

Building and Rebuilding Teaching Professionalism: An Experience Report from the *PIBID/Letras-Inglês* Programme at the Federal University of Western Pará

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Abstract

The *PIBID/Letras-Inglês* sub-project is carried out within the Teaching Initiation Nucleus (NID) associated with the Institutional PIBID Project of the Federal University of Western Pará. It seeks to support the professional development of undergraduate student teachers and school-based mentors through sustained engagement with publicly funded schools in Santarém, Pará. This paper analyses the contributions of the sub-project to the initial and continuing education of English teachers affiliated with the NID, with particular attention to its implications for participants' teaching professionalism. The study is presented as an experience report informed by mixed qualitative and quantitative data collected from institutional records, teaching initiation reports, digital portfolios and testimonials produced between November 2024 and May 2026. The qualitative analysis followed the principles of reflexive thematic analysis, while the quantitative data were used to map activities and outputs developed during the first nineteen months of the sub-project. The findings suggest that *PIBID/Letras-Inglês* has created sustained opportunities for professional learning across university and school settings. For undergraduate student teachers, the data point to perceived growth in teaching agency, situated pedagogical judgement, reflective inquiry, awareness of school realities and professional identity. For school-based mentors, the data indicate opportunities for reflection on pedagogical practice, methodological renewal, reciprocal learning and professional recognition. The paper concludes that *PIBID/Letras-Inglês* may be understood as a shared space of professional development, with potential implications for the professionalism of both future and practising English teachers in primary and secondary education in Brazilian Amazon.

Keywords: PIBID, English teacher education, teaching professionalism, primary and secondary education, Brazilian Amazon

1. Introduction

The education of English language teachers for primary and secondary schools in Brazil remains a complex field marked by a number of persistent challenges. These include the need for closer articulation between theory and practice in initial teacher education, the precarious working conditions found in many publicly funded schools, and the limited availability of continuing professional development opportunities for practising teachers (Hitotuzi, Britto & Pimentel, 2015). Against this backdrop, the Institutional Scholarship Programme for Teaching Initiation (PIBID) (Note 1), created by the Ministry of Education and administered by the Coordination for the Improvement of Higher Education Personnel (CAPES), has become one of the country's most significant public policies for teacher education. The programme promotes the guided and supervised placement of undergraduate students in state primary and secondary schools through activities that progressively increase in complexity and autonomy according to students' stage in the degree course, thereby strengthening the relationship between university and school throughout initial teacher education (CAPES, 2024).

At the Federal University of Western Pará (UFOPA), the *PIBID/Letras-Inglês* sub-project has been running since 2012. It is affiliated with the Language and Literature Programme of the Institute of Educational Sciences (ICED), particularly with its undergraduate English teacher education course, and with the Research Group Centre for Studies in Applied Linguistics and English as a Foreign Language Teacher Education (CELEPI). The current edition, resulting from the approval of the Institutional PIBID/UFOPA Project under CAPES Call No. 10/2024 and PIBID/UFOPA Call No. 01/2024 (CAPES, 2024; UFOPA, 2024), runs from November 2024 to October 2026 in partnership with three publicly funded schools in Santarém, Pará: EEEM Álvaro Adolfo da Silveira, EMEF Professora Sofia Imbiriba and EMEF Professora Maria das Graças Lima de Almeida.

The aim of this paper is to analyse the contributions of the *PIBID/Letras-Inglês* sub-project to the initial and continuing education of the English teachers affiliated with the Teaching Initiation Nucleus (NID) responsible for its implementation. More specifically, the paper seeks to: (a) map the professional development activities undertaken; (b) identify the pedagogical and academic products generated; (c) systematise quantitative indicators of the NID's productivity and participation; (d) discuss qualitative evidence of perceived professional learning from the perspective of student teachers and school-based mentors; and (e) examine the implications of these contributions for the teaching professionalism of the participants. The term *professionalism* is used here to refer to the dynamic construction and reconstruction of teachers' professional knowledge, dispositions, values and forms of pedagogical action, rather than to *professionalism* understood more broadly as occupational status, conduct or external standards of professional behaviour.

The relevance of the study lies in the context of English teacher education in the Northern Region of Brazil, which is marked by geographical, social, cultural and institutional specificities. In the Amazonian context, the demands placed on teacher education cannot be understood only in terms of generic national challenges. They include the need to guarantee access to education across vast territories, in riverside and rural communities, in areas where

mobility is difficult, and in schools that operate under unequal material and structural conditions. They also involve the recognition of sociocultural, ethnic and linguistic diversity; the need for educational policies that respond to local singularities; the production of pedagogical practices and materials that are meaningful in Amazonian school contexts; and the strengthening of publicly funded education as a right and as a means of social transformation (Soares, Colares, & Colares, 2020; Colares, 2022). Such factors make the preparation of well-qualified teachers for primary and secondary education particularly demanding. By bringing together university-based teacher education, school-based professional practice and research-group activity in an Amazonian setting, the experience analysed here offers a contextually situated model of teacher education that merits critical reflection and wider dissemination.

