



# Elite bilingual education in Brazil: an applied linguist's perspective

## Educación bilingüe de elite en Brasil desde la perspectiva de una lingüista aplicada

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### Abstract

This paper (i) presents the current globalized multicultural context, which supports the interest in the area, and relates its connection with bilingual education; (ii) discusses and problematizes bilingual education in Brazil from the perspective of applied linguistics and (iii) analyzes research and activities carried out in the Brazilian context. Having as a starting point Brazilian bilingual school curricula, texts taken from websites of bilingual schools, and materials related to these schools' language allocation provided by publishers, this study analyses the type of bilingualism aimed at these schools and the type of bilingual education implemented. We also analyzed the research conducted in the area through the abstracts from the communications presented in conferences, articles and thesis in which bilingual education was the theme to identify the conception used. We adopt the theoretical framework followed by applied linguists such as Abello-Contesse (2013), Hornberger (1991, 2000), García (2009), and García and Wei (2014), which challenges monolingual conceptions of languages and monoglossic types of bilingual education. The results point to the fact that all the curricula and related materials analyzed from these schools reveal a monoglossic view of language. As for the research produced at universities, the vast majority of these productions have heteroglossic views of language as a theoretical background. Therefore, although heteroglossic views of language have been studied and discussed in the university, these discussions and findings are far from the reality of the schools in Brazil.

**Keywords:** applied linguistics, bilingualism, elite bilingual education, heteroglossia, monoglossia

### Resumen

Vivimos un momento histórico en el que la superdiversidad crea una composición y abundancia de importantes variables que afectan dónde, cómo y con quién conviven las personas. En este escenario, el tema de la educación multilingüe en diferentes países se intensifica y la creación de escuelas bilingües de elite también. En el presente artículo (i) presentamos el contexto multicultural de globalización actual, compatible con el interés en la región, y una discusión de su conexión con la educación bilingüe; (ii) discutimos y problematizamos la educación bilingüe en Brasil desde la perspectiva de la lingüística aplicada y (iii) abordamos los enfoques de investigación y las actividades llevadas a cabo en el contexto brasileño, así como algunos investigadores e instituciones involucrados en el tema.

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Tomando como punto de partida programas escolares bilingües brasileños, textos de páginas web de escuelas privadas bilingües y materiales relacionados a la asignación de idiomas en escuelas bilingües proporcionados por los editores, este estudio analiza el tipo de bilingüismo destinado a estas escuelas y el tipo de educación bilingüe implantado. Analizamos también investigaciones en el área a través de los resúmenes de las conferencias, artículos y tesis en las que la educación bilingüe fue el tema para identificar los conceptos utilizados. Adoptamos el marco teórico seguido por los lingüistas aplicados como Abello-Contesse (2013), Hornberger (1991, 2000), García (2009) y García y Wei (2014), que desafía las concepciones monolingües de idiomas y tipos monoglossicos de educación bilingüe. Por último, se identificaron algunas omisiones en las encuestas nacionales correlacionadas a las internacionales.

*Palabras clave:* lingüística aplicada, bilingüismo, heteroglossia, monoglossia

## Introduction

The postmodern condition of socialization, the interaction with other societies, cultures and “worlds,” the multiple and fragmented identities, and the deconstruction of the notion of subject as a holder of a fixed identity, identified by a “self” (Hall, 2005, p. 12), require a rethinking of the role of subjects and the way education contributes to the constitution of subjectivity.

From this perspective, it is necessary to take into consideration the present characteristics in which one experiences life as though it is embedded in a complex web of villages, cities, neighborhoods, and settlements interconnected by material and symbolic ties in unpredictable ways (Martin-Jones, Blackledge, & Creese, 2012). In this environment, we effectively live the vertigo of the speed of contemporary changes, the scattering of people around the world, the end of frontiers, a more integrated and connected world which, however, continues to promote apartness, marginalization, exclusion in an impersonal dynamic of competition which shows the local impact of global propositions (Burbules & Torres, 2004).

