some point, usually when dealing with the students and/or their problems. Most interviewees – B1, B2 and B3 – portray themselves as good, caring teachers, who are interested in helping the students by taking their personal issues into account – as also found by Muller et al., (1999). However, some of the interviewees do not take full responsibility over solving the students' issues: B5 and B3 see both student and teacher as responsible; B4 includes the parents; B2 mentions school administrators (not specifying whom) together with both teacher and student as holders of responsibility; and B1 accounts only the students as responsible for their own problems. Overall, the interviewees show themselves as highly committed to what is being said (Fairclough, 2005), except for B2 who is notably subjective in every answer. There are not many occurrences of markers of modalization and of evaluation and the answers are generally straightforward.

4.4. AMERICAN SAMPLES

As far as the American interviewees' answers to question number 1 are concerned, it can be observed that only one out of the five does not mention the problems raised in the articles (A1 discusses relationships with in-risk students), and the others discuss at least one: A2 deals with emotional exhaustion, A3 talks about efficiency, A4 discusses both burnout and the willingness to help those students who show interest, and A5 admits identifying with many of the problems but decides to talk about her unwillingness to help disinterested students. Accordingly to the type of question, the occurrence of 'I-statements' placed as Actors of sentences is high but the responsibility over academic development is often shared with students – at times, by the interviewees' acknowledgment that they do not engage in a solution because the student does not have a certain attitude, for instance.

The subjective account of the facts is higher when there is an extensive use of markers of modalization (Fairclough, 2005) which are found in A3 and A5. Interviewees A1, A2 and A4 show a high level of commitment by using more straightforward non-modalized affirmations. There are also isolated cases, interesting nonetheless. In A1's sample, there is the case of an omitted social actor; in A2 a case of a generic 'you' is found, and the response has a tone of advice; A3 writes in positive tone; A4 shows no interested in the students' private lives, only discussing their academic issues; and A5 not only talks about both students' private and academic problems – like A3 –, but characterizes the students using mostly words with negative connotation, and also uses an impersonalization through categorization by implying indefinite articles to limit generic groups ("an adult" and "a teacher").

In the answers to question 2, the American teachers address only the students' academic problems, without any reference to personal problems, but A3 introduces a new element. She brings up the issue of an erroneously built educational system which fails in dealing with the students' development and which she holds as responsible for the students' problems. As far as accounting for or pointing out responsibility, A2 takes full responsibility over solving these issues, while A1, A4 and A5 have the students as responsible for their own academic performance. In the American samples there are extensive cases of overgeneralization – all but A5 – and a very low usage of markers of modalization and evaluation – with the exception of A2 who

is highly subjective and A4 who uses no markers. A few intriguing isolated points are the authoritarian position of A1 ("should" appears twice); the personification of "the educational system" by A3; and the only occurrence of a social agent in A4's answer being "the group of students".

According to the responses to the third question, it is possible to conclude they all 'attempt', 'try' to help students acknowledge their classes are worth paying attention to by addressing specifically the individual student or relating the problem to the whole class (A3 and A5), or both (A2 and A4). Consistent with the type of question asked are the occurrences of overgeneralization, the first person as the subject of sentences and the use of markers of modalization and of evaluation. All the answers show overgeneralizations, probably because they are mixed with hypothetical situations, anecdotes, to facilitate comprehension. Also, the majority of the sentences are 'I-statements' with the teachers as Actor of processes. Subjective markers of modalization and of evaluation are found in A2, A3, A4 and A5 whereas A1 uses only a few of those.

As encountered in the Brazilian samples, the answers to the fourth question are not satisfactory in A1 and A2's answers: A1 explicitly writes she does not understand the questions and A2 writes the single non-modalized word 'yes'. The possible reasons for these occurrences have already been discussed in this work and are not reconsidered here. As far as the tone of the other three interviewees' answers – A3, A4 and A5 –, they show interesting differences: A3 has a negative view on education, using the metaphor of a 'war zone'; A4 has a very optimist view, confirming the easiness to notice problems with experience; and A5 brings up both sides, stating that experience may make it easier to perceive the problems at the same time that it may account for teacher burnout. Overgeneralizations and statements with a high level of commitment were abundant and consistent with the issue raised in the question. The only exception is in A3, who uses 'We-statements' – which correlates to her view on the educational system of the world, or more specifically the "Western world" – and the lower commitment to what was being said with the use of markers of modalization and of evaluation.

In the responses to the fifth question, there is the generic and categorized "teacher" as the social actor of most sentences (in A1, A2 and A5) with rare occurrences of 'I-statements' (A2 and A4); there is a case of misinterpretation (A3); and one of a utopian account of the facts

(A4). With the exception of the answer from A5, overgeneralizations were constant in the answers of A1, A2 and A4, which is understandable because of the anecdotal tone of the answers. On the responsibility over the solution or perception of the students problems, A1, A2, and A4 attribute it to themselves while A5 includes school administrators as also responsible. In the American samples there are examples of both high level (A1) and low level of commitment (A2, A4 and A5). An interesting finding is A1's statement describing teachers (and adults in general) as role models to the students.

Question number 6 asks for the interviewees' expectations towards the students' future "as students and/or citizens". Amongst the responses, there is one that deals only with their future as students (A3), one that deals only with their future as citizens (A1), two that deal with their future as students and citizens (A2 and A5), and another one that does not account – specifically – for any of the two (A4). In their description, there are some divergent points of view: A1 uses common sense and abstract affirmations to express her optimistic expectations; A2 is democratic by acknowledging some students have problems that may become deeper and go further in the future, while she still has an optimist expectation; A3 has a rather negative take on the students' future because of the present educational system; and A4 is quite vague and does not mention any specific issue relate to the students' future as citizens or students.

The stories presented as answer to the last question range from a generic, vague example of a classroom activity to a story about a specific and named participant. A1 decides to write on two different students, both of whom she helped improve academically during their high school years; A2 presents the only occurrence of a personally represented social actor in this whole study – "Peter" –, the stereotypical "gangster Mexican" "from the ghetto" in whom she developed an interest in literature; A3 talks about a group activity; A4 – because she recognizes to have changed schools too often – can only remember a student's improvement throughout high school; A5 presented the example of "one girl" who has improved academically over a school year.

Summarizing the findings in the American samples, it is possible to draw some interesting conclusions. There are cases of interviewees portraying themselves as caring and nurturing (A1 and A2) as well as ones that struggle to keep their willingness to help students out (as A4 and A5) and another that does not attempt to picture herself but focuses

on the system of education (A3). These occurrences are not quite coherent with how they address the students' problems. The samples that have students' personal problems cited are A2 (only two cases) and A5. In the other samples academic problems appeared often, except for A3 who discusses it superficially.

The responsibility over solving any of the students' issues is set on both student and teacher by A1 and A4. This democratic view is not shared by A3 – who places the responsibility on the system of education – nor by A2 – who takes most responsibility onto herself – but it is in part related to A5's view – which includes school administrators and possibly means a way to dodge some of her own responsibility.