2. Methodology

This paper is an experience report (Mussi, Flores, & Almeida, 2021) informed by mixed qualitative and quantitative data (Creswell & Creswell, 2023). It was developed in the context of the *PIBID/Letras-Inglês* NID at UFOPA, in association with the CELEPI Research Group, covering the period from November 2024 to May 2026.

As an experience report, the study does not seek to establish causal effects or to generalise statistically from the experience analysed. Rather, it aims to document, systematise and interpret a situated educational experience, making explicit the conditions under which it was developed, the forms of evidence produced, and the meanings attributed to the process by participants. For this reason, the experience report is treated here as a form of practice-based academic knowledge that allows a pedagogical and institutional experience to be critically reconstructed, rather than merely narrated. Its contribution therefore lies in the analytical systematisation of a contextually situated process of teacher education.

The NID comprises one area coordinator, three school-based mentors (officially designated in PIBID as supervising teachers) and twenty-four undergraduate student teachers, organised into six teams of four members each. Team leadership rotates every semester, while the teams rotate annually between the partner schools.

The sub-project is carried out in partnership with three publicly funded schools in Santarém, Pará: EEEM Álvaro Adolfo da Silveira, an upper secondary school, and EMEF Professora Sofia Imbiriba and EMEF Professora Maria das Graças Lima de Almeida, both serving primary and lower secondary pupils. These schools constitute the main teaching context of the experience reported here. They provide the institutional setting in which the undergraduate student teachers from the *PIBID/Letras-Inglês* NID participate in school-based activities, observe and support English language teaching, plan and implement research and pedagogical intervention microprojects, interact with pupils and teachers, and reflect on teaching practice under the guidance of school-based mentors and the area coordinator.

Three research and pedagogical intervention microprojects are being developed, each associated with one partner school. At Maria das Graças Municipal School, two teams implement *Readers' Theatre: Developing Oral Reading and Reading Comprehension in*

English. At Álvaro Adolfo State School, another two teams implement *From Screen to Stage: Learning English through Simulations*. At Sofia Imbiriba Municipal School, two further teams implement *Learning English through Storytelling*. Although student teachers rotate annually between partner schools, the microprojects remain linked to the schools in which they are being developed. This arrangement allows the sub-project to combine student-teacher mobility with continuity in the pedagogical and research work carried out in each school.

The six teams work with both lower and upper secondary pupils, depending on the partner school to which they are assigned. Table 1 summarises pupil distribution by school, year group, gender and age range.

Table 1. Pupil distribution by school, year group, gender and age range

School	Year group	Male	Female	Total	Age range
Álvaro Adolfo State School	First-year upper secondary (×6 classes)	63	65	128	14-15
Sofia Imbiriba Municipal School	Year 6 (×2 classes)	36	34	70	11-13
	Year 7 (×1 class)	25	20	45	12-14
	Year 8 (×1 class)	17	13	30	13-14
Maria das Graças Municipal School	Year 6 (×1 class)	23	14	37	11-14
	Year 8 (×2 classes)	30	39	69	13-15
	Year 9 (×1 class)	19	24	43	14-17
Total		213	209	422	—

For analytical purposes, the experience was organised into three interconnected stages. The first stage consisted of mapping the NID's activities and outputs based on institutional records produced between 1 November 2024 and 31 May 2026. These records included meeting minutes, field-journal records of school-based activities, an institutional quantitative monitoring spreadsheet produced by the area coordination, fifteen PIBID teaching initiation reports and six digital portfolios compiled by the teams of undergraduate student teachers. At this stage, the material was used to systematise quantitative indicators, such as the number of general NID meetings, team meetings, school-based activities, academic presentations, events organised, pedagogical products and participations in professional development activities. The second stage focused on describing and organising the mapped pedagogical and academic products, particularly the teaching initiation reports and digital portfolios, with attention to their role in documenting school-based work, pedagogical production and professional learning trajectories.

The third stage consisted of the qualitative interpretation of reflective evidence produced by undergraduate student teachers and school-based mentors. For student teachers, the analysis

drew primarily on excerpts from the teaching initiation reports and digital portfolios, with the aim of identifying perceived effects on initial teacher education. For school-based mentors, written testimonials were analysed to understand how they perceived the contribution of *PIBID/Letras-Inglês* to their continuing professional development, particularly regarding reflection on practice, methodological renewal, professional exchange and recognition of their role in the education of future English teachers.

The qualitative analysis adopted an interpretivist orientation, drawing on Erickson (1986), and was conducted through reflexive thematic analysis, following the six phases proposed by Braun and Clarke (2022). First, the teaching initiation reports, digital portfolios and mentors' testimonials were read and reread to familiarise the researchers with the dataset and to identify initial points of analytical interest. Second, relevant passages were coded manually, with attention to how participants described their participation in *PIBID/Letras-Inglês*, their perceived learning, their engagement with school realities, their relationships with mentors and peers, and their understanding of teaching practice. Third, the codes were examined to develop broader patterns of meaning related to professional development.