In this reality, it is necessary to look beyond national and international varieties, global economic systems, transnational companies and global communication (Gardner, 2012) to notice the effects of such globalization. According to Freeland (1996), the effects of globalization in Latin America, for example, mean the weakening of states due to the emergence of the transnational phenomenon (external pressure) and social and

ethnic fragmentation (internal pressure). These characteristics also mean linguistic consequences, such as the fact that some languages have started to play a large number of functions and the hypercentral place being occupied by the English language, as Calvet (2002) points out. In this regard, Kroon, Blommaert, and Jie (2014) explain that globalization has had an obvious impact on the spread of English and other global languages within and between nation states and on language hierarchies, in particular on the position and predicament of linguistic minorities.

The central issue nowadays arises from understanding superdiversity as clarified by Vertovec (2007); that is, the mixture and interweaving of diversities, not only of ethnicities, but also of other variables that intersect and influence the highly differentiated compositions, social localization, and trajectory of various groups of immigrants in the twenty-first century. Additionally, Blommaert (2010) observes that superdiversity is characterized by an immense expansion in the categories of migrants, not only regarding nationality, ethnicity, language, and religion, but also regarding motives, patterns and courses of migration, and processes of introduction into the labor and housing markets of the host societies, among others.

In Brazil, specifically, one notices the cultivation of a powerful myth of monolingualism and obliteration of minorities. Indigenous peoples' and immigrants' languages, for instance, are usually dealt with in our country as irrelevant (Cavalcanti, 1999). There seems to be a denial of our cultural diversity, which has gradually deserved

the attention of many researchers and increased its visibility in civil society (Monte Mór, 2002). According to Oliveira (2000), the fact that people accept, without question, as if it were a natural fact that Portuguese is the language of Brazil was and is fundamental to obtain consensus of the majority for the repressive policies against other languages in Brazil. In order to understand this issue, Maher (2013) points to the fact that besides Portuguese, 222 languages are spoken in Brazil. The author explains that she does not refer to languages spoken by foreigners. On the contrary, she refers to the existence of 222 languages spoken as mother tongue by Brazilians.

Cavalcanti and Maher (2016) allege that to fully understand the multilingual nature of contemporary Brazil, it is necessary to take into account its recent history and the fact that the country is now embedded in complex global relations of a political, economic, and cultural nature. Since 1970, Brazil has become a new destination for transnational flows and movements of people: We received due to the Brazilian economic boom, according to Amado (2011), (i) a large contingent of Chinese and South Koreans; (ii) thousands of immigrants from neighboring South American countries (mainly from Bolivia, Peru, and Ecuador) and, to a lesser extent, from Senegal and Angola, and (iii) refugees in the wake of natural disasters such as the earthquake in Haiti and the civil war in Syria.

Therefore, it is true to say that we have been watching the emergence of superdiversity in Brazil. In this scenario, the growth of private bilingual schools in Brazil is visible. Taking into consideration, as Moita Lopes (2001) points out, the importance of education in the constitution of the subjects' identity, the role of bilingual education is fundamental as an enabler of this expansion. According to García (2009), bilingual education aims at developing multiple understandings about languages and cultures, thus, fostering appreciation for human diversity.

In this article, the concepts of bilingual education, elite bilingual education, and the contributions given by applied linguistics to rethink this important and increasing area in Brazil will be discussed.

### *Bilingual Education*

The concept of bilingual education has been considered as a combination of simple terms for a complex phenomenon (Cazden & Snow, 1990). As Genesee (1987) states, bilingual education is connected to the teaching that occurs at school involving at least two languages or, as Hornberger (1991) argues, when two languages are being used as a means of instruction. Hamers and Blanc (2000) categorize bilingual programs into three groups according to the language used for instruction:

- Those that use both languages simultaneously
- Those that use the first language until a certain point
- Those that use the second language and then the first language is introduced later

Deepening the discussion, Hornberger (1991) organizes three broad categories, which she terms bilingual education models, taking into account goals with respect to language, culture, and society.