Extensively using 'I-statements' – with the exception of A3's responses – and with the many occurrences of markers of modalization and of evaluation –, the American samples were somewhat different from one another but still show an effort from the interviewees to develop their line of thought and answer the questions fully. The fact of elaborating on the answers and speaking thoughtfully about their own experiences turns these answers into a useful tool for assessing their relationship with theoretical issues that pervade the current educational literature on teacher-student relationship.

4.5. SUMMARY OF THE CHAPTER

In this chapter, the analyses of ten (10) samples – answers from a questionnaire regarding the main objectives of this study – was held in two different sections. First, the samples were analyzed individually, followed by the analysis of the samples divided into Brazilian Samples and American Samples. These findings are reviewed and concluded in the proceeding chapter.

CHAPTER V

RESULTS

5.1. INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, the research findings are examined according to the outcomes from the individual and comparable analysis in the previous chapter. The focus on teacher-student relationship and on teachers' image and expectations towards students has stimulated the present study into an attempt to increase teachers' awareness of the students' necessary skills for a successful academic life, after high school. And in this chapter these objectives are started to be answered, mainly following the method provided by Fairclough (2005, 1994), separating the analysis into Social Practice, Discourse Practice and Text – as described in chapter II.

5.2. RESEARCH FINDINGS

As far as the discourse practice level of analysis, this corpus does not require extensive interpretation, for the texts were produced under a very specific circumstance – the authors (interviewees) knew what was the final purpose of their production (academic research) and that therefore the text consumption would be immediately interpreted by the researcher and possibly by other academics once the results were published.

In spite of some similarities as to the presentation of themselves as caring and struggling professionals (8 out of 10) and, to some extent, in taking responsibility for students' performance (5 out of 10), the two groups of teachers present striking differences between them.

Considering the two groups of answers as a whole, what calls the

attention is the overall collective attitude toward research. Whereas Brazilian teachers appear to have answered the questionnaire a bit hastily, if we considered the total average of 179 words per teacher, the American teachers showed a much greater concern with the issues raised (an average of 629 words). Also, they addressed the topics of self-efficiency and burnout presented in the readings much more directly, showing an awareness of theoretical educational issues. Their answers were considerably more to the point than those provided by Brazilian teachers and contained a larger amount of details and examples. These findings seem to be further evidence of the different cultures concerning teaching and learning, as the American culture seems to pursue clearness and objectivity as opposed to our culture.

In terms of linguistic choices, the representation of the social actors show some similarities and differences. All interviewees – Brazilians and Americans – write extensively in 'I-statements' – omitted or not. Many of them (6 out of 10) also write using 'we' – whether addressing a 'we-community' or themselves together with students – and (7 out of 10) write at least one case of impersonal classification (more frequently, 'teacher(s)'). Amongst the American samples, different representations are found: the occurrence of a generic 'you' and of naming – "representing individuals by name" (Fairclough, 2005, p. 150) – in A2's sample; the case of a personification – of the system of education – in A3's answers; and the generic and vague categorizations "a teacher" and "an adult" in A5.

The choices for representing social actors have social and political implications (Fairclough, 2005). 'I-statements' are subjective, indicating a direct and clear positioning of the author while the occurrence of 'you-' and 'we-communities' are often vague and evasive and seen as shared responsibility, an attempt to escape full accountability over failure, for instance. Examining the choices made by both groups for representing social actors in their responses, one can infer a high level of subjectivity in the samples. The American as well as the Brazilian participants, in general, presented an effort to explain the importance of both actors (teacher and student) in a healthy and optimal relationship (Marks, 2000), for instance. Shared responsibility is evident in the attributions made by the teachers, especially due to the choices for representations.

Moreover, the verb "try" is seen in most of the samples (7 out of 10) at least once – with the higher number of occurrences (four) in A5's answers. This generalized use of "try" may indicate either that teachers

have doubts about their self-efficiency in the classroom or that they are transferring part of the responsibility in learning to their students, acknowledging the fact that there are cases in which their efforts are not enough and/or effective.

The number of the affective mental processes “think” and “believe” is also worthwhile mentioning. There were no occurrences whatsoever among the Brazilian samples, and a total of 17 in the American samples are found. Only A1 did not use either of the processes. A5 used them once, A4 three times, A2 four times, and in A3 nine occurrences of “think” and “believe” are found. These findings suggest that Brazilians are more committed to what they say when compared to the Americans – since the last group use evaluative markers extensively. It is also possible that the Americans are more self-reflective about their teaching.

As to markers of modalization and evaluation, they may be considered the second most striking difference between the Brazilian and the American samples, surpassed only by the contrast in the length of the answers. Among the Brazilian group, there is one interviewee who did not use a single modality or evaluative marker (B1), one that writes only one (B5) and the other three use only a few. The interesting fact among those who used markers of modalization and/or evaluation is the occurrences of “always” and “should” – two of the main examples of a high level of commitment. In the American group, contrastingly, there are cases of extensive use of markers of evaluation and modalization. A2 is the example of the most extensive use of them, including the underlining of words and phrases, exclamation point and expressions such as “Gee!” and “Wow!”.

Focusing on the formal/informal written style of the participants, the examples demonstrate a natural inclination to emphasize some aspects. In a comparable examination of the groups, the American teachers have posed a greater amount and diversity of modalizers.

As far as the analysis of the social practices involved in these samples are concerned, the most noteworthy finding is the use of commonsensical ideas and expressions. As seen in the review of literature, these are directly related to the maintenance of or struggle against the current dominant ideology (Fairclough, 1991). The majority of the occurrences of ideological common sense show an alignment with hegemonical thinking (Fairclough, 2001, 1995, 1992), with only one participant (A3) attempting to show a protesting stance although making use of an ideologically inserted subject. In attempting to attribute the

problems to the educational system, A3 nevertheless raises vague and superficial topics, as in an empty manifesto.

5.3. SUMMARY OF THE CHAPTER

Although not refuting the concern of the Brazilian participants towards the issues raised, the American group showed more interest in exposing their ideas, a higher investment into their participation – through their awareness of theoretical educational aspects mentioned in the background articles, the length of their answers, their linguistic choices, the amount of details and examples. Moreover, the relationship between students' engagement and teachers' expectation was proven to be important in teachers' point of view. A healthy teacher-student relationship is, in like manner, found in the samples as an important factor that contributes to students' success in school/college. The use of modalizers is correlated with the difference in teacher-student relationships in the cultural contexts here analyzed. The American group, through showing a lower level of commitment, appears more open to diverse methods of approaching at-risk students and withal sharing such responsibility. These issues are reconsidered in the next chapter.

CHAPTER VI

FINAL REMARKS

6.1. INTRODUCTION

This study was initially drawn at understanding teachers' concern for students' academic success, mainly in preparing them for college. Adding the intercultural aspect to the corpus, a deeper and much broader view of different approaches and perspectives were able to be analyzed. Therefore, the objectives of this study were on teachers' self-image and image of the students; the teachers' expectations towards graduating (at-risk) students; and the teacher-student relationship. The abovementioned were the core of this investigation.