The analysis then moved from coding towards theme development and refinement. The initial patterns were reviewed in relation to both the coded extracts and the dataset as a whole, so that the analysis would not be restricted to isolated quotations. The themes were then refined, named and organised in relation to the study's theoretical construct of teaching professionalism. This process resulted in five analytical dimensions concerning undergraduate student teachers: active participation and teaching agency; situated pedagogical judgement and the emergence of a teacher-researcher stance; engagement with the challenges of real school contexts; articulation between theory and practice; and the strengthening of teacher identity through belonging and relational learning. Finally, the themes were written up in dialogue with selected excerpts from the reports and testimonials, with the aim of constructing an interpretive account of perceived professional learning within the sub-project.

Two methodological caveats are important for situating the scope and status of the analysis. The first concerns the interpretive nature of the analytical procedure. Because the study adopted reflexive thematic analysis, the aim was not to produce inter-rater reliability or coding agreement, but to construct a coherent, transparent and plausible interpretation of the dataset. Researcher subjectivity was addressed reflexively through repeated reading of the material, comparison across different sources of evidence and analytical note-taking, while interpretive claims were formulated in relation to the strength and limits of the available evidence.

The second caveat concerns the nature of the primary qualitative sources used in the study. The teaching initiation reports, digital portfolios and mentors' testimonials are self-reported and institutionally embedded texts produced within the context of *PIBID/Letras-Inglês*. They were written by participants who were directly involved in the sub-project and who may have had academic, professional or financial reasons to represent the experience positively. For this reason, the analysis does not treat these materials as neutral or independent evidence of impact. Rather, they are interpreted as records of participants' perceived professional learning

and as situated accounts of how they made sense of their participation in the programme. This limitation was addressed by triangulating different types of documents, by attending to passages that expressed challenges, tensions and difficulties as well as positive evaluations, and by avoiding claims of direct causality or objectively measured effectiveness.

A further limitation relates to the temporal scope of the study. Because the sub-project's operational period is scheduled to end only in October 2026, the analysis presented here should be understood as a partial account of an ongoing experience rather than as a final evaluation.

Finally, as part of the institutional context of the experience, the sub-project's affiliation with the CELEPI Research Group should also be noted. The NID's activities were connected to teaching, research and outreach initiatives developed within the group.

3. Teaching Professionalism as a Professional Continuum

In this paper, teaching professionalism is understood as a dynamic set of theoretical and practical knowledge, behaviours, values and attitudes that are constructed and reconstructed throughout a teacher's career, both during initial teacher education and in professional practice. It is therefore not regarded as a fixed state to be achieved, but as an ongoing, formally supported process that remains open to reconfiguration. This perspective is clearly formulated by Vale (2024), whose working definition is adopted in this study:

Teaching professionalism is defined by a set of theoretical-practical knowledge of teaching that may be formally (re)constructed throughout the teacher's initial training and professional career, as well as behaviours, values, and attitudes that are revealed in their teaching practice (p. 25).

Vale's (2024) synthesis is grounded in the contributions of Sacristán (1999), Contreras (2002) and Roldão (2005, 2007a, 2007b, 2017). It is adopted here because it brings these perspectives together into an operational definition that is particularly useful for analysing the professional learning processes fostered by *PIBID/Letras-Inglês*.

This conception is closely aligned with Roldão (2005), for whom teaching professionalism may be analysed through descriptors such as the teacher's specific social function, the professional knowledge that legitimises that function, the authority to make decisions about pedagogical action, and membership of a professional community capable of sharing, regulating and developing that knowledge. From this standpoint, teaching professionalism cannot be reduced to the individual possession of subject knowledge. Rather, it involves the construction of a specific professional knowledge base, socially recognised and sustained by collective practices of reflection, decision-making and accountability.

Roldão (2007b) argues that the professional teacher is defined not only by mastery of content, but also by the capacity to mediate, transform and mobilise knowledge in concrete teaching situations in order to promote learning. Sacristán (1999), in turn, emphasises that teaching professionalism is strengthened when teachers develop awareness and agency in relation to their own practice, moving beyond mechanical or merely executive forms of action.

Contreras (2002) broadens this discussion by arguing that teacher autonomy should not be understood as individual independence or corporate prerogative, but as an educational quality of teaching work, constituted through the articulation of professional competence, moral responsibility, commitment to the community and critical reflection on the concrete conditions of practice.

This understanding of teaching professionalism resonates with approaches that conceptualise professional learning as reflective, inquiry-oriented and situated in practice. Schön (1987) argues that professional education should move beyond the mere application of technical knowledge by creating conditions for learners to engage in reflective practicums: spaces where learning occurs through doing, coaching and reflection on concrete situations. In TESOL teacher education, Cirocki, Wyatt and Gao (2024) similarly emphasise reflective practice as an ongoing, purposeful, collaborative and context-specific process through which teachers integrate theoretical and practical knowledge and develop professional identity. These perspectives are directly relevant to the present study, as *PIBID/Letras-Inglês* places undergraduate student teachers and school-based mentors in situations requiring them to plan, act, observe, interpret, adapt and reflect in response to the realities of school life.