The first model is the transitional model which has as its linguistic goal language shift and aims at cultural assimilation and social incorporation. García (2009) explains that this model uses the child's language in instruction only until the child is able to receive instruction in the additional language. Therefore, this model of bilingual education "supports and values monolingualism and permits bilingualism only as a temporary measure" (García, 2009, p. 124). Adding to this, Fishman (1976), a critic of the transitional nature of bilingual education in the United States, compares this model as a "vaccine" and argues that a non-English mother tongue, in this perspective, is considered a disease of the poor in the USA. Thus, its goal is to "throw off the mother tongue entirely and to embrace all-American vim, vigor, and stability" (Fishman, 1976, p. 34).

The maintenance model, which is the second model proposed by Hornberger (1991), aims at preserving the minority language while students develop proficiency in a dominant language. Its cultural goal is to strengthen the students' cultural identity and its social goal is to affirm the civil right of having the minority language in the school. García (2009) clarifies that besides teaching

subjects through two languages, schools aligned with this model worry about reflecting community cultural values as well as instilling bicultural identity in children.

The third model, known as the enrichment model, has the linguistic goal of language development. García (2009) explains that, according to this model, majority children are taught through the medium of two languages which are usually languages of prestige. Its cultural goal is cultural pluralism and its social goal is social autonomy (Hornberger, 1991).

Adding to these categories proposed by Hornberger (1991), García (2009) identifies types of bilingual education organized into two theoretical frameworks: monoglossic and heteroglossic views of language. The typology suggested by the author is based on contextual and structural characteristics. García (2009) explains that the types of bilingual education respond to the way in which bilingualism is understood in the community.

A monoglossic view of language “assumes that legitimate linguistic practices are only those enacted by monolinguals” (García, 2009, p. 115). From this belief of language, there are two types of bilingual education: programs that promote a subtractive type of bilingualism and programs that promote an additive type of bilingual education. The subtractive framework supports language shift to a more prestigious language. It can be represented as  $L1 + L2 - L1 = L2^3$  (García, 2009, p. 116). The additive framework adds another language to the children’s repertoire and corresponds to Hornberger’s maintenance and enrichment models. It can be represented as  $L1 + L2 = L1 + L2$  (García, 2009, p. 116). This theoretical framework works towards the development of the learner’s bilingualism according to two monolingual standards, therefore, the two languages function in a compartmentalized way which maintains diglossia.

García (2009) categorized four types of bilingual education according to the monoglossic framework: transitional, maintenance, prestigious,

3 L1 stands for first language and L2 stands for second language.

and immersion. The transitional and maintenance types coincide with Hornberger’s models (1991).

In prestigious bilingual programs, the children are taught through two prestigious languages, García (2009) states that the languages are clearly separated by the teachers and the principle of one person, one language is followed.

In immersion bilingual education, for a specific period of time depending on the type of the immersion program, students are taught exclusively through the new language that they are learning. In a planned moment, the second language is added as a means of instruction (García, 2009).

A heteroglossic view of language takes into account the challenges of communication in the globalized and superdiverse world, recognizes the diversity of language practices, and supports the language interaction of children with different translanguaging practices. According to García and Wei (2014), translanguaging is the discursive norm in bilingual/multilingual communities. García (2009) explains that a translanguaging lens assumes that bilinguals have one linguistic repertoire from which they select features strategically to communicate efficiently. According to this view of language, we can identify two further theoretical frameworks for bilingual education programs: recursive and dynamic (García, 2009).

A recursive bilingual education, as García (2009) states, is a theoretical framework that supports the possibility of language revitalization through education, focuses on the bilingual continuum of students, understands their bilingualism as a right, and works towards the acceptance of their linguistic and cultural differences.

The dynamic theoretical framework supports the idea that language interaction takes place on “different planes including multimodalities, and other linguistic interrelationships” (García, 2009, p. 118). According to García and Wei (2014), the dynamic bilingual model posits that bilinguals have one linguistic system with features that are integrated throughout. It allows the simultaneous coexistence of different languages in communication and,

therefore, supports the education to use languages “for functional interrelationships, and not simply for separate functional allocations” (García, 2009, p. 118).

García (2009) categorized five types of bilingual education in accordance with the heteroglossic framework: immersion revitalization, developmental, dual language, CLIL, and multiple multilingual education.