With these topics in mind, my assumption included the relevance of cultural aspects to teachers' concept of a 'good teaching' and of a 'good student' as well as teachers' expectations toward at-risk students. Brazil and the USA have divergent methods and approaches to education and those were predicted to influence teachers' attitudes and outlook towards students.

The investigation was undertaken with four research questions in mind. These questions will be separately reconsidered in this chapter, followed by the limitations of the study and suggestions for further research.

6.2. RESEARCH QUESTIONS REVISITED

Question 1 – How do teachers evaluate their efforts towards the students?

Fairclough (2005) states that verbal processes have meanings

related to how the author perceives the world. The interviewees' verb choice demonstrates an overall attempt to solve problems (especially the ones directly related to classroom activity and participation). However, the same choices are evidence of a limited effort, i.e. the interest would have to be mutual for teachers to engage in the betterment of a relationship.

The interviewees' self-representation show a concern with being seen as caring and nurturing individuals, whom students can rely on and search for help and/or advice when needed, as seen in Muller et. al (1999). The responsibility is mainly shared with the students – and sometimes with other subjects –, but some attitudes are expected before teachers decide to engage in the relationship.

In sum, what appears to be the case is that teachers do not feel guilty for disengaging from a relationship with the student since the latter are accounted for the failure. These conclusions can be associated with what Fairclough (1994) says of the unequal power relations seen in discourse and, thus, in society.

Question 2 – How important is the high school teacher-student relationship for the student to learn the proper skills needed for academic success in college?

According to contemporary educational research (Muller et al, 1999; Hoy, 2000; Jussim & Harber, 2005; Egyed & Short, 2006; Laitão & Waugh, 2007; Maton & Martin, 2008)[30], the answer to this question would be affirmative. However, the analyses generally confirmed that students who have academic-related problems would need special attention from their teachers, whereas the other students would not. Some interviewees admit to having an equal relationship with all students and that once they notice a student in need, they would engage in an attempt to academically level the group of students. This can be related to the differences perceived in society and the ideological work of hegemony (Fairclough, 1995). Therefore, the interviewees may be pro-agents of ideology, ones who accept and reproduce the current dominant ideology.

Question 3 – What do teachers believe is most important for students'

[30] Discussed in the first chapters of this study.

academic and personal success/development?

Students' positive attitude towards learning and mutual respect among peers and teachers, students' punctuality, interest in the subject and responsibility are some of the many matters related to students' academic and personal achievements raised in the samples. For this reason, the most important factor is noticeably hard to pinpoint since the answers were so divergent from each other. Nevertheless, the issue of showing interest in self-development is the most mentioned and, therefore, this investigation provides support for believing it to be the interviewees' consensus for the overcoming of problems and an eventual success.

Question 4 – What is/are the difference(s) between "minority" high school student-teacher relationships in Brazil and in the USA?

Considerable variation exists amongst the two groups when addressing this matter. The main difference between the two groups is that Brazilians seem to take into account the students' personal, private lives and to believe they are the drive for the teachers' engagement into a better relationship. Americans, on the other hand, were more concerned with providing their students with the academic skills that will help them to succeed in life and become good citizens. While most Brazilians mentioned the students' private problems, the Americans were reluctant to mention them and focused on their development throughout high school or even their decision and desire to get a college degree.

6.3. LIMITATIONS OF THIS STUDY AND SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

The results of this investigation may be limited for a set of reasons. Firstly, the inclusion of some of the participants' characteristics – such as work experience and time of practice – would be considered interesting since it can bring the other variables and deepen the construct of the discourse authors' identity. Secondly, another aspect to be considered for further research is the lack of the students' voice.

However extensive research is made in this area, a new data collection incorporating the students' own point of view to cross-reference with this study's results would bring some new perspective over the issues presently raised.

In spite of its limited scope, this study indicates that the average teacher, both in Brazil and the United States, is only marginally aware of important issues related to teacher-student relationships. American participants, however, have shown a better willingness and a much more responsive attitude towards the questions presented to them, attempting to reflect more carefully on the issues raised by the questionnaire. The most important finding of the present study may be the urgent need to promote self-reflection among those involved in preparing students for college, educators and school administrators alike.

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APPENDIX I

Model of electronic mail sent to the American teachers

Dear Mrs. X

I am a graduate student in Applied Linguistics at the Federal University of Santa Catarina (UFSC – httt://www.ufsc.br) and one of my interests is to compare student-teacher relationships in first language classrooms in the United States and in Brazil.

Since I am going to be visiting California for a few days next April, I would very much appreciate the possibility of scheduling a meeting with you to get some information for my research. Your time and assistance would greatly help me and I would be happy to share the results of my work with you when completed. I am fluent in English so there will be no language barrier.

My personal reference in the United States is Paul Rorden (airlndc@gmail.com) and my academic advisor at UFSC is Dr. Susana Funck (sbfunck@floripa.com.br).

Thank you for your time. I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Sincerely,

Camila Q. Oppelt
+554899733324

APPENDIX II

Articles Summaries in English

Investing in Teaching and Learning: Dynamics of the Teacher-Student Relationship from Each Actor's Perspective

Chandra Muller, Susan Roberta Katz and L. Janelle Dance

The students shape their own educational expectations largely from their perceptions of their teachers' expectations.

It is difficult to establish a causal relationship in the association between teachers' and students' expectations because each plays a primary role in shaping the other. (…) Teachers base their expectations on the student's prior performance, using indicators such as test scores, track placement, and on other characteristics such as behavior, physical appearance, socioeconomic status, the student's expectations, and race and ethnicity (Oakes, 1985; Persell, 1977; Rist, 1970; Williams, 1975). In sum, teachers' expectations shape their behavior and vary according to the student's social characteristics. (…) Some students may be especially vulnerable to low teachers' expectations, including those from communities that are disproportionately lower income and ethnic minority (Delpit, 1995; Heath, 1983; Ladson-Billings, 1994; Oakes, 1985). (…) Nieto (1996) isolates teacher caring as a key factor in the students' achievement of success. An encouraging teacher can provide a student with the essential link between school and the home community.

A caring teacher-student relationship is one in which the actors feel mutually "understood, received, respected and recognized." (…) Most teachers express a sincere desire to care about their students and to teach them successfully. Teachers' unfamiliarity with the lives of students outside school frequently leads to stereotyping: "[Teachers] often fill the knowledge voids with stereotypes based upon what they read or see in the media, or what they pick up indirectly from stories told to them by children" (Noguera, 1995, p. 203).

Students know well that their teachers' fundamental responsibility is to do whatever is needed to teach them. When teachers fall short of that responsibility, students lose respect for them. They take their teachers' failure personally. The students can sense that perhaps their teachers have given up because they have no faith in the students'

potential to learn and achieve. They lose respect for their teachers precisely because they feel that their teachers have lost respect for them.