Within this reflective and inquiry-oriented frame, Lesson Study is particularly relevant to the present analysis, given that one of the *PIBID/Letras-Inglês* microprojects explicitly incorporated it as a procedure for linking theoretical study, classroom experimentation and reflective discussion. A Japanese-origin approach to teacher development, Lesson Study centres on the collaborative planning, observation, discussion and revision of research lessons. Lewis (2002) describes it as a form of teacher-led instructional improvement in which educators work together to examine classroom learning and refine teaching practice, while Stepanek et al. (2007) emphasise its cyclical structure of planning, teaching, observing, debriefing, revising and sharing results. Dudley (2013) further highlights its potential to render teacher learning visible through professional dialogue, focused observation of pupils' learning and the collective construction of practice knowledge.

The inquiry-oriented dimension of teaching professionalism can be further understood through the notion of the teacher-researcher. MacLean and Mohr (1999) argue that when teachers adopt a research stance, the traditional boundary between teaching and researching is redefined: they raise questions about their own practice, examine classroom evidence and use inquiry to deepen their understanding of teaching and learning from within. Mills (2018) similarly presents action research as a collaborative and socially responsive form of professional inquiry capable of empowering teachers and supporting educational change. Thus, the construction of teaching professionalism involves not only learning to teach, but also developing the capacity to investigate practice, interpret evidence and make informed pedagogical decisions in context.

Finally, the professional learning fostered by *PIBID/Letras-Inglês* may be read in relation to Wenger's (1998) understanding of learning as participation in communities of practice. For him, learning is not merely the accumulation of information or skills, but a process of becoming, through which participants develop identities in relation to shared practices, forms

of engagement and communities of belonging. This perspective helps to frame *PIBID/Letras-Inglês* as a formative space in which student teachers, school-based mentors, university staff and partner schools participate in a shared enterprise of planning, teaching, reflecting and producing pedagogical knowledge.

Studies focusing specifically on PIBID help to situate this discussion within the Brazilian teacher education context and to illuminate the particular dynamics of programmes of this kind when implemented in peripheral or under-resourced settings. Hitotuzi, Britto and Pimentel (2015), in their analysis of previous editions of the *PIBID/Letras-Inglês* Project at UFOPA, show that the programme can strengthen initial teacher education by bringing undergraduate student teachers into closer contact with the everyday realities of publicly funded schools and by creating structured opportunities for pedagogical experimentation, collaborative planning and reflection on practice. Their study also draws attention to the institutional and regional conditions in which such programmes operate, particularly in a context marked by geographical distance, uneven educational infrastructure, shortages of qualified teachers and limited opportunities for continuing professional development (Azevedo, Oliveira, & Ferreira, 2021; Dantas et al., 2024; Hitotuzi, 2021). Therefore, PIBID may function not only as a complement to university-based coursework, but also as a significant site of early professional learning and socialisation into teaching.

More recently, Vale (2024), examining PIBID and the construction of the professionalism of beginning English teachers in Western Pará, reinforces the view that participation in the programme may contribute to the progressive development of professional knowledge, dispositions and values associated with becoming a teacher. Her findings point in particular to the experiential, collaborative and contextually situated dimensions of professional learning within PIBID, suggesting that the formative potential of the programme lies partly in the articulation of theory and practice, in sustained engagement with publicly funded school contexts, and in the interaction between student teachers, more experienced school teachers and university-based teacher educators. These studies portray PIBID as a setting for teacher development rather than simply as a grant-funded school-placement programme. Sustained participation in school life, combined with collaborative reflection and institutional support, creates conditions in which teachers can develop professional identities, exercise pedagogical agency and build knowledge grounded in practice.

From this perspective, PIBID may be understood as a programme that operates along two complementary dimensions: the initial construction of professionalism among undergraduate student teachers and the reconstruction of professionalism among school-based mentors already working in publicly funded schools. By creating opportunities for student teachers and practising teachers to interact in real school settings, the sub-project appears to support the development of teaching professionalism in ways that are reflective, collaborative, inquiry-oriented and contextually situated.

4. Evidence of Professional Growth: Findings and Discussion

Table 2 summarises the quantitative data gathered over the first nineteen months of the *PIBID/Letras-Inglês* NID's operation. The figures indicate a considerable level of activity and

illustrate the range of institutional, school-based, academic and professional development actions through which the sub-project has operated.

Table 2. Overview of *PIBID/Letras-Inglês* NID activities and outputs in the first 19 months

Activities and events	n
General NID meetings	10
Team meetings with school-based mentors	147
Team meetings without school-based mentors	62
Activities in partner schools	138
Papers presented at academic events	22
Large-scale events organised by the NID	2
Professional development activity participations by NID members	32
Abstracts published in conference proceedings	12
PIBID teaching initiation reports	15
Active digital portfolios	6
Digital stories in English with Amazonian themes	4
Bilingual mini-dictionary for basic education pupils	1

Although these figures should be interpreted cautiously, since there is no standardised benchmark for comparing PIBID sub-projects across different institutional and regional contexts, they suggest a sustained level of activity in the first nineteen months of implementation. The number of team meetings with school-based mentors (147), when compared with meetings held without mentors (62), indicates that much of the sub-project's work was mediated by school-based professional guidance rather than being restricted to autonomous student-teacher preparation. Similarly, the 138 activities carried out in partner schools suggest that the NID's work was not limited to university-based planning or reporting, but involved repeated engagement with pupils, classrooms and school routines. The 22 papers presented at academic events, 12 abstracts published in conference proceedings and 32 professional development activity participations by NID members also indicate that the sub-project operated across teaching, research and professional development activities, thereby reinforcing the link between school-based practice and academic formation. Accordingly, the quantitative data should be interpreted as indicators of the intensity, continuity and institutional breadth of the experience analysed, rather than as evidence of impact in themselves.