Immersion revitalization programs are also called, according to García (2009), heritage language immersion because they emphasize not only the languages but they also focus on incorporating local knowledge in the school's curricula.

Developmental programs recognize the recursive nature of bilingualism, the speakers' cultural multiplicity and their linguistic differences (García, 2009). These programs are for minority language groups who are reaffirming and developing their languages.

Dual-language programs, as García (2009) explains, receive children at all points of the bilingual continuum who interact with each other and who share their language differences through translanguaging.

CLIL stands for content and language integrated learning. According to Coyle, Hood, and Marsh (2010), “CLIL is a dual-focused educational approach in which an additional language is used for the learning and teaching of both content and language” (p. 1). CLIL is an umbrella term and, therefore, many variants can be distinguished. It may vary significantly according to the educational system of the country or to the socio-linguistic context in which the approach is being used.

Multiple multilingual education programs involve at least three languages and groups who present a complex multilingualism that creates a bilingual continuum with children at different points (García, 2009). These programs are common in countries such as India in which many languages are official.

As we can understand from the typology organized by García (2009), bilingual education is a dynamic field of studies in the multidisciplinary realm of applied linguistics which, as Abello-Contesse (2013) explains, is understood as an umbrella term to refer to the teaching and learning of two or more languages in schools centered on bilingualism and biliteracy.

Brazil has always been a multilingual country, although throughout its history it has systematically tried to get rid of its linguistic and cultural diversity or veil it. However, for the last two decades alone, we have witnessed an ideological change that acknowledges and stimulates Brazilian plurilingualism. In this scenario, Liberali and Megale (2011) point out that there are four Brazilian bilingual education proposals: bilingual education with sign language, indigenous bilingual education, bilingual education in multilingual contexts, and elite or prestigious bilingual education whose name was given due to the favorable financial conditions of students who can attend these schools, in them instruction occurs in two languages simultaneously.

In this paper, we primarily discuss elite bilingual education (EBE), one of the expanding modes of bilingual education in Brazil.

By taking an approach based on teaching the elite language, EBE aims to offer students high proficiency levels. In some cases, this arose from a desire by some countries to benefit economically, politically, and culturally from the straightforward participation in the global network that has been built through the use of English (Gardner, 2012). On the other hand, it is also accomplished as an answer to world multilingualism, generating the possibility of participation in intercultural actions in different languages and different cultural experiences (García & Flores, 2012). Therefore, this means the creation of a kind of education that, in a significant way, not only includes apprentices but also opens space for them to act and participate through various language practices (García & Flores, 2012). With the learning experience within a bilingual education context, students may increase their cultural awareness both in the culture(s) of origin, and in the culture of the additional language, have a different

way of looking at things, build tolerance towards linguistic and cultural groups, value human diversity, and constitute themselves with hybrid identities (Canclini, 2011).

## Methodology

This research aimed at discussing and problematizing elite bilingual education in Brazil from the perspective of applied linguistics and analyzing research carried out in the Brazilian context. In order to do that, we analyzed: (a) the curricula of 27 Brazilian bilingual schools located in São Paulo, Rio de Janeiro, and Belo Horizonte; (b) 43 texts taken from websites of private bilingual schools from four different Brazilian states, and (c) materials related to the bilingual schools' language allocation provided by publishers. These schools are located in all regions of Brazil.

Based on the interpretation of these materials and documents, we analyzed the type of bilingualism aimed at these schools and the type of bilingual education implemented. We also analyzed research conducted in the area through the abstracts from conferences, articles, and theses in which bilingual education was the theme in order to identify the conception used. To interpret the data, we adopted the theoretical framework followed by applied linguists such as Abello-Contesse (2013), Hornberger (1991, 2000), García (2009), and García and Wei (2014), which challenges monolingual conceptions of languages and monoglossic types of bilingual education.