Teachers' expectations for their students are [therefore] central in setting the stage for a positive or negative relationship.

Teachers constantly weigh factors in teacher-student relationships when deciding whether to invest time and energy in their students. (…) Teachers refuse to give extra attention to those who habitually are late or cut their classes; they do not want to waste their time. The teachers prefer that disruptive students not attend their classes; they send them to the office, suspend them, or indirectly encourage them to stay home.

A teacher will decide to not invest in a student viewed as highly susceptible to peer pressure but will devote attention to a student trying to disengage from peer pressure in order to succeed in school.

Favorite teachers possess the following characteristics: a good sense of humor, a pedagogical approach that is fun yet educational, the ability to motivate all students to work hard, fairness and accessibility, and empathetic regard for students. (…) Students invest in teachers who care enough to do whatever is necessary to facilitate learning. (…) At-risk students are not asking that teachers be buddies or peers but that they be mentors who can see the world from the student's perspective and yet provide wise advice, direction, admonishment, and praise; thereby they would facilitate learning.

Persistence. Students do not easily disinvest from school and often make persistent attempts to engage teachers. Disengagement occurs over time; even a student who appears to be disengaged will jump at an opportunity to invest when he or she perceives the odds to be favorable for learning. Yet even the most persistent student will stop trying when she or he concludes that the odds are insurmountable.

If students sense the presence of high expectations and caring, they glimpse hints of an opening into the path of academic success.They are inspired. Conversely, if absent, the students feel that the opening is blocked and they assess the obstacles as insurmountable. They then disengage from the learning process at school. (…) The intersection of the student's and the teacher's educational expectations for the student is important in shaping their relationship. If the two sets of actors—students and teachers—are not working toward the same goal, this lack of common purpose apparently has dramatic implications for the broader relationship.

Students often report that it is important to have teachers who

care about them. They want their teachers to be fair, understanding of their lives, fun and yet worthy of respect, and able to believe that they can do good work and to demand it. (…) An effective teacher-student relationship involves the dynamic combination of expectations, caring, and feedback and rewards (in the form of grades).

Teachers are supposed to prepare students for the future; students are expected to follow the teachers' demands, such as completing homework assignments,

Conclusion. We have found that teachers tend to rely heavily on test scores and that test scores mask racial differences in expectations; in contrast, students appear to be more closely attuned to the social environment, particularly the teacher's. Some of the differences in teachers' behavior, which the teacher may link to test scores or completion of homework, are viewed by the students as racist.

Teacher Self-Efficacy, Burnout, Experience and Decision to Refer a Disruptive Student

Egyed, C. J. & Short, R. J.

The purpose of this study was to investigate teacher characteristics that may lead to special education referrals, including efficacy, burnout, experience, and preparation. We hypothesized that likelihood to refer for special education is related to these teacher characteristics.

This study involved 106 elementary teachers who rated themselves on the Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI) and the Teacher Efficacy Scale (TES). They were given a case vignette of a child exhibiting behavioural problems in a classroom and were asked how likely they would be to refer the child for special education assessment.

Self-Efficacy

Teacher's perceived efficacy has been shown in some studies to have a differential effect on the likelihood of referral of students for special education testing (Meijer and Foster, 1988; Soodak and Podell, 1993). Soodak and Podell (1993) found a high negative correlation between sense of efficacy of teachers and willingness to refer a child who was exhibiting behaviour problems.

Teachers with higher self-efficacy were less likely to refer a hypothetical child for special education placement and less likely to see the child as being problematic. They also found that the higher the number of pupils a teacher had in a class, the more likely he or she was to choose to refer the hypothetical child. In contrast, Hughes and her colleagues (Hughes et al., 1993) reported that, although more experienced teachers in their study were more likely to refer than less experienced teachers, self-efficacy did not predict decisions to refer.

Teacher sense of efficacy also has been related to student behaviour and academic performance. Gibson and Dembo (1984) found differences in the classroom behaviour of low- and high-self-efficacy teachers.

Burnout

Professionals who experience burnout are characterized by emotional exhaustion, negative self-evaluation, combined with cynicism and negativism concerning those with whom they work.

Teachers who are burned out may have fewer resources to be concerned about their students' needs and may lack the energy needed to handle pupils' behaviour problems themselves (Evers et al., 2004). Teachers who feel overwhelmed and overstressed may be more apathetic toward their students. (…) Burnout may lead to not wanting to help a problem student, opting to have someone else deal with that student.

A teacher who is emotionally exhausted may not feel that he or she has the emotional reserve to interact with a difficult student. Also, a teacher who evaluates his or her work negatively or has a low sense of personal accomplishment might feel that his or her work does not have a positive impact on student achievement, which will culminate in a lack of persistence in working with a child with difficulties and thereby increase the desire to refer the student.

Emotional energy can be drained, leaving the teacher feeling tired and possibly unwilling or unable to adequately perform the behaviours required to manage students' behaviour. Emotional exhaustion may lead to or result in a lack of persistence at trying to overcome student behaviour problems and thus may be directly linked to decreased personal teacher efficacy. Emotional exhaustion may also lead to decreased efficacy because it may result in the deterioration in the effort or care that a teacher exhibits towards her or his students.

Conclusion

Analyses revealed that teachers who were uncertain whether they would refer a child for special education testing had higher levels of burnout than teachers who were more decided about whether to refer. No relationship was found between teacher sense of efficacy, experience, or preparation and decision to refer. Significant correlations between the subscales on the MBI and the TES suggest an inverse relationship between teacher sense of efficacy and teacher burnout.

Articles Summaries in Portuguese

Investindo na Dinâmica de Ensino e Aprendizado na Relação Professor-Aluno a Partir da Perspectiva de Cada Ator

Chandra Muller, Susan Roberta Katz e L. Janelle Dance

Os alunos, de maneira geral, moldam suas expectativas educacionais pelo que percebem da expectativa do professore. (…) O professor, por sua vez, baseia suas expectativas na performance inicial do aluno, usando indicadores como notas, rendimento e outras características como: comportamento, aparência física, estatus socioeconômico, as expectativas dos alunos, raça e etnia (Oakes, 1985; Persell, 1977; Rist, 1970; Williams, 1975). Resumindo, as expectativas do professor moldam seu comportamento e variam de acordo com as características sociais dos alunos. (…) Alguns alunos podem ser especialmente vulneráveis ao diminuir as expectativas do professor, incluindo aqueles de comunidade pobre e de minoria étnica (Delpit, 1995; Heath, 1983; Ladson-Billings, 1994; Oakes, 1985). (…) Nieto (1996) isola o cuidado do professor como elemento chave ao sucesso do aluno. Um professor que encoraja seus alunos pode providenciar uma conexão entre a escola e a comunidade em que é inserido.

