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ARTICLE

Language centers as a language policy in a federal institute

Os centros de línguas como política linguística em um instituto federal

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Abstract

This paper analyzes the contexts of influence and design of the reference text for implementing a Language Center as part of the language policy (LP) and internationalization process of a Federal Institute of Education (FI) in the Northeastern Region of Brazil. The critical analysis based on Critical Applied Linguistics (CAL) and the Policy Cycle Approach (PCA) made it possible to perceive that the reference text points to a favorable and strongly driving environment for the design of Language Centers in the FI. Thus, the FI can institutionalize the LP actions already carried out unsystematically and individually by teachers of the mother-tongue and additional ones. The document allows the teaching agency to develop and implement projects that meet the local realities of the FI campuses. However, the reference text is involved in a naturalized-top-down internationalization perspective and focuses mainly on the offer of English courses. Moreover, we perceived the lack of investments for the document to be constituted in concrete actions and to assume a transforming role in the educational community.

Keywords
Internationalization. Federal Institutes. Language Education.

Resumo

Esse artigo analisa os contextos de influência e de elaboração do texto de referência para a implementação de um Centro de Línguas como parte da política linguística (PL) e de internacionalização de um Instituto Federal de Educação (IF) na Região Nordeste do Brasil. A análise crítica que realizamos com base na Linguística Aplicada Crítica (LAC) e na Abordagem do Ciclo de Políticas (ACP) possibilitou perceber que o texto de referência aponta para um ambiente favorável e fortemente impulsionador da concepção dos Centros de Línguas no IF. Desse modo, o IF pode institucionalizar ações de PL já em andamento realizadas assistemática e individualmente por professores de língua materna e adicionais. O documento permite agência docente para a

elaboração e implementação de projetos que atendam as realidades locais dos campi do IF. Contudo, percebemos também uma naturalização do processo de internacionalização impositiva e do ensino principalmente de língua inglesa, bem como, a falta de investimentos para que o documento se constitua em ações concretas e possa assumir um papel transformador da comunidade educacional.

Palavras-chave
Internacionalização. Institutos Federais. Educação Linguística.

Introduction

In educational and language policy, issues about internationalization and globalization have received much attention in recent decades worldwide. Although in different amplitudes, the market logic usually guides these phenomena and orients them toward consumption, social prestige, standardization, and linguistic and cultural homogeneity. That scenario privileges peoples' ranking and perpetuates the English language (EL) hegemony as the international language of the world's educational and scientific market (ROCHA; MACIEL, 2017).

For Rajagopalan (2005), more than ever, globalization seems to stimulate a reversal in the abstract patterns of identity, language forms, and use. Therefore, we need to understand the globalization impacts on language policies without the illusion that they were formed in a neutral way, always being an arena of power dispute.

This paper approaches language policy (LP) as a complex term composed of different meanings contextually constructed. In this way, we agree with Rajagopalan (2013) when saying that LP interests linguists, as language is their object of study, as well as it should interest any citizen, in the sense that language is a national asset.

In this context, the Federal Institutes of Education, Science, and Technology (FIs), as part of the Federal Network of Vocational, Scientific, and Technological Education (EPCT Network), also faced a movement to expand actions for educational internationalization. In a historical retrospective, the FIs emerge from a centenary and multi-curricular pedagogical model, whose mission has been to promote economic and social development through professional, quality public, and emancipatory education. FIs give varied students access to the possibilities of verticalization of education from high school to postgraduate courses in several Brazilian cities.

Souza (2015) analyzes that, until 2007, the institutions that make up the EPCT Network still had few experiences in terms of international cooperation. To

a large extent, these were bilateral and inter-institutional, with no funding sources, and constituted by the personal efforts of civil servants and students. The works of Tonelli (2018), Ferreira (2016), Berriel, Trevisol and Melo (2014) pointed out that because of this reality and of an instrumental tradition, language teaching, especially Foreign Languages (FL), had little appreciation in the contexts of vocational education in Brazil.