### *EBE Brazilian Reality*

The growth of elite private bilingual schools in Brazil is clear. Regarding this phenomenon, Marcelino (2009) points to the fact that parents previously chose schools for their children based on the educational proposal, and the need to learn another language was supplied in private language institutes. Over time, regular schools started outsourcing the teaching of languages in order to improve its quality which was considered inefficient for several reasons, such as the lack of teachers' fluency, insufficient number of classes,

and many students in the classroom. Meanwhile, bilingual schools, with at least the initial function of integrating the role of language institutes and regular schools, began to appear. This new model of education has had great support from Brazilian families who realized that bilingual schools are a convenient opportunity to achieve two important and necessary functions in the education of their children: a quality education and the teaching of a foreign language (Marcelino, 2009).

In Brazil, in opposition to this increasing demand for elite bilingual schools, there is hardly any formation concerning theoretical aspects with regard to bilingualism and bilingual education, not to mention discursive-linguistic knowledge (Megale, 2014). The number of extension and graduate courses in Brazil aiming to train professionals for BE has grown gradually, since degree courses seem to ignore the increasing demand for qualified teachers to act in bilingual schools (Megale, 2014). More and more, it is clear that we need to educate teachers to act in this segment so as to serve the various purposes of the different bilingual schools in Brazil (Salgado et al., 2009).

As regards EBE, there is no law to regulate its procedures. The *Parâmetros Curriculares Nacionais* (National Curricular Parameters/PCNs) merely describe the teaching of a foreign language as from *Ensino Fundamental II* [Secondary School – Level II]. Moreover, in the Municipal Education Councils of São Paulo and Rio de Janeiro States, there are only two official opinions which deal with issues concerning this context: opinion CME no. 135/2008 (SP) and opinion CME no. 01/2007/ (RJ) – that point out considerations about the operation of young children's bilingual schools.

Although there are no official numbers due to this lack of regulation, it is possible to picture the expansion of bilingual schools based on research data and publishing houses. There are also few projects in public schools including EBE programs. This expansion may be understood once the teaching of English in Brazil has become a booming business and the belief that this language is essential to a successful life is transmitted by the media (Rajagopalan, 2005). According to these data,

São Paulo is the state with the greatest number of bilingual schools: 104; followed by Paraná, with 23 bilingual schools; then Rio de Janeiro, with 20 bilingual schools and Santa Catarina with 15 schools.

We notice that the greatest concentration of bilingual schools happens to be in the south and southeast regions. It may happen due to the fact that these regions present high levels of development compared to other regions in Brazil, therefore, they concentrate a social elite which can afford the high price of these schools. In our country, similarly to what Mejía (2004) describes regarding the Colombian context, "career advancement is dependent to a large degree on English language proficiency, and bilingual education is seen as the key to foreign language development" (p. 392). Therefore, elite bilingualism has a very high profile among the middle and upper classes and attending a bilingual school is considered to be high status. However, bilingual education has also increased in the midwest and northeast region in Brazil, especially in Bahia, with 14 schools, and Distrito Federal, with 13 schools. All the other states still have an unimpressive number of schools.

The model followed by these schools is the enrichment model (Hornberger, 1991). They all aim at developing a prestigious language while developing the students' competence in Portuguese. As they are registered at MEC (Ministry of Education) as monolingual schools, once there is no law for EBE in Brazil, they have to teach all the subjects through Portuguese. Therefore, different from the majority of schools in the country, they are full-time schools and, in most of them, the subjects that must be taught through Portuguese are generally allocated in the morning. In the afternoon, the students have the subjects taught through English and some extra classes such as sports, technology and English itself. The choice of subjects which are taught through English is freely made by the schools' authority, since there is no legislation regarding this issue. The lack of law for EBE allows each school to choose what will be taught through English. Thus, the subjects may vary from school to school. However, a significant number of schools, mainly in the countryside and in underprivileged neighborhoods in the capitals, only teach English as a subject which would not

characterize these schools as bilingual schools. Nevertheless, they name themselves as bilingual due to, in some cases, their lack of knowledge in this area and to the economic advantages to be labeled as a bilingual school.