Um bom relacionamento professor/aluno ocorre quando os atores se sentem mutuamente "compreendidos, receptivos, respeitados e reconhecidos." (…) A maioria dos professores expressa desejo sincero em cuidar de seus alunos e obter êxito ao lhes ensinar. O desconhecimento do professor quanto à vida de seus alunos fora da escola frequentemente leva ao estereótipo: "[Professores] frequentemente preenchem o vazio de conhecimento com estereótipos baseados no que eles leem ou veem na mídia, ou o que eles percebem,

indiretamente, de estórias contadas pelas crianças (Noguera, 1995, p. 203).

Os alunos sabem que a responsabilidade fundamental dos professores é fazer o que for necessário para ensiná-los. Quando um professor não atende à esta responsabilidade, os alunos perdem o respeito pelo mesmo. Eles consideram a falha do professor como algo pessoal. Os alunos sentem que talvez o professor desistiu porque não acredita no potencial dos alunos em aprender. Eles perdem o respeito pelo professor precisamente porque sentem que o professor perdeu o respeito por eles. A expectativa do professor pelos alunos é, portanto, central em dar início a um relacionamento positivo ou negativo.

O professor constantemente mede valores no relacionamento professor/aluno ao decidir se devem investir tempo e energia nos alunos. (…) Os professores se recusam a dar atenção extra àqueles que habitualmente se atrasam ou perdem aula; eles não querem perder seu tempo. Professores preferem que os alunos problemáticos não assistam suas aulas; eles enviam os alunos para o setor responsável, os suspendem, ou indiretamente os encorajam a ficar em casa. (…) Um professor decidiria não investir no aluno visto como altamente sucetível a pressão dos colegas, mas devotaria atenção ao aluno que tentasse se separar deste grupo para obter sucesso na escola.

As características dos professores favoritos dos alunos são: bom senso de humor, abordagem pedagógica alegre mas educational, habilidade de motivar outros alunos em trabalhos difíceis, justiça e acessibilidade, e relação empática com os colegas. (…) 'Alunos em risco' não pedem que professores sejam amigos ou colegas, mas que eles sejam mentores, que vejam o mundo sob a perspectiva do aluno e ainda deem bons conselhos, direcionamento, avisos e elogios; assim eles facilitariam o processo de aprendizagem.

Persistência. Alunos são desinvestem na escola facilmente e frequentemente fazem tentativas persistentes para engajar os professores. A separação ocorre com o tempo. Até mesmo um aluno que pareça desengajado aceitaria a oportunidade de investir se ele/a perceber boas chances de aprender. Ainda assim, até o aluno mais persistente pararia de tentar se ele/a concluir que as changes não são boas.

Se os alunos sentem a presença de grandes expectativas e carinho, eles vislumbram a possibilidade da abertura de um caminho para o sucesso acadêmico. Eles se sentem inspirados. Entretanto, se ausente, o aluno sente esta passagem bloqueada e percebem o obstáculo como insuperável. E, então, eles desistem do processo de aprendizagem

da escola. (…) A intersecção das expectativas educacionais dos alunos e dos professores pelos alunos é importante para moldar a relação professor-aluno. Se ambos os atores – professor e aluno – não têm o mesmo objetivo, esta falta de propósito comum tem, aparentemente, implicações dramáticas no seu relacionamento de um modo em geral.

Frequentemente, alunos relatam a importância do professor que se importa com eles. Eles querem que o professor seja justo; que compreenda suas vidas; que seja engraçado e, ainda, merecedor de seu respeito; e que acredite que eles sejam capazes de fazer um bom trabalho e exijam isto deles. (…) Um bom relacionamento professor-aluno envolve a combinação dinâmica de: expectativas, cuidado, *feedback* e recompensa (atravéz das notas). O professor deve preparar os alunos para o futuro. Os alunos, por sua vez, devem cumprir as exigências do professor, como deveres de casa.

Conclusão. Percebemos que o professor tende a se basear muito nas notas e que estas mascaram diferenças raciais quanto as suas expectativas. Os alunos, ao contrário, parecem mais afinados com o ambiente social, especialmente, com o do professor. Algumas diferenças no comportamento do professor – que pode ser relacionado com as notas e com os deveres de casa resolvidos – são vistas pelos alunos como racistas.

Auto-imagem, Esgotamento, Experiência e Decisões de Professores ao Encaminhar Alunos Problemáticos

Egyed, C. J. & Short, R. J.

O propósito deste estudo era investigar as características dos professores que podem levar ao encaminhamento para educação especial, incluindo eficiência, esgotamento, experiência e preparação. Nós hipotetizamos que a probabilidade de encaminhar para educação especial é relacionado a estas características do professor.

Este estudo envolveu 106 professores do ensino fundamental os quais se auto-avaliaram no Inventário de Esgotamento Maslach (MBI) e na Escala de Eficiência do Professor (TES). A eles foi dado uma situação hipotética de uma criança exibindo problemas comportamentais em sala de aula e foram perguntados se eles provavelmente encaminhariam a criança para avaliação para educação especial.

Auto-Eficiênia

Alguns estudos mostram que a auto-imagem positiva dos professores tem um efeito diferencial na probabilidade de encaminhar os alunos para testes ligados à educação especial (Meijer and Foster, 1988; Soodak and Podell, 1993). Soodak and Podell (1993) encontraram uma alta correlação negativa entre a sensação de eficiência do professor e a vontade de encaminhar uma criança que apresenta problemas comportamentais.

Professores com auto-imagem positiva tinham menor probabilidade de encaminhar uma criança hipotética para educação especial e menores chances de perceber a criança como problemática. Também encontraram que quanto maior o número de alunos um professor tem em uma turma, maior a chance de este encaminhar a criança hipotética. Em contraste, Hughes e seus colegas (Hughes et al., 1993) relataram que, em seu estudo, ainda que professores mais experientes tinham maior probabilidade de encaminhar alunos do que os professores menos experientes, uma auto-imagem positivanão determinaria a decisão de encaminhar o aluno.

O senso de eficiência do professor também tem relação com o comportamento do estudante e desempenho acadêmico. Gibson e Dembo (1984) encontraram diferenças do comportamento nas aulas de professores que se auto-avaliam positiva ou negativamente.

Esgotamento

Profissionais com histórico de esgotamento são caracterizados por exaustão emocional, auto-avaliação negativa, combinado com cinismo e negativismo quanto aos colegas de trabalho.

Professores esgotados podem ter menos recursos para se preocupar com as necessidades dos alunos e podem ainda não ter a energia necessária para lidar com o comportamento problemático de seus alunos (Evers et al., 2004). Os professores que se sentem sobrecarregados e estressados podem se tornar mais apáticos. (…) O esgotamento pode levar à recusa de ajudar um aluno com problemas, preferindo que outra pessoa lide com este aluno.

Um professor emocionalmente exausto pode se achar incapaz de interagir com um aluno difícil. Da mesma forma, um professor que se auto-avalia negativamente ou tem baixo sentimento de conquista pessoal pode sentir que seu trabalho não tem um impacto positivo no desenvolvimento dos seus alunos, o que culminaria em falta de persistência em trabalhar com a criança em dificuldades e portanto

aumentar o desejo de reportar o aluno.

