

# From field to contact: relations and affections in teaching placement

## Abstract

This paper explores the multifaceted nature of teacher training placements, emphasizing the interconnectedness of teaching, research, and outreach within the pedagogical framework. Drawing on Schopenhauer's notion of beauty as a relational encounter, the study argues against a simplistic understanding of teacher training that overlooks the critical dimension of praxis. The authors, Pimenta and Lima, highlight the limitations of conventional training curricula, suggesting they often present isolated subjects without meaningful connections to real-world contexts. The concept of imitation in teaching practice is examined, contrasting it with the richer notion of mimesis, which encompasses competition and emulation. Furthermore, the internship is positioned as a vital research experience that fosters a blend of intuition and practical engagement, informed by Deleuze's interpretation of Bergson's philosophy. This approach emphasizes the importance of duration, memory, and vital impulse in shaping the intern's journey, advocating for a methodological understanding that transcends the confines of empirical analysis. The paper ultimately calls for a re-evaluation of teacher training placements as dynamic sites of learning that are essential for the development of critical educators.

**Keywords:** teacher training, imitation and mimesis, deleuze and bergson, praxis, internship as research

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## Introduction

### a) Teaching placements beyond dichotomous relationships

When questioned about beauty, Arthur Schopenhauer refers to it as a concept to be understood from a philosophical perspective. He argues that beauty does not exist per se, but instead, it reveals itself and transmutes in the relationship (1920). However, wouldn't this relationship be an empirical element, belonging to the realm of praxis? Beauty is not found in the image before us, nor in the retina, which carries a cultural aesthetic repertoire of what is contemplated. For the metaphysician, beauty is the encounter between the phenomenon/being/object and the one who observes it. Beauty is a relational and transient revelation through contact. The text entitled *Teacher Training Placement and Teaching: Different Conceptions* engages with a field where dichotomies do not impose a fixed meaning following the decline of absolute ideas. Just as beauty is not found in the observer, we cannot regard the field of reflection on teacher training placement and teaching as a fixed truth, risking the creation of artificial domains without the potential to build connections. As Selma Garrido Pimenta and Maria Socorro Lucena Lima point out concerning training curricula: "In reality, training curricula have become an accumulation of isolated subjects, without any clarification of their connections to the reality that gave rise to them".<sup>1</sup> Teacher training placement and teaching cannot be understood as part of a pedagogical process if the fieldwork perspective, the empirical, naively positions itself as the driving force. Just as for Schopenhauer, beauty is not found in the fact/phenomenon/subject being observed. When teacher training placement and teaching lack criticality, they become instruments, products of a hollowing out of meaning and at the mercy of the field. It is akin to assuming that beauty lies in what is seen. If that were the case, our subjectivities in perception would be disregarded. This is a position of subordination, where the surroundings define the perspective of being. Beauty is the encounter

of that which is contemplated by the human, who is the contemplator. By advocating the relationship as foundational, the metaphysical philosopher deconstructs the relativisation, whether of reason or of the empirical. For him, there is no possibility of constructing beauty in isolation. The construction of barbarism could be experienced where the method and the empirical are non-relational concerning social facts. Here, we reflect on the subjugation of teacher training placement and teaching. Thus, we can infer that if they are seen as disconnected from methodological investigation, they lack relevance. The reflection proposed in the work *The Metaphysics of the Beautiful*<sup>2</sup> extends to the sciences in their various dimensions. In education, the implementation of methods without considering the culture of territories still has an impact on identity processes today. We can reflect, as Pimenta and Lima<sup>1</sup> suggest, on the role of the placement as an appendage or the perspective of power to which this configuration is subjected.

### b) Teaching placements: reason and emotion

Even while aligning with the initial perspectives of researchers Pimenta and Lima, on the dimension of practice as a model of imitation, it seems necessary to reflect in a trans disciplinary manner on what constitutes imitation. The text presents teaching placements and teaching practice as actions of imitation: "The teaching profession is also practical. And the way to learn the profession, according to the perspective of imitation, will be through observation, imitation, and reproduction and, sometimes, the re-elaboration of existing models in practice, consecrated as good". The concept of imitation holds various meanings and interpretations. To state that practice in teaching placements is formed through a process of observation, imitation, and reproduction closely resembles behaviorist concepts, which disregard all aspects of psychic subjectivity, language as a science, and beyond oral language. There is also a lack of understanding from an anthropological perspective that could view it as a rite of belonging. Here, the experiences with dogs, amoebas, or mice are not

being dismissed. However, the behavior of these creatures does not encompass the complexity of human existence. In everyday Greek life, imitation closely aligns with the concept of mimesis, widely understood in Greek theatre as a way to symbolically represent people through intonation, gestures, and expressions. It also holds power in representing ideas, objects, gods, heroes, and territories. We observe that the article's definition of the teaching profession as imitation strips the term of its potential by simplifying it. From a continued Greek perspective, if we think of imitation through mimesis, another possible meaning emerges: emulation, which leads us towards a dimension of competition.

### c) Internship as research

The internship activity, as part of the curricular framework, stands out from three perspectives, which reveal its blurred boundaries. This is not to be considered from a Cartesian presupposition for understanding them, but rather as actors in a network system that are self-reinforcing and dynamically reconfiguring. These perspectives are: teaching, research, and outreach. Teaching, in this context, refers to the learning activity of the intern. This occurs in interaction with their supervising teacher and with their peers in a different dynamic, as well as affectively during encounters with the class, school, and community- spaces and territories that the intern will experience. Outreach, which often occupies a secondary role within curricular structures, can be understood in the context of the pedagogy course internship as a collective construction from within to the surrounding community, which will be impacted by the dynamics of the school. This includes both the directly involved audiences (the school community itself) and those who will be directly engaged through the formation of the student body and its involvement in community actions to varying degrees. These aspects can be addressed more thoroughly at appropriate moments.