As for their cultural goal, it is possible to affirm that they do not have clear guidelines to work within the framework of a multicultural perspective. We understood that some curiosities and characteristics of some foreign countries are worked throughout the curricula, but it is not possible to state that these schools produce bicultural students. It seems to us that the add-on language happens distinct from the students' own ethnolinguistic identity. It means that the emphasis is only on adding one language which would happen separate and different from that which identifies them as an ethnolinguistic group.

Around 70% of these schools are preschools or teach until the initial years of elementary school. In preschool, about 85% of them function as immersion (García, 2009) schools. It means that all the subjects are taught through English. In some cases, there are Portuguese classes in which the students have access to stories and songs, for instance, in the last two years of preschool.

All the curricula and related materials analyzed from these schools reveal a monoglossic view of language (García, 2009). The languages are clearly separated by the teachers. There is up to the end of elementary school, one teacher who teaches through Portuguese and one teacher who teaches through English. In many cases, the classrooms are also different. It means that, besides changing the teacher, they also have classes in different places according to the language in which they are being taught. These programs can be considered as additive bilingual programs (García, 2009) once they compartmentalize the use of the two languages: they ensure that the children add on a language, but guarantee the development of Portuguese in protected monoglossic spaces. In the vast majority of these schools, translanguaging is not understood as a beneficial practice and many teachers forbid the students to speak in a language other than the official language in that class.

These schools, according to García's (2009) typology, are considered prestigious bilingual education programs, once, in most of them, the fees charged can only be paid by students from high income classes.

Besides that, there is a wide adoption of educational bilingual models imported from other countries (Storto, 2015) and a search for international certification such as the International Baccalaureate Organization.

This scenario reinforces the importance of research in the field of applied linguistics dedicated to understanding, discussing, and suggesting ways to handle the growth of bilingual education in Brazil.

### *A Brief Mapping of Research in Applied Linguistics*

At present, in Brazil the amount of research in the field of applied linguistics, despite being on the increase, is still very small. With regard to the number of universities, we have found out that there are only five of them in which applied linguistics researchers include in their study areas some explicit reference to work in EBE issues: Heloisa Augusto Brito de Mello at Universidade Federal de Goiás (UFG); Fernanda Liberali at Pontifícia Universidade Católica de São Paulo (PUC-SP); Ana Claudia Peters Salgado at Universidade Federal de Juiz de Fora (UFJF); Marcelo Marcelino Rosa at Universidade Federal de São Paulo (UNIFESP) and Terezinha de Jesus Machado Maher at Universidade Estadual de Campinas (UNICAMP).

Similarly, publications in this area still count on few contributions; the existing ones have different focal points and articles on EBE can be sparsely found in academic journals. In 2005, the journal *Revel*<sup>4</sup> published a special issue focused on bilingualism and language acquisition. In this issue, there were 14 articles, two of them focused on EBE. Megale (2005) worked on the theoretical discussion regarding bilingualism and bilingual education. David (2005) discussed the elements of a lesson

4 *Revista Virtual de Estudo da Linguagem-ReVEL*. Retrieved from: <http://www.revel.inf.br/pt/edicoes/?id=5>.

plan elaborated by an English teacher in a bilingual school.

In 2009, the journal *Intercâmbio*<sup>5</sup> published a special issue focused on bilingualism and second language acquisition. In this issue, there were seven articles, in one entitled "Bilingualism in Brazil: Meaning and Expectations," Marcelino (2009) briefly discusses the appearance of bilingual schools in Brazil as well as some of their main characteristics.

Salgado et al. (2009) carried out an ethnographic study in a bilingual school and observed interesting linguistic aspects that served as data to be analyzed and elements for an initial proposal for teacher training for bilingual education.

Mello (2010) in her article "Bilingual Education: A Brief Discussion" shed some light on bilingual education issues such as concepts and definitions, typologies, language policies, and ideological orientations underlying the different models and types of programs as well as their defining characteristics.

In 2013, Vian et al. published the article "Bilingual Teaching in Natal/Rio Grande do Norte State: A Preliminary Contextual Mapping." In this paper, the authors aimed at outlining a preliminary map of bilingual education in Natal/RN. The data were generated through questionnaires and interviews in four private schools in the urban area of the city. The results indicate that most schools apply partial biliterate bilingualism<sup>6</sup>, with differences regarding instructional use of language.