Since 2009, documents such as the International Relations Policies of the Federal Institutes, prepared by the International Relations Forum (FORINTER) of the Board of Directors of Vocational, Scientific and Technological Education Institutions (CONIF), have highlighted the need to build language policies aimed to promote the process of the EPCT Network internationalization (FORINTER, 2009).

The implementation of the Language Centers in the FIs has been among the main discussions of the EPCT Network. It arose from the need presented by students and civil servants regarding foreign language learning to participate in academic mobility notices or international research (CAVALCANTE; SAID *et. al,* 2015; BRASIL, 2018). Furthermore, the recent look at internationalization at home (IaH)[1] strengthened it.

According to a 2019 survey (CONIF, 2021), 64% out of the 31 responding FIs have already implemented a Language Center on at least one of their *campuses* for the regular provision of FL education. In detail, researched FIs indicate that the main languages taught are English and Spanish, followed by French and, in the minority, Portuguese as an Additional Language and the Brazilian Sign Language (LIBRAS).

In this work, we briefly reflect on the document attached to Resolution Number 179 (IFMA, 2017), which regulates the Implementation Project of the Center for Studies, Research and Service in Language (CEPELI) of the Federal Institute of Maranhão (IFMA). We do this by bringing the language policies encouraged in the sphere of international macro-policy for a local, critical, historical, and culturally situated approach, investigating the following questions: *To which interests does the implementation of the Language Center as a language policy of the FI serve? What is the role of language teachers in developing more democratic language policies?*

To this end, we carried out a qualitative analysis based on the theoretical-methodological assumptions of the approach to the genre as social action (BA-

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1   IaH consists of purposefully integrating the international and intercultural dimension into the formal and informal curriculum of all students within the home learning environment (BEELEN; JONES, 2015, p. 69).

ZERMAN, 1994; 2005). We did this in dialogue with the discussions of the Policy Cycle (BOWE; BALL; GOLD, 1992; MAINARDES, 2006) to find meaning in the implementation of a Language Center as a significant part of the language policy for the FI.

Besides this introduction, we organized the text into three sections and final considerations. We discuss the critical foundations of the concept of language policies, the methodological aspects adopted in this analysis, and reflection upon the Language Center document in question.

2 Language policies: some theoretical considerations

In this section, we problematize the term "language policy" to understand some possibilities of meaning researchers bring in linguistic studies. This endeavor is not an easy task, as the term "is subject to a conceptual variety, due to the diversity of points of view and places of observation from which it is defined" (DINIZ, 2020, p. 24, our translation). Moreover, it is "a much more complex topic" (RAJAGOPALAN, 2013, p. 20, our translation) that demands a deep understanding of "its peculiarities as a field of knowledge and action" (*op. cit.*).

Based on Rajagopalan (2013, p. 21, our translation), it is essential to clarify that LP is not an exact science governed by rules and norms. The author compares LP to policy in a general sense (the art of governing public affairs) to explain that it is "the art of conducting reflections around specific languages, to conduct concrete actions of public interest relating to the language(s) that matter to the people".

By proposing this comparison, Rajagopalan (2013) simultaneously indicates that LP is of interest to individuals who deal directly with the concrete actions of elaborating norms and official documents from/to LP or with studies related to the citizen. To this researcher, the citizen has the legitimate right to express an opinion on issues concerning the language of a people. In his own words, "language policy has nothing to do with linguistics; it has everything to do with politics, understood as an activity in which every citizen [...] has the right and duty to participate in conditions of absolute equality" (p. 22, our translation).

Thus, the discussions involving LP include issues such as (a) national language, (b) mother-tongue teaching, (c) minority languages, and (d) foreign languages and their place in curricula (RAJAGOPALAN, 2013).

To deepen his exposition about LP, Rajagopalan (2013) emphasizes that, given some terminological confusions, the most common and least enlightening

meaning refers to LP as an art or science of guiding the collective life of a nation or a group of people. The author approaches LP from the perspective of: (a) *abstract noun* – "inside the field of philosophy" (p. 28), "it is everywhere and at all times" (p. 29); (b) *common noun* – "something concrete and countable" (p. 29), in the sense of the emphasis given by Calvet (2007, p. 160) that "language policies work in the *imitation mode*, which they try to reproduce *in vitro* what happens thousands of times *in vivo* in the history of languages".