These indicators should also be considered alongside the sub-project's affiliation with the CELEPI Research Group, which shaped the broader formative context in which the experience took place. CELEPI connected school-based participation in PIBID with teaching, research and outreach activities, creating opportunities for undergraduate student teachers and school-based mentors to take part not only in classroom interventions, but also in academic events, pedagogical production, reflective documentation and research-oriented discussions. In this sense, the NID's work was situated within a broader university environment that sought to

articulate three central dimensions of academic life: teaching, research and extension.

The two large-scale events organised by the NID were the 5th CELEPI Seminar (Note 2) and the 4th Colloquium of English Teachers of the Western Pará Region (Note 3). Regarding pedagogical and academic outputs, the digital portfolios (Note 4) are particularly relevant because they document the teams' professional learning trajectories in a public and shared format, make visible the work carried out in schools and may foster processes of reflection, documentation and monitoring of professional learning. This interpretation is supported by Zeichner and Wray (2001), for whom portfolios in teacher education can stimulate reflection, analysis of practice and professional dialogue, and by Barrett (2007), who associates electronic portfolios with the documentation of growth over time, reflection on learning and the presentation of evidence in different formats.

In terms of qualitative evidence related to initial teacher education, the analysis of the student teachers' reports points to perceived developmental effects in at least five interrelated dimensions: (i) active participation and teaching agency; (ii) situated pedagogical judgement and the emergence of a teacher-researcher stance; (iii) engagement with the challenges of real school contexts; (iv) articulation between theory and practice; and (v) the strengthening of teacher identity through belonging and relational learning. These dimensions are visible in reflective passages produced by undergraduate student teachers across different PIBID teaching initiation reports.

The first dimension concerns the movement from a primarily observational stance to active participation and teaching agency. As one student teacher states:

In PIBID, I am not merely a student observing; I am someone who contributes actively, who makes mistakes, who learns, who experiments. This space has given me the confidence to take a stance, test strategies, develop approaches such as TPRS, and constantly challenge myself. With every encounter with pupils and with the team, I feel more certain of my choice to teach and more motivated to continue on this journey with commitment and passion (UFOPA, 2025, p. 30).

This passage suggests that the sub-project is not limited to the observation of school life but provides opportunities for active participation in pedagogical practice. Expressions such as "test strategies", "develop approaches" and "constantly challenge myself" indicate the development of teaching agency, as the student teacher begins to perceive themselves as someone capable of intervening, proposing and making pedagogical decisions. The passage also points to professional learning through experience, including through mistakes, which are not represented as failure but as part of the process of becoming a teacher. This analysis accords with Sacristán's (1999) view of reflection as integral to professional practice. It also resonates with contemporary discussions of reflective TESOL teacher education, in which professional learning is understood as a purposeful and context-sensitive process through which student teachers learn to connect pedagogical knowledge, classroom experience and reflection on practice (Cirocki, Wyatt, & Gao, 2024). Finally, the statement "I feel more certain of my choice to teach" suggests that participation in PIBID may contribute to the confirmation of professional choice and to increased motivation to pursue a teaching career.

The second dimension concerns the development of situated pedagogical judgement and the emergence of a teacher-researcher stance. Another student teacher observes:

Where I had previously observed and experimented, I began to intervene with greater confidence: I took an active part in planning, proposed adaptations and felt more able to make decisions in the classroom in response to pupils' real needs. This movement from observer to agent consolidated practices and revealed more clearly the limits and possibilities of the school context in Santarém. I also learned to improvise when resources were lacking, to reformulate plans when the expected results did not appear, and to value each small step forward as an indicator of progress. This continuous exercise of planning, implementing and evaluating reaffirmed in me the stance of a teacher-researcher: someone who questions, adapts and learns from their own practice (UFOPA, 2026a, p. 31).

This reflection points to the importance of situated experience in the construction of teaching professionalism. Rather than presenting teaching as the simple application of previously acquired knowledge, the student teacher's account suggests that professional learning emerges through the need to respond to concrete classroom situations, adjust pedagogical decisions and interpret pupils' needs in context. The reference to the "teacher-researcher" stance is also significant, since it indicates an emerging understanding of teaching as a reflective and inquiry-oriented practice. This interpretation is consistent with MacLean and Mohr's (1999) view that teacher-researchers redefine the boundaries between teaching and researching by raising questions about their own practice, examining classroom evidence and using inquiry to understand teaching and learning from within the classroom. It also accords with Mills's (2018) conception of action research as a collaborative and socially responsive form of professional inquiry that may empower teachers and become part of their ongoing professional practice.