Energia emocional pode se exaurir, levando o professor a uma sensação de cansaço e possivelmente sem vontade ou incapaz de agir conforme a necessidade para gerenciar o comportamento dos alunos. Exaustão emocional pode resultar em falta de persistência ao tentar superar os problemas comportamentais dos alunos e assim pode ser diretamente relacionado com a redução da eficiência do professor. A exaustão emocional pode também levar a redução de eficiência porque pode resultar na deterioração de vontade ou atenção que um professor demostra a seus alunos.

Conclusões

Análises revelam que professores que não tinham certeza se iriam referir uma criança para educação especial tinham nível mais alto de esgotamento que professores que eram mais decididos quanto ao encaminhamento. Nenhuma relação entre o sentimento de eficiência, a experiência ou a preparação dos professores com a decisão de encaminhar foi encontrado. Correlações significativas entre subescalas do MBI e o TSE sugerem uma relação inversa entre o senso de eficácia do professor e seu esgotamento.

APPENDIX III

Questionnaire in English

1. Do you identify with any of the problems dealt with in the articles summaries? Which?
2. What are the major problems you have with your students?
3. How do you deal with these problems?
4. Do you believe that the time of teaching help the teacher notice problems more easily?
5. Does the perception of the problems make the teacher more sensitive to them?
6. What are your expectations in relation to their future as students and/or citizens?
7. Have you had any 'success' stories? If so, could you briefly describe one of them?

Questionnaire in Portuguese

1. Te identificastes com algum problema citado nos resumos dos artigos? Qual(is)?
2. Quais os maiores problemas que enfrentas com teus alunos?
3. Como procedes frente a esses problemas?
4. O tempo do magistério ajuda o professor a perceber problemas com maior facilidade?
5. A percepção do problema torna o professor mais sensível a eles?
6. Qual(is) tua(s) expectativa(s) com relação a eles como estudantes e/ou cidadãos?
7. Já presenciaste estórias bem-sucedidas? Se positivo, descreva brevemente uma delas.

APPENDIX IV

Participants' Answers

B1

1. Sim, o de exaustão emocional. Falta de motivação, ânimo, paciência com os alunos que necessitam de maior atenção.
2. Pouco interesse pelo estudo. Desinformação. Atitudes grosseiras no tratamento com os professores e colegas. Não gostam de ler, desmotivação.
3. Tento motivar-me/motivá-los para que se interessem por cultura e educação.
4. Sim.
5. Sim.
6. Que percebam os erros e não desperdicem o tempo deles com cultura inútil. Que venham a se interessar por algo que lhes faça crescer, desenvolver-se e que possam transformar para melhor a sociedade, como cidadãos conscientes e capazes.
7. Sim. Alunos que acompanhei desde as séries iniciais, que acabaram sendo aprovados no vestibular sem que fossem necessários os cursos pré-vestibulares, pois muitos não tinham condições de cursá-los.

B2

1. Não.
2. São aqueles oriundos da falha de alimentação adequada, da desestrutura familiar, alto índice de drogadição e falta de perspectivas quanto ao futuro que lhes parece pouco promissor. Ministro aulas em duas escolas periféricas (manhã e noite) e estes problemas são característicos (nas) [em] ambas as escolas.
3. Incentivo-os a se esforçarem, se destacarem, procuro sempre nos meios de comunicação cursos gratuitos de capacitação, pleiteio merenda reforçada para eles, trago palestrantes para alertá-los sobre os efeitos das drogas em suas vidas...
4. Creio que sim.
5. Certamente que sim. Faz com que o professor desenvolva metodologias para saná-los, ou, pelo menos, tentar dirimi-los. É

um trabalho hercúleo, que transcende a sala de aula, e que nos mostra como somos impotentes, porque precisamos de ajuda extracurricular e nem sempre somos atendidos em nossos pedidos.

6. O básico: que tenham bons empregos, salários dignos e uma vida menos sofrida. Que não lhes falte "o pão de cada dia". Que sejam menos promíscuos, que as garotas não engravidem aos 15 anos, que acreditem que o futuro pode ser melhor, que a vida pode ser melhor.
7. Se histórias bem sucedidas é vê-los na Universidade, formados, sim.

   Mas, o que me emociona sobremaneira é vê-los seguindo bom exemplos dados por mim. Tenho varias alunas que estão fazendo magistério, porque amaram o que eu fiz com elas e querem reproduzir.

   O carinho que eu recebo é imenso, incomensurável, porque lhes dou respeito, carinho, amizade. Não há estresse que resista a uma florzinha, um convite para almoçar na casa de um aluno, a um convite para participar da janta da comunidade deles.

   Nossos alunos têm fome de aprender, porém é necessário que despertemos neles essa consciência. Para isso temos que ser sensíveis a tudo que nós cerca, entender os seus motivos, suas caminhadas, suas perspectivas. Enfim, seu mundo, para que possamos nos introduzir nele...

B3

1. Sim. Inevitavelmente em algum momento de nossa carreira nos deparamos com alguns dos problemas mencionados, ou até mesmo todos, mas o bom é que eles ocorrem em diferentes épocas.
2. Minha principal dificuldade é fazê-los enxergar que as oportunidades na vida são proporcionais ao grau de escolaridade.
3. Estou sempre procurando exemplos práticos para enriquecer minhas aulas, esperando que isso deixe meus alunos mais motivados.
4. Certamente, com o tempo nos tornamos mais seguros de nossa prática pedagógica, o que nos deixa mais a vontade para fazer uma ponte entre os conteúdos e a realidade de nossos alunos.

5. Nem sempre, ainda hoje há os que pensam que ser professor é meramente passar conhecimentos e continuam ignorando o ser humano que é nosso aluno. Esquecem que eles têm desejos, opiniões e uma vida que não podemos desconsiderar.
6. Que ao final de cada ano letivo, tornem-se pessoas melhores, mais educadas, com objetivos e opiniões formadas.
7. Sim, muitas. Vou contar essa porque fiquei muito próxima dessa pessoa e conheci bem sua realidade. Era meu aluno de 8ª série, órfão, morava com a irmã de criação e o cunhado, que vivia acusando-o de vagabundo. Ele me procurou pedindo que eu o ajudasse a arrumar um emprego, pois já havia arrumado um lugar para morar, mas precisava trabalhar. Consegui um emprego para ele com a condição de que não deixasse de estudar. Ele topou, terminou o ensino médio e além do emprego inicial, ainda nos fins de semana passou a trabalhar como garçom. No meu entendimento é uma história bem sucedida, pois um adolescente sem nenhuma estrutura familiar, vivia suma situação bem vulnerável e mesmo assim optou em estudar e ter um trabalho honesto.