According to Diniz (2020, p. 25), one can classically understand language policies from the inseparable binomial "language policy/language planning". The first part of the binomial would indicate the "determination of major decisions regarding the relationship between languages and society" (CALVET, 2007, p. 11, our translation) and "a set of choices regarding the relationship between language(s) and social life" (CALVET, 2002, p. 145, our translation). The second part would be related to the "practical implementation of a language policy, in short, the passage to the act" (*op. cit.*) so that "only the State has the power and the means to move to the planning stage, to put their political choices into practice" (*op. cit.* p. 146).

Considering the approach given by Calvet (2002; 2007) to language policies, we agree with Diniz (2020) when he criticizes it. Calvet's definition of language policy puts the effects of the un-institutionalized implementation processes of language policies in a secondary position. In other words, the question raised by Diniz (op. *cit.)* seeks to draw attention to the forces that emanate from society, which can influence social practices of language. Still, in the words of Diniz (2020, p. 26, our translation), the approach that Calvet gives to LP somehow suppresses "the fact that all knowledge is inscribed in specific production conditions".

Faced with these considerations, it is certainly no longer possible to ignore the influence that individuals have on transforming social communication practices to enable interactions. Thus, even if the State does not legally recognize an LP focused on linguistic diversity, it is natural for individuals to find practical communication strategies that come to represent an LP in their local context.

It is, therefore, noted that the understanding of LP as language planning materialized in activities carried out from top to bottom by the high spheres of state power begins to be impacted by bottom-up actions arising from mobilizations from the base of society, as addressed Shohamy (2006). In this direction, Rajagopalan points out that

> Language policy is, before anything else, a field of activity. In many cases, it is well

thought out and planned, and sometimes also well executed; but there are also cases in which it 'sprouts' within society as if 'spontaneously' and develops in a somewhat 'chaotic' or at least disorderly way (RAJAGOPALAN, 2013, p. 33, our translation).

By discussing LP as a field of activity, Rajagopalan (2013, p. 34, our translation*)* explains that it is a field of politics comparable to other areas of interest in society, namely "economy", "housing", "work", "family planning", "genetically modified food", "investments in alternative energy sources". Therefore, LP is subject to influences that can come from different sides and not only from the actions performed by the rulers of a country.

Taking the case of the English language and the internationalization process in Brazil, multilateral agencies, such as the World Bank and the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), have used globalization and the urge for global citizenship to influence countries to adopt English in schools and higher education curriculum. Meanwhile, Jordão *et. al.* (2020) indicate that professors and university students have naturalized the use of this language in EMI (English as a Medium of Instruction) projects, research, and publications without questioning motivations or socio-educational consequences as if learning English would fast-speed successful careers. Jordão *et. al.* (2020) also warn us of the fact that the acritical perception of English as the language of internationalization brings along ideologies related to ownership of the language, standards, and proficiency issues which need to be carefully addressed in policies and classrooms.

Jesus (2018) defends an agenda of multilingual and multicultural policies for internationalization relating more linguistic diversity to more empowered and critical researchers who can analyze their object of study and better understand the social, historical, political, and economic forces that act on it. Whenever policies do not strengthen other languages and knowledge, scientists and academics will choose the hegemonic language capital for immediate prestige and recognition instead of valuing the use of a broader repertoire, in a continuous cycle. For Jesus (2018) the role of institutions and their staff is to internationalize their practices and actions by offering answers to language matters that emerge from the local needs.

That said, we understand that LP comprises not only abstract considerations or concrete actions thought and proposed by the State carried out by educational institutions, but it also encompasses the agentive action of subjects who carry out LP activities in their local spheres. Language teachers, for example, whi-

le planning their classes, selecting materials and methodological procedures for teaching a specific language, need to make choices to collaboratively construct knowledge considering the community needs. This way, by teachers' dialogical teaching approach the learning process acquires a critical and emancipatory dimension.