The third dimension relates to the challenges and tensions involved in teaching in real school contexts. One student teacher, reflecting on the microproject From Screen to Stage, states:

This second experience in PIBID brought me closer to the realities of teaching, revealing a number of challenges, including the lack of interest shown by some pupils, even when films were used as a teaching resource, the exhaustion caused by the constant search for innovative strategies, and moments of limited collaboration from the class. At the same time, the greater autonomy granted to the team in the classroom at Álvaro Adolfo da Silveira School made the experience both challenging and rewarding (UFOPA, 2026b, p. 19).

The excerpt points to a less linear understanding of professional learning. The student teacher recognises that pedagogical innovation does not automatically guarantee pupil engagement and that the search for meaningful strategies may be demanding. At the same time, the reference to autonomy suggests that the sub-project creates conditions for student teachers to experience the complexity of teaching not as passive observers, but as participants responsible for planning, adapting and responding to classroom situations. This is close to Schön's (1987) understanding of professional learning as engagement with uncertain and indeterminate situations, in which practitioners cannot simply apply technical knowledge but must interpret the situation and act reflectively. This combination of difficulty, autonomy and reflection is

central to the construction of professionalism.

The fourth dimension concerns the articulation between theory and practice, particularly through collaborative planning, Lesson Study and dialogue with the school-based mentor. As another student teacher reports:

Participating in PIBID continues to be one of the fundamental stages of my education. This period served above all to consolidate what we had been studying in theory. It was remarkable to see the sub-project From Screen to Stage finally take shape and move from paper into practice. In addition to direct work with pupils, PIBID provided moments in which we could pause and think about the reasons behind what we were doing. The readings undertaken with the mentor and the discussions that emerged in our meetings were fundamental. This process of studying theory and discussing ideas gave us much more confidence when applying the Lesson Study methodology in the classroom (UFOPA, 2026c, p. 10).

This passage suggests that the contribution of PIBID is not restricted to immersion in school life. It also lies in the creation of spaces for mediation between theoretical study, collaborative planning and classroom practice. The reference to readings, meetings and Lesson Study is particularly relevant because it indicates that the student teacher experienced professional learning as a structured process of studying, planning, implementing, observing and discussing pedagogical action, rather than as isolated classroom performance. In this respect, the sub-project approximates the idea of a reflective practicum, as discussed by Schön (1987), because student teachers are placed in situations where they learn by doing, receiving guidance, examining practice and rethinking their pedagogical decisions. It also aligns with current discussions in TESOL teacher education that emphasise reflection as a structured, dialogic and context-sensitive process through which future teachers learn to interpret and improve their own practice (Cirocki, Wyatt, & Gao, 2024). More specifically, the student teacher's reference to Lesson Study resonates with literature that understands teacher learning as a collaborative and inquiry-oriented process centred on the careful examination of pupils' learning and the refinement of teaching practice (Lewis, 2002; Stepanek et al., 2007; Dudley, 2013). From this perspective, PIBID appears to support the construction of professionalism by linking university-based knowledge, school-based experimentation and systematic reflection.

Finally, the fifth dimension concerns the emergence of a sense of belonging to the school and the strengthening of teacher identity through mentor support and participation in the life of the institution. One student teacher writes:

The school made materials and spaces available to us, and the mentor's guidance gave us the confidence to teach the classes. I personally felt as if I were already a teacher in that school. Through the conversations between the groups and with the mentor, who felt comfortable talking to us about life, school and experiences at university, I came to feel part of the school. It was an edifying experience in my teacher education (UFOPA, 2026c, pp. 11–12).

The passage suggests that teacher identity is constructed not only through individual

confidence, but also through institutional participation and relational learning. The student teacher's sense of professional growth is associated with feeling recognised, supported and included in the school community. The mentor's role, the interaction between teams and the school's openness are therefore presented as conditions that enabled the student teacher to experience teaching as a situated professional practice. This interpretation is consistent with Wenger's (1998) understanding of learning as participation in communities of practice, since the student teacher's professional identity appears to be shaped through engagement with shared practices, forms of belonging and participation in the school community.

These reflections also help to specify, at the level of teacher education, what some of the demands of the Northern Region involve. The student teachers' references to pupils' real needs, limited resources, uneven engagement, adaptation of plans, collaboration with school-based mentors and the need to feel part of the school community point to the importance of preparing teachers who are able to understand and respond to concrete Amazonian school realities. Therefore, the construction of teaching professionalism within *PIBID/Letras-Inglês* is not detached from regional conditions but shaped by them.

The student-teacher reflections suggest that *PIBID/Letras-Inglês* contributes to the initial construction of teaching professionalism through multiple and interconnected processes. The reports indicate perceived growth in active participation, teaching agency, situated pedagogical judgement, reflective capacity, collaborative planning, awareness of school realities and professional identity. They also suggest that learning to teach is experienced not only as the acquisition of methods or techniques, but as participation in a community of practice in which student teachers observe, plan, intervene, adapt, reflect, make decisions and gradually come to see themselves as teachers. Examined in the light of Wenger (1998), this process may be understood as a form of professional becoming, in which identity is constructed through participation in shared practices. Considered in dialogue with Schön (1987), MacLean and Mohr (1999) and Mills (2018), it also indicates that teaching professionalism is strengthened when student teachers learn to inquire into practice, interpret classroom evidence and make situated pedagogical decisions.