## Between knowledge and flavors: experience and socialization in the school context

The educational space emerges as a central place for the child's reception and socialization, offering an environment where early childhood education transcends formal teaching to foster psychological, cultural, and social development, in line with the role of the state in shaping individuals and society, as proposed by Gramsci.<sup>3</sup> On a broader level, pedagogical practices, such as the teacher-led "outings" and playful interactions, echo Tim Ingold's<sup>4</sup> conception of experience. In gold emphasizes the intrinsic character of experience as a sensory and rational engagement, uniting "saber" and "sabor." The experience in the playground or the ritual of storytelling, such as sharing the tale of Saci-Pererê, are examples of practices where the totality of experience is central to the child's formation. These are moments where, as Ingold suggests, it's not merely about acquiring knowledge about the world but of living it and absorbing it in a synaesthetic way—a process that may involve tasting fruit or imaginatively transforming the playground into a symbolic volcano, thus connecting their senses to collective narratives. In this context, Debord notion of the spectacle reveals a contemporary challenge. In a society dominated by vision and image, exposure to screens and technology mediates the sensory experience, affecting how children develop their perceptive abilities. Therefore, the school becomes a crucial space for redirecting attention towards a lived experience that values not only the visual but other senses as well. By introducing activities in which smell, touch, and hearing are essential elements, a counterbalance to a media-saturated reality is created, reinstating sensory diversity as a vital part of children's cognitive and affective

development. From an ethnographic perspective, these moments of interaction appear as "rituals," where the physical space and roles of each participant are essential for socialisation and cultural initiation. Transforming the classroom into a symbolic, ritualised space, storytelling and group activities incorporate children into culture, making them participants in shared knowledge, as Freud posits in *Totem e Tabu*.<sup>5</sup> Through frustration and limits, the child begins to understand their individuality and sense of belonging to the group. Lacan further argues that these frustrations are foundational for the "I" in his *Seminário IV*, where the recognition of limitations allows the child to approach their own identity and otherness in relation to others. This process of "being limited" within educational contexts forms a basis for self-understanding within the collective.

The ritualised act of serving oneself during meals, where each child waits their turn to select food, illustrates respect and consideration for others. Here, the triad "cuidar, educar e nutrir" emerges as a fundamental principle of pedagogical work, extending the traditional "educar-cuidar" pairing (Pasqualini & Martins, 2008). This collective act of sharing reinforces the children's sense of interdependence and respect for diverse preferences and needs. Maria's dislike for rice and Pedro's preference for tomatoes exemplify how, by teaching respect for others' preferences, the school becomes a place where diversity is displayed and respected. This shared care nourishes more than the body; it fosters a culture of respect and empathy essential to social development. By integrating these theoretical perspectives into the school setting, early childhood education can be seen as a space for holistic formation, where educating and caring blend with the act of nourishing- not only physically, but symbolically, in an environment that appreciates the role of each sense in shaping relationships and affections.

## Final considerations

Thus, the aim of the dimension proposed here is to reflect on the internship as research, starting from the concept of Deleuze in his work *Bergsonism*, which seeks to bring together intuition and praxis as methods. The internship activity in the initial years of elementary education serves as the first structured contact within the curricular matrix that positions the student of the pedagogy course at the Federal University of Goiás (UFG) in the symbolic role of an intern. The concept of intuition as a method advocated by Bergsonian philosophy, as articulated by Gilles Deleuze,<sup>6</sup> applies here, as the presentation of this new landscape will demand vital impulses and the recovery of memories, both from the intern's life history and academic journey (which are inseparable). There is something Bergson refers to as duration. In other words, the student's contact with the new environment intuitively requires an investigation. For Bergson, this mobilises the intern-researcher under three dimensions: duration, memory, and vital impulse. The methodological question in the realm of research cannot be confined to the paradigm of the exact sciences. This perception from the physicist and philosopher Bergson serves to underscore the importance of understanding the method as a means to be constructed together with the subject and within the process (duration). As Deleuze states: The most general methodological question is this: How is intuition which primarily denotes an immediate knowledge (connaissance)- capable of forming a method, once it is accepted that the method essentially involves one or several mediations? Bergson often presents intuition as a simple act. But, in his view, simplicity does not exclude a qualitative and virtual multiplicity, various directions in which it comes to be actualized. It is in this sense, then, that intuition involves a plurality of meanings and irreducible multiple aspects.

For the philosopher, it is important to distinguish between different kinds of acts, which will determine the rules of the method, starting from the formulation of the problem. In the context discussed here, we can envision a scenario in which the intern alternates between positioning themselves as a teacher in front of the class and as a student in front of their supervising teacher. The other possibility would involve the search for understanding what the philosopher refers to as “fighting against illusion, rediscovering the true differences in nature, or the articulations of the real”.<sup>7,8</sup> Ultimately, the confrontation between these two initial acts constructs a simplification of the fundamental sense regarding the research problem, leading the individual into a new process of re-elaboration and problem formulation. This process may encompass both methodological and epistemological questions, allowing the intern to address these issues throughout their journey.<sup>9,10</sup>

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### Conflicts of interest

The authors declare that there are no conflicts of interest.

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