3 Methodological aspects of the research

When it comes to language, many processes involving conception, disputes, and implementation of policies occur within the educational context, as in the case of FI. Bowe *et. al.* (1992), supported in Brazil by Mainardes (2006), defend a theoretical-analytical conception known as the Policy Cycle Approach (PCA) for the field of educational policies. In confluence with the PCA, we seek to understand the constituent text of the Language Center Project as part of social action (BAZERMAN, 2005), in which genres can incorporate the interests and values of a particular social group to reinforce social rules and relationships between writers and readers.

For Bazerman (2005), from the perspective of genres as social action, texts can affect peoples' lives, changing knowledge, beliefs, attitudes, and values. Thus, it is necessary to understand the relationship between the participants of the social event of which the text is part, so it is possible to have broadly understood meanings. This perspective is concerned with the social organization and power relations that genres encapsulate from a socio-historical and cultural point of view. Consequently, we take genres linked to the institutions that produce them and existing activities and power.

In this sense, "the Policy Cycle Approach brings several contributions to policy analysis since the political process is understood as multifaceted and dialectical, in need to articulate macro and micro perspectives" (MAINARDES, 2006, p. 55, our translation). These two spheres of policies are fundamental. The broader scopes usually do not consider regional inequalities. They can serve as a space for maneuver if they are not actively interpreted, within the limits of action, in a continuous and fluid process of reordering and resignifying local realities.

In the PCA, there are five contexts to take into account for policy analysis: (1) the *context of influence*, coming from different spheres, being the place where policies start and where they gain legitimacy; (2) the *context of the production of the text,* oral or written, official or not; (3) the *context of practice,* creative action of interpreting texts; *(4)* the *context of results (or effects),* impacts of the action

analyzed together, and; (5) the *context of strategies*, the latter aiming to reflect on ways to minimize inequalities resulting from the policy in question (MAINARDES, 2006).

Mainardes (2006, p.66-69) presents a list of questions adapted as guidelines to assist in analyzing PCA. Some of the concerns for the first two contexts were: What were some of the influences present in the policy? Why did those influences emerged at that particular moment? What kind of global/international/national/local influences did the policy receive? How did discourses happen/change over time? Whose interests were in play? Whose interest were excluded? When did the production of the policy document start? Were there consensus/contradictions in the construction of the policy? What kind of language did the document use? Who was the policy written for?

Therefore, the following section presents reflections for some these questions (not necessarily in any particular order) to constitute the context of influence and production of the text "Implementation Project of CEPELI at IFMA" as part of Resolution Number 179 (IFMA, 2017). This broad understanding of the forces and intentions involved in the idea of creating Language Centers as one of the significant language policies for FI in the context of internationalization is urgent and fundamental.

4 The creation of a language center as a language policy in a federal institute.

In 2017, IFMA Superior Council regulated the CEPELI Implementation Project. It contains details of the presentation, justification, objectives, execution phases, and structuring elements for the functioning of the language center, such as didactic, human, budgetary, and infrastructure resources. In addition to the project, Resolution number 179 also approves the Regulation of the Language Center, specifying the role of the different institutional bodies in the management of CEPELI in the Rectory and on the *campuses*.

Next, we highlight the contexts that demanded the creation of the Language Center and the production of the text, discussing what interests this policy serves and the teaching participation in this process.

In the context of influence, one can usually initiate public policies and construct political discourses between disputes of interest. This dispute can happen through the circulation of ideas, social networks, or academic journals, alternatively, through globalized solutions offered by agencies that exert influence

on elaborating national policies (MAINARDES, 2006). In this scenario, several actors perform there, including legislative and executive powers, social groups, and multilateral organizations.