On the question of continuing professional development, the school-based mentors' testimonials point to similarly relevant dimensions. Mentor 1 (Note 5) states that PIBID has contributed to their continuing development by "promoting reflection on my teaching practice, planning, and classroom mediation", adding that, in the role of mentor, they also learn "from the student teachers, from professional exchanges, and from the real challenges of daily school life". This testimonial suggests a reciprocal professional learning relationship, in which the school-based mentor not only guides student teachers but also learns from them and from the concrete situations encountered in school practice. This interpretation is consistent with Roldão (2017), who understands continuing education as a process of professional development that incorporates practical experience, subjects it to theoretical questioning and reinvests it in improved practices that generate new knowledge. It also resonates with Schön's (1987) understanding of professional learning as reflection on and through practice, since the mentor's account points to learning generated by planning, mediation, classroom challenges and subsequent reflection on pedagogical action.

Mentor 2, who, like the other *PIBID/Letras-Inglês* mentors, participated in PIBID as a student teacher in a previous edition and now serves as a school-based mentor, interprets the programme as a space of professional continuity and peer development:

In my view, PIBID is an extremely important project, as I was once in the position of student teacher and today I serve as a mentor. Being in dialogue with other peers about teaching practice is always beneficial for education, and this new experience has contributed greatly to my practice (Mentor 2) (Note 6).

This testimonial is relevant because it bridges two moments in the same professional trajectory: initial teacher education and continuing professional development. The mentor's movement from former student teacher to current school-based mentor suggests that PIBID may support formative processes at different stages of an English teacher's career. The emphasis on dialogue with peers also reinforces the idea that professionalism is not developed only through individual accumulation of experience, but through exchange, reflection and participation in a wider professional community. This interpretation is compatible with Wenger's (1998) understanding of learning as participation in communities of practice, since professional knowledge appears to be constructed through shared engagement, dialogue and belonging to a collective enterprise.

Mentor 3 offers a broader assessment, describing *PIBID/Letras-Inglês* as "a turning point" in their continuing professional development. Their testimonial refers explicitly to the updating of pedagogical practice, the expanded use of technologies, professional exchanges with undergraduates, the stimulus to critical reflection, innovation and a sense of recognition as a state-school teacher:

PIBID/Letras-Inglês has been a turning point in my continuing professional development, as it updates my pedagogical practice, broadens the use of technologies, fosters professional exchanges with undergraduates, and stimulates critical reflection on my teaching. Throughout this process, I teach, I learn, I innovate, and I feel professionally valued as a state-school teacher (Mentor 3) (Note 7).

Although this is a self-reported perception, the strength of the expression "a turning point" suggests that the experience has been subjectively significant for this mentor. The passage also indicates that continuing professional development is experienced not merely as attendance at formal training activities, but as a process of renewed engagement with pedagogical practice, technologies, professional exchange and recognition. Thus, the testimonial complements the student-teacher reflections by suggesting that *PIBID/Letras-Inglês* may operate as a two-way formative space, in which mentors contribute to the education of future teachers while also revisiting and expanding their own professional repertoires.

In the light of Roldão (2005), these testimonials may be interpreted as evidence of the strengthening of teaching professionalism among school-based mentors, since they point not only to individual professional updating, but also to participation in a collective space of training, reflection and production of professional knowledge. By fostering exchanges among school-based mentors, student teachers, university staff, schools and the research group,

PIBID/Letras-Inglês appears to challenge the traditional isolation of teaching work and to contribute to the formation of a professional community oriented towards reflection on practice and the improvement of pedagogical action. From a communities-of-practice perspective, this suggests that the NID operates as a shared professional space in which different participants contribute to, and learn from, a common repertoire of practices, problems, resources and pedagogical meanings (Wenger, 1998).

The data discussed in this section suggest that *PIBID/Letras-Inglês* contributes to the initial construction of professionalism among undergraduate student teachers, while also operating as a space for professional updating, reflection, exchange and recognition for school-based mentors. For student teachers, the reports indicate perceived growth in confidence, agency, reflective capacity, professional identity, situated pedagogical judgement and participation in collaborative professional practices. For school-based mentors, the testimonials point to opportunities for renewed reflection on practice, methodological updating, reciprocal learning and professional recognition. These findings are in dialogue with Roldão (2007b), for whom professional teaching knowledge does not result from the mere application of theory to practice, but from the articulation of scientific, pedagogical-didactic and experiential knowledge through reflection on, in and after action. They also align with Roldão (2007a), insofar as the author relates the quality of teaching performance to professional education and the strengthening of professionalism. Across both groups, the evidence suggests that, within *PIBID/Letras-Inglês*, teaching professionalism is built and rebuilt through reflective participation in situated, collaborative and inquiry-oriented practices.