B4

1. Sim. Persistência.
2. Ensino médio: não percebo nenhum problema.
   Ensino fundamental: falta de educação; o aluno deveria chegar na escola com uma determinada bagagem referente à educação, mas a família não ajuda nesse processo.
3. Tento conversar com o aluno e explicar que para termos um bom relacionamento dentro da sala de aula devemos, principalmente, nos respeitarmos.
4. Sim.
5. Quando o professor é um simples agente de conhecimentos não.
6. Pela minha experiência percebo que como “estudantes” estão apenas buscando serem compreendidos como pessoas, como “cidadãos” estão querendo a valorização pelo que são. Tenho apenas uma expectativa: que sejam felizes.
7. Sim. Alunos, classe média, cursou direito, hoje é promotor.

B5

1. Não exatamente com os artigos.
2. A heterogeneidade de letramento e idade.
3. Preparo atividades diferentes, quando disponho de tempo, senão organizo equipes para que se ajudem mutuamente.
4. Sim.
5. Sim.
6. Esforço-me a estimulá-los a desejarem aprender, ampliar seus conhecimentos e se enriquecerem culturalmente.
7. Lembro-me apenas de um aluno que conseguiu passar no vestibular para uma licenciatura sem precisar fazer cursinho pré-vestibular.

A1

1. Yes, I identify with students of lower income and ethnic minority who have been struggling academically coming from their intermediate school. I have been dealing with building relationships and making sure to give clear and achievable to high expectations and structure in the classroom environment to help with behavior and academic achievement.
   Over the 15 years that I have been teaching, I have had opportunities to refer students for special education testing. If recommendations were made, it was based on students' reading/math levels, a learning deficit, looking at past school records, speaking counselors, or other teachers the student had. It is true that when I first started teaching was leery of recommending students; however, with more experience it becomes easier because one can see signs that may indicate that a student needs greater help than what can be given in regular education.
2. The major problems with some of the freshman I have now are disruptive behavior (talking when shouldn't, immature playful behavior when should be focused), not doing homework, poor quality of work, poor work habits, and using class time poorly.
3. I be sure that students have clear expectations of what I expect in the classroom, I also establish routines that help with the expectations and structure of the classroom. From the first day I meet my students, I am already trying to gain a relationship with them. I will be very personable and fun-loving and tell them that I will know all their names at the end of week. This

gives them an idea that I care for them and am happy that they are in my class. Each day I am trying to know them better and giving them a chance to know the kind of person I am. This helps greatly because students will respect a teacher that respects them and shows that they care. However, there are times when I need to raise my voice and be firm, but it works because I have taken the time to establish a positive relationship with them. I will have these students again their sophomore year, so the chances of disruptive behavior is lessened because students know me and my expectations and I know them.

4. I'm not sure that I understand this question in its original text, but the way I am interpreting, would be "yes". When we teach is when we see our students, so of course, that is when we would readily see problems. However, I have been in many situations where I am able to observe and this is a great time to see students' unwanted behavior that cannot always be easily perceived when teaching.
5. Yes. Teachers are role models and need to behave the way they want students to behave. We, as adults, need to show our children the correct and best way to do something. Yes, we teach content, but we are also teaching like skills that students need productive citizens. An unwanted problem, no matter how big or small, should not be ignored, but it is at the discretion of the teacher, so long it does not infringe on any one's safety. Standards of behavior always need to be set, so problems will be at a minimal.
6. My expectations are for my students to be contributing, law abiding citizens, who have confidence in themselves and are resourceful adults who will find success in any endeavor they undertake. My expectations also include for them to be highly literate adults who will be responsible and loving to their family when they eventually have one.
7. Yes, many. One of my students had a difficult time coming to class to start with. However, with my encouragement (and other teachers) this student began to come regularly and excel in their work and eventually graduated.

   Another success story was a student who had had my class his freshman and sophomore year and found success, however, when he left me he struggled academically that even his counselor discouraged him from continuing high school. I

found that appalling, knowing that this student had the ability, intelligence, and desire to graduate from high school. The student continued to see me regularly throughout the school year. I did not have him as a student anymore and I felt that I was more of a counselor and a friendly ear for him to speak to. To make a long story short, he did earn his diploma, and we were both thrilled. He was so sweet because he credited his passing to me, but I know it was him and others, as well. I am quite pleased that this student felt comfortable and secure to come back to me for help. And I credit that to my relationship that I built with this student when I had him as a student.

A2

1. Yes, I can relate to several problems mentioned in the articles – for example: "emotional exhaustion" when dealing with "difficult" students, it's very draining mentally, physically, and emotionally dealing with so many teenagers in one day. But – I love them and just bounce back each day" at the end of the year, I always look back on my kids from that year with affection and good thoughts! I also agree (1st article) with: the importance of expectations, caring, respect, and teacher-students having common goal. I know personally that when you truly care about the well-being of the student, teaching them comes almost naturally (to me).
2. Laziness, procrastination, and negative attitude toward our literature (i.e. "I hate this book")/our material.
   But – I have super, amazing students – I really do! I'm lucky. I love them – I love them too much sometimes! One other problem I have is with loud, squirrelly, silly, "shouty-type" kids. They get annoying! But it's really my fault – because I'm very flexible and patient and I let them express themselves too much! But – we do have fun a lot of the time and I know my kids are learning!!
3. Problem: laziness and procrastination.
   I just mainly get on their case! I bug them and push them and talk to them. Also – I make the expectations/guidelines as clear as possible. I find that when kids clearly understand exactly what to do, how to do it, and why it's important – then they're usually a lot more apt to do it! When they feel confident that the

task is something they can succeed at, then they usually do!
Problem: if kids don't like our literature
Well, this thankfully doesn't happen too often, because I really do everything in my power to "sell" the book as something "cool"! I also try really hard to explain that – even if you don't "like" this literature – that's OK – you can still be smart and mature and open-minded enough to gain a "sense of appreciation" for this literature. I also try to deliver the concept that we're not necessarily "learning" this book – rather – we are learning how to think analytically and how to formulate deeper thoughts about literature and language.

4. Yes.
5. Well, I'm not really sure what this questions means – is "them" the students? If so – then yes, I think perception of a "problem" can make teachers more sensitive toward the student – well actually – when you understand more thoroughly about the "problem" – like what might be causing it, or what are lots of possible solutions – then yes, it helps a lot in potentially helping that problem – it's a simple matter of being informal and knowledgeable about the "problem". You really have to take the time and effort and patience to talk to the student and develop trust and companionship.
6. I know it sound cliché, but I genuinely believe all my students have potential to be awesome, happy, successful students and future citizens. How can I not think that? However, of course I'm only human, and of course I have my little thoughts once in a while – like "Gee! That kid might have a little trouble later if he doesn't shape up!" and the like. I also worry about kids who I hear have been drinking and using drugs – because those are habit-forming and it can kill their dreams. But I've heard so many success stories about my past students who have gone out and thrived in the world. So I have high hopes and expectations for my kids! Kids have so many opportunities and so much support these days.
7. One student – few years ago – I had him in my 9th grade English class. He was what you could call "from the ghetto" – the supposed – stereotype of the "gangster Mexican" – but I was tough on him – in a kind of loving way – and one day he shared this really great idea/insight about the book we were reading and I said, "Wow! Peter, you're really good at relating

this book to real life!" or something like that. So – basically – I really tried throughout the year to foster and channel his ability to tap into literature and I persuaded him "You'll love A.P.! The books are so cool in A.P.!" and later in 12th grade – there he was in my 12th grade A.P. English literature class and he did great. He told me that I got him to like reading and that's why he had the courage to take A.P. classes throughout school.