The power relations that naturalize internationalization processes arise from capitalism and globalization. Bringing up such constitutions of forces allows us to recognize and problematize local practices (ROCHA; MACIEL, 2017). We perceive the construction of agendas in the field of Brazilian public policies based on recommendations, indicators, and reports from international organizations, among them, the International Monetary Fund (IMF), World Trade Organization (WTO), Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) and the World Bank (WB). Although the speed and form of adopting these measures vary from country to country, neoliberal regulations, arising since the 1990s, had similar consequences in Latin American countries, directing the training of human resources with the objective of meeting the demands the world labor market, as a priority.

The emphasis given worldwide to the teaching of EL and European languages is monitored in World Bank documents (1992) dating from the 1970s through the observation of the teaching of these languages and the results in proficiency tests, mainly the Test of English as Foreign Language (TOEFL). Based on Canagarajah (1999), Rajagopalan (2005) states that the reproductive orientation of English in the peripheral countries' context aims to disseminate the language, culture, and values associated with them. Such soft power induction is more efficient and faster, regardless of the social cost and the risks of turning the learners into passive agents. For FI students, more specifically, English exerts a power of attraction, as it "enjoys a dominant position in the sectors of scientific research, communication, imagery, mass culture. It has a quasi-monopoly in the technological innovation sector" (BRETON, 2005, p. 23, our translation).

The British Council (2015) launched a report that reveals the lack of a language policy in Brazil focusing on English and the growth of the middle class, with greater purchasing power and consumerism implied the learning of EL. The document points to the broad market of young people who are more technology-oriented and less connected to a political agenda that could interfere in the strengthening of English in the country. The document indicates that the Dilma Rousseff government, president at that time, demonstrated some resistance towards prioritizing EL for ideological reasons, as demonstrated by the following quote:

> Perceptions of English language use are changing. Younger generations are more open to English and link it less to a political agenda and more with personal growth and opportunity. Although there seem to **be deeply-rooted ideological barriers at a national level to prioritise English over other languages**, at an individual level, the language is gaining increased value and influence (BRITISH COUNCIL, 2015, p. 57, our emphasis).

Contradictorily, the same government of then-President Dilma, accused of not promoting the teaching of English by the British Council (2015), launched the federal program of international academic mobility, Science without Borders (SwB), in 2011. Brazilian higher education and the demand for communicative knowledge in other languages, especially in English, caused a race for courses and proficiency tests across the country. Although the SwB was not part of a language policy *per se*, a government commission needed to join forces in an emergency to carry out language courses in the country and abroad to guarantee the possibility of exchange students participating in the program.

Complementary federal language policies gained strength from then on, such as English (later Languages) without Borders, coordinated by the Ministry of Education (MEC), and E-TEC Language without Borders by the Secretary of Science and Technology (in Portuguese, *Secretaria de Educação Profissional e Tecnológica* - SETEC). Also, in partnership with foreign educational institutions, the Brazilian government has issued public notices for teacher training courses, such as the English Teacher Development Program (PDPI) and the SETEC-CA-PES/NOVA Program, both in the United States, and the English Language Teaching Methodology Course at *the Institute of Education* in London.

The text of the CEPELI project justifies its context of creation by stating that the

> Science without Borders was responsible for creating a language policy, which, until then, did not exist, (...). In addition to the internationalization of higher education having entered the agenda and having awakened the need to treat it strategically. Also, the evaluation [by CAPES] shows that there was a 21% increase in the search for language courses in Brazil, which reinforces the need to rethink language teaching in Federal Institutes (IFMA, 2017, p.9, our translation).

The incentive was already given as an internationalization strategy by FORINTER (2009, p. 8-9):

> Fostering language practice and cultural exchange in each of the FI [...] International relations are established through communication in several languages. The-

refore, knowledge of foreign languages is essential. Thus, it is necessary to create **Language Centers** that enable the development of competencies and skills in the languages of greatest institutional interest, as well as the teaching of Portuguese to foreigners (our emphasis and translation).

For Souza (2018, p. 165), this FORINTER document arranged during President Lula's government and Law Number 11.161/2005 (BRASIL, 2005) provide for the teaching of the Spanish language in Brazilian high school curriculum and circulate other language teaching and learning. This way, the Forum participants try to raise awareness for the dissemination of communicative practices that privilege not only English but also other languages. In addition to strengthening ties with Latin American countries, the document suggests an approximation with African and Portuguese-speaking countries, subverting the hegemonic logic imposed in international agreements with countries in the Global North.