5. Concluding remarks

This paper has reported and analysed the experience of the *PIBID/Letras-Inglês* sub-project at UFOPA over its first nineteen months of operation, covering the period from November 2024 to May 2026. Presented as an experience report informed by mixed qualitative and quantitative data, the study examined the contributions of the sub-project to the initial and continuing education of English teachers affiliated with the NID responsible for its implementation, with particular attention to its implications for teaching professionalism. The analysis was guided by an understanding of teaching professionalism as a dynamic set of knowledge, dispositions, values and forms of pedagogical action that are constructed and reconstructed throughout a teacher's career.

The findings suggest that the sub-project has functioned as a shared space of professional development, with perceived effects on both the initial education of undergraduate student teachers and the continuing professional development of school-based mentors, creating sustained opportunities for professional learning across university and school settings.

For undergraduate student teachers, the programme appears to contribute to the initial construction of teaching professionalism by providing opportunities for active participation in school life, the development of teaching agency, situated pedagogical judgement, reflective learning and the strengthening of professional identity. The teaching initiation reports suggest that student teachers do not experience PIBID merely as a period of observation or practical training, but as a formative process in which they gradually learn to plan, intervene, adapt,

reflect and make pedagogical decisions in response to the realities of publicly funded schools. The experience thus fosters not only the acquisition of pedagogical strategies, but also the development of reflective and inquiry-oriented dispositions associated with becoming a teacher.

For school-based mentors, the programme appears to contribute to the reconstruction of professionalism by reactivating professional learning processes, encouraging reflection on practice, supporting methodological renewal and recognising practising teachers as active participants in the education of future English teachers. The mentors' testimonials suggest that this participation may enable reciprocal learning, since mentors not only guide undergraduate student teachers but also engage in professional exchanges that lead them to revisit their own practices, assumptions and forms of pedagogical mediation.

Considered as a whole, these findings suggest that teacher education can be strengthened when university, school and research group work together in a sustained and contextually responsive way. In this arrangement, publicly funded schools function not merely as placement sites, but as legitimate spaces for the production of professional knowledge, pedagogical experimentation and collaborative reflection, and the NID itself may be understood as a community of practice in which student teachers, school-based mentors and university staff participate in shared forms of planning, teaching, reflection and pedagogical knowledge production. This model is particularly relevant in the Amazonian context, where geographical distance, sociocultural diversity, unequal school conditions and the need for locally responsive educational policies make the preparation of well-qualified English teachers for primary and secondary education especially challenging.

The study also has limitations. It analyses an ongoing sub-project scheduled to end in October 2026 and relies mainly on institutional records, teaching initiation reports, digital portfolios and written testimonials. These sources are valuable for understanding participants' perceived professional learning, but they are self-reported and institutionally embedded and therefore cannot be treated as independent evidence of impact or as objective measures of professional development. A fuller assessment would require consideration of the complete operational period and the inclusion of additional perspectives, particularly those of the pupils involved in the activities. Future studies could examine how pupils experience the microprojects, how they perceive their own engagement with English, and whether the activities produce observable changes in participation, confidence, oral production, reading comprehension or attitudes towards English learning. They could also adopt more systematic instruments, such as interviews, questionnaires and classroom observation protocols, to examine how participation in PIBID shapes the professional learning trajectories of student teachers and school-based mentors over time.

Even with these limitations, the experience reported here suggests that *PIBID/Letras-Inglês* may be understood as more than a grant-funded school-placement programme. In the context of UFOPA, it operates as a space in which professional identity, pedagogical agency, situated judgement, reflective inquiry and collaborative professional knowledge are progressively constructed and reconstructed. In doing so, it contributes not only to the initial education of

future English teachers, but also to the continuing professional development of practising teachers and to the strengthening of English teacher education in the Brazilian Amazon region.

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Notes

Note 1. All acronyms used in the paper are retained from the Portuguese original.

Note 2. Website of the 5th CELEPI Seminar: <https://celepiresearchoutp.wixsite.com/vscelepi>

Note 3. Website of the 4th Colloquium of English Teachers of the Western Pará Region. Retrieved from <https://ivcpropufopa.wixsite.com/ivcprop>

Note 4. Digital portfolio links of the six student-teacher teams: Team 1, Beyond Words: <https://celepi.ufopa/beyondwords>; Team 2, Gracinha: <https://celepi.ufopa/gracinha>; Team 3,

I-Educators: <https://celepi.ufopa/i-educators>; Team 4, Alpha: <https://celepi.ufopa/alpha>; Team 5, InspirEd: <https://celepi.ufopa/inspired>; Team 6, Step Up: <https://celepi.ufopa/stepup>.

Note 5. Written testimonial collected on 18 May 2026: PIBID/Letras-Inglês sub-project, UFOPA, Santarém, PA.

Note 6. Written testimonial collected on 19 May 2026: PIBID/Letras-Inglês sub-project, UFOPA, Santarém, PA.

Note 7. Written testimonial collected on 22 May 2026: PIBID/Letras-Inglês sub-project, UFOPA, Santarém, PA.

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