Provide students with "little successes" along the way – and they will snowball into the courage and skills for bigger/overall success.

You need to notice the little good things about the student and bring that out.

A3

1. I identify with being able to see myself as an "efficient" teacher. Yes, I feel that I am often capable, in my own way, of judging a student's fitness (academic "fitness") and need for special services. Most of the time I rely on my experience and sensible, practical feedback: is the student behaving appropriately? Comprehending the majority of the material? Interacting with others in a social setting in appropriate ways? Being an active listener? Using coherent methods to communicate ideas? Also, I rely on my intuition: Do I sense a blockage, a lack, or inability to process? Then, I might refer for special testing, especially if the behavior is repetitive. I do doubt my skills. I do doubt my ability to "go on" as a teacher. I feel burned out. But I still remember at last to shape a sense of positivity and kindness with my students while I am a teacher to remember my humanity – and theirs. I think most of my students feel that I do care for them. They know my interest about them extends well beyond the borders of the classroom and the discussions and what we do reflects the diversity of the our topics regarding our lives. If students are habitually absent, I don't go after them but if they remain and show marked change in behavior I generally attempt to understand the change and offer support.
2. The "major problem" I have is not with my students. The fact is that I see why they disengage with reading and writing when our system of education pushes the curriculum down the students' (and teachers') throats. There is less room for

expression, for discovery, and for enrichment. I see myself entrenched in a system I don't believe in and often the "major" problem" I admit to my students is that I am teaching a system I don't believe in.

3. I try to teach my way as much as possible. I don't even know what my way is. I like to have my students explore their individuality through journaling, collage, interpretive responses, and games. We have theoretical discussions. I love reading aloud, using voices and making books "come alive", rather than using "drill and kill" tests to elicit comprehension.
4. Absolutely. After 14 years, I can step back and see that I am not as eager as I used to be to "join the ranks" and "step into line" and fight for the army of the teachers in this apparent war we call education any more. I don't believe in it. I believe now that education is an entirely different process, and we in the world (especially in the Western world) with our bells and lessons and testes and papers are forgetting the humanity of learning. The joy of reading. The world of color and sound and texture. I am disillusioned with our system, but not its people, you see.
5. I think the previous response covers this question.
6. I believe that the educational system (which I have determined is the "problem") will continue to churn out students who are misguidedly believing that they must read, write, and think in way A, B, and C, in order to succeed in the university, where they will read, write, and think in way A, B, and C on higher levels. This "way" will be effective for the world we've built for ourself here, the one that rewards scores, achievement, and success, but holds in low esteem (relatively) the importance of human kindness, personal expression, and deep connection with our natural world. We're not encouraged to discuss these subjects in educational setting except under the guise of a larger thesis.
7. I had several classes create personal "fairy tales", narratives that drew on autobiographical accounts. These stories were part of the students' reflective places, too, for they were sharing how they saw themselves: as a hero, as a beautiful queen, as a trapped hermit. The stories were, accompanied by illustrations, hand-drawn by the authors, and bound. Then students shared round and graded each other's work. Finally, we donated them to the local children's elementary school to enjoy.

A4

1. I can identify with the problem of not investing as much in students who are habitually tardy or cut my classes. The amount of effort I put in to students is often related to their response to my effort – if it seems to help or not.
   I also am experiencing burnout issues – I'm not as interested in dealing with individual students' issues as I used to be.
2. Major problems – lack of grade-level skills and truancy. The more disparate the group of students' skills are, the harder it is to keep things going well in the classroom.
3. Sometimes I deal with the students individually and sometimes I adjust the pace or work of the whole class so that students will fall through the cracks less.
4. I definitely think I have gotten better at handling these issues over time. I have accumulated strategies for dealing with the problems that come up repeatedly. I also have more perspective about the problems so I don't let them affect the rest of my teaching as much.
5. I think that teachers can definitely do a better job handling issues with students when they know why the student is acting out. In a perfect world teachers would have a lot more time to get to know each student and where he/she was coming from.
6. I think often students with problems learn how to cope better as they mature. Especially since I teach mostly 9th graders – they do a lot of things that I know they will stop doing by 10th grade. Unfortunately some students mess up so badly during 9th grade that they can't recover until much later when they are adults.
7. I knew a student who in 9th grade was constantly in trouble. Over the course of his high school career he became more and more involved in student government and turned into a teacher. By senior year he was an officer and had good grades. Although I have been teaching for 6 years I have switched schools 3 times so I haven't been around to see my 9th graders turn into success stories.

A5

1. Yes, I identify with many of the issues brought up. Especially here at Kailua High School, there are a lot of students coming

from socio-economically difficult home lives and, thus, truly seem to connect with an adult who cares for them vs. simply a teacher who pushes them academically. I do find myself not wishing to put effect towards a student who is often absent or who refuses to do work as my energy dwindles often anyway. I guess I do feel that it is a 2 way street; the student shows a desire to try (even if they will have difficulty), I am happy to help them + push them, but it's hard to extent that energy when the student is reluctant to try or if they are apathetic. In connection with this, I do connect with the burn-out issue and feel that I do not deal with behavior issues as well when I am overwhelmed.

2. Major problems that I have with my students stem from tardiness to apathy to refusal to do work. Many students do not do homework (i.e. reading the novel, short story) at home and, thus, come to class unprepared to participate in discussions which are often the drive of the class.
3. I tried to bring in interesting connection (i.e. songs, video, other articles) to connect to the book. Also, keeping the class more student-centered sometimes helps to keep the focus on the students which, hopefully, drives them to be more self-motivated.
4. Yes, I do feel that to an extent, the more experienced a teacher is the more likely they are to notice issues. However, there are many a teacher who have many years of experience, are burned out from the issues and, thus, don't have the energy to deal with the issues.
5. As stated above, many "younger" teachers, once realizing the issue are quick to try to "fix" the issue. However, many teachers who have "been around the block" have an attitude of why try to "fix" it when I've done it before and it hasn't helped. Often teachers ask for help from administrators and do not receive the support needed, thus, figure, why bother.
6. I expect all of my students to be confident enough in their skills as learners to be able to go out after high school and be confortable in new situations to succeed. I expect them to understand how work ethic is a large aspect of succeeding and that, with it, they can overcome any obstacles and can succeed at what they put their mind to.
7. I can't necessarily narrow down success stories to me in

particular but, as the AP language & composition teacher, I often find students, who, at the beginning of the year can write, but they more simply spit out the basic essay that doesn't really say much. By the end of the year they are truly thinking and connecting and questioning on paper. One girl specifically this year went from having a disorganized mess of an essay on her 1st essay to completing a high level, college essay that was awesomely organized.