In the current context of Internationalization at Home (BEELEN; JONES, 2015), with focus on language and culture issues brought within institutional practices, curriculum internationalization strategies, *online collaborative work,* and language schools are initiatives that empower the institutional development. This issue links to understanding a local environment that can generate collective, ethically oriented intercultural learning and not just benefit individuals in the world of work (MARTINEZ, 2017).

During CEPELI's document creation, Language Centers were already being implemented in at least 6 of the 11 FIs in the northeastern region of Brazil. Therefore, according to the reference document (BRASIL, 2018), these language institutes assumed priority for internationalization, in the 2018-2019 biennium.

The Institutional Development Plan-PDI/IFMA-2014-2018 and the IFMA Service Policy (Resolution Number 47/2015) already provided for the implementation of CEPELI to foster and promote the teaching and practice of foreign languages. Moreover, these documents supported federal programs, the provision of preparatory courses and the application of proficiency tests for students and employees, and the monitoring of international mobility.

Thus, we can perceive, especially in short time space, the documents' genealogy that encouraged the creation of CEPELI at IFMA. This project comes after a set of actions in which the FI acted mainly responsive to the demands of the federal government and the academic community. Consequently, the institutionalization of actions that were already taking place through disjointed individual initiatives found a certain consensus when creating the text for the Center's implementation, as we will see in the following.

For Mainardes (2006), the context of the production of political texts usually articulates the language of public interest. Political texts, therefore, represent politics in the form of official or unofficial legal texts, pronouncements**,** and videos, which are not necessarily internally coherent and clear. Such texts can also bring contradictions resulting from the clashes in power fights for their constitution, considering the time and place of production.

The text of the CEPELI Implementation Project began in 2016 at the International Relations Office (DIRI) initiative of IFMA. Seven teachers already working in foreign language courses (01 teacher of Portuguese as an Additional and Mother Language, 02 of Spanish, 03 of English, and 01 of French) collaborated with the proposal. All these teachers were involved in actions to encourage students' participation in the SwB program. Perhaps, because mutual collaboration between DIRI and these language teachers have already taken place during the SwB initiatives, the proposal to create a Language Center coordinated not by the *campuses* they worked at but directly linked to the DIRI - Rectory did not initially cause surprise or any inadequacy reactions. The ongoing institutional internationalization was the project's motto, explained in its presentation and justification.

The naturalization of internationalization benefits relates to the demands of globalization, knowledge society, and hegemonic international standards, which subject educational institutions and their actors to external criteria, without debating their identity in the local context. Thus, there is a risk of promoting a passive internationalization process by watching what is produced abroad in a subordinate way (LIMA; MARANHÃO, 2009).

The main objective indicated by the project was "to institutionalize teaching, research and service actions aimed at foreign/additional languages, Portuguese and LIBRAS and their respective cultures" (IFMA, 2017, p.12, our translation). Thus, the text brought a sequence of methodological and logistical actions for the gradual implementation of CEPELI on the 29 *campuses* of this FI, aiming to benefit educational internationalization, language teaching and learning, research in the area, and teachers' education.

However, Resolution 179/2017 does not require the establishment of the Center. This document assumes that there is space for the teaching agency when a *campus* makes tangible the most significant and motivating idea for language teachers and the local community. This way, a *campus* may engage in the proposal for the constitution of a Language Center, with possibilities of adjustments and different interpretations of the official project in multiple local realities. The text recognizes that "the language teachers must be understood as transforma-

tive agents in the process of internationalization of the institution and must be encouraged to be members of the CEPELIs and teach classes in it" (IFMA, 2017, p.23, our translation).

Mainardes (2006, p. 50) cites Roland Barthes' conceptions (*writerly* and *readerly)* to distinguish how professionals working in the school are involved in policies. A *readerly* (or prescriptive) text limits reader engagement, while a *writerly* (or writable) text invites the reader to co-author the text, encouraging him to participate more actively in interpreting the text and filling in possible gaps. The verbs "suggest", "recommend", and "may" (in the sense of possibility) appear more frequently throughout the CEPELI text than the incisive obligation of "must", thus pointing to a less prescriptive text, allowing more spaces for local debates in the implementation of the project.

Throughout the text, there is no mention of any indigenous and African languages. However, data from the Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics - IBGE (2010) show that the state of Maranhão has a population of almost 28 thousand representatives of native people**s** belonging to two linguistic groups: Macro-Jê and Tupi-Guarani, and about 700 official quilombos. Some of these groups live in regions where IFMA is, but the Language Center document did not contemplate them.

Even in the micro dimension of an institutional language policy, local practices allow for evidence of cross-cultural, collaborative bases and favor one or another agenda (ROCHA; MACIEL, 2017). The document under analysis shows an inclination to maintain the hegemony of European languages. For whom does this project serve, then? If aimed at social transformation, through the continuous reassessment of the values and visions that support international programs, curricula, and relationships between students and teachers, we could establish more transformative purposes, priorities, and paths in the internationalization processes of vocational and technological educational institutions.

Final Considerations

We can conclude that the language policy analyzed through the text Project for Implementation of CEPELI at IFMA (IFMA, 2017) was directly influenced by international, national, and institutional discourses related to the demands of educational internationalization process.

The context of textual production also points out that the influence of the federal mobility programs and documents, which turns internationalization into

something positive, generated a homogeneous consensus among the formulators of this policy. Even with some possibility of agency, the authors of the text do not take a more forceful position on language concepts that could lead to rethinking, at the local level, a diversity of social practices and a critical perspective on language policies.

Although the focus of this paper is not to research the other contexts of the Policy Cycle (BOWE; BALL; GOLD, 1992; MAINARDES, 2006), we perceive that after five years of its approval by the IFMA Superior Council, only six *campuses* created their Language Centers. Two were created in the capital and the others in cities in the countryside, according to a survey carried out at SUAP (Unified Public Administration System), in May 2022. The system also points out that, before the pandemic of COVID-19, these CEPELI had offered courses in English, Spanish, French, and Portuguese as an Additional Language, mainly as service projects, open to the internal and external community. The courses have different workloads, durations, and methodologies, such as English for conversation, English for specific purposes, French for tourism, and English, Spanish or French language courses, based on the Common European Framework of Reference. In addition to these actions, we could observe on the institutional website[2], the offer of proficiency tests, cultural seminars with international guests, and dissemination of teaching materials produced by FL teachers.

It is essential to reflect on how much these actions continue to happen through the individual effort of teachers, without institutional funding, and without a language policy that supports the adoption of assumptions beyond supranational influences and federal organizations (CAPES, SETEC, and CONIF, for example). The same teachers who work at CEPELI are often in the classroom teaching Portuguese as a first language and foreign languages in the curriculum concomitantly with a high workload. Such discourses disseminate the need to create Language Centers in the FIs, without providing physical and professional infrastructure conditions.

Unlike federal universities, FIs offer degrees in math sciences and nature or bachelor's degrees in the most diverse technological areas. They are not, many times, an internship field for students of Language undergraduate courses. Thus, FIs need an explicit language policy that strengthens the link between fellow professors, attracting professionals and exchange students to work in these spaces.

The FIs face pressure from hegemonic forces arising from a world economy highly guided by economic values to the detriment of a social and human

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2   Available at: https://portal.ifma.edu.br/?s=cepeli . Accessed on May 2nd., 2021.

development view. FIs have experienced several budget cuts in recent years and educational funding seems to be increasingly sparse. On the other hand, the demands for internationalization at home have increased, according to the rankings of international agencies for institutions that offer courses taught in EMI or, more recently, for promoting virtual mobility. In future investigations, we need to further address this myriad of policies, discourses, and practices to evidence language and internationalization policies for the FIs.

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