Gazzotti and Liberali (2014) published an article entitled "Conflict Resolution in the Context of Early Childhood Bilingual Education: Towards a Multicultural Development." In this article, the authors discussed how young children learn to deal with conflicts from a multicultural standpoint.

5 *Revista do Programa de Estudos Pós-Graduados em Linguística Aplicada e Estudos da Linguagem*. Retrieved from: <http://revistas.pucsp.br/index.php/intercambio/issue/view/271>

6 Partial biliterate bilingualism in which both languages are used for all four language skills, but in which the academic subjects are divided in such a way that the first language is used for 'cultural subject' such as arts, folklore, history and the second language is used for 'technical subjects' such as science and economy (Fishman & Lovas, 1970).



In 2014, Fortes presented findings of her doctoral dissertation research, attempting to understand some effects of meaning produced by the discourses that surround the English language curricula in 'bilingual schools.'

Soares, Dornas, Costa, and Salgado (2015) in their article "Switching Codes in the Context of Bilingual Education: Code-Switching, Code-Mixing and Language Transfers" presented the first results of research into discursive strategies involved in the process of foreign language acquisition by children in a formal situation of bilingual education. In 2015, two other articles on elite bilingual education were also written. Jesus (2015) discussed the increase of bilingual education in Bahia, a state in the northeast Brazil. Punhagui, Pereira, and Cruz (2015) discussed their experience related to a teacher education workshop carried out in a private bilingual school in the south of Brazil.

In graduate programs in Brazilian universities, the research on EBE is also very scarce. After searching theses and dissertation sites in the area of applied linguistics, it was possible to find 17 dissertations (master's degree) whose themes or contexts of research were elite bilingual schools, from 1995 to 2015 in this field.

Brazilian participation in the most important Latin-American event discussing bilingual education and questions of bilingualism, *Simposio Internacional de Bilinguismo y Educación en América Latina (BilingLatAm)*, has in general grown. In the first two editions of the symposium, 2004 and 2006, only two communications were by Brazilians presenters. In 2009, however, the symposium took place in São Paulo, Brazil, during which 134 Brazilian presenters participated in this edition. In 2011, in Oaxaca, Mexico, 17 Brazilians presented their research. In Valparaíso, Chile, there were 21 Brazilians and, in the last edition, in Lima, Peru, in 2015, 23 Brazilians researchers presented their studies in the symposium.

Furthermore, there has been an expansion of conferences and events organized by private educational institutions. In addition to this, debates of topics related to this area have been held in blogs,

such as the one organized by Selma Moura (<http://educacaobilingue.com/>), a closed Facebook group, organized by Antonieta Megale (<https://facebook.com/groups/320059094758994/?fref=ts>), and the Grupo de Estudos sobre Educação Bilíngue [Bilingual Education Study Group/GEEB/PUC-SP], with a discussion list, all of which bring together researchers and practicing people involved in bilingual education in general.

The vast majority of these productions have as theoretical background heteroglossic views of language (García, 2009). However, the field research took place in schools whose language ideology is monoglossic. Therefore, most of the researches analyze the school practices and the curricula pointing out this monoglossic scenario and contrasting these monoglossic school practices with heteroglossic ones. One of the biggest issues in Brazil is the distance between what is being produced in the Universities and the practice in the schools. Thus, although heteroglossic views of language have been studied and discussed in the University, these discussions and findings are far from the reality of the schools in Brazil.

### *Gaps and Needs to be Dealt with in the Area*

The expanding reality concerning this subject requires studies to be carried out about the Brazilian situation, focusing on the aspects outlined below:

- Studies about state policies for intuitive solutions being practiced so as to have some coherence (Flores, 2010)
- Studies about a minimum EBE curriculum in pedagogy or licentiate degree (Cavalcanti, 1999)
- Studies that challenge teaching the mother tongue by always having in mind an ideal native speaker and a community speaking a homogeneous language (Cavalcanti, 1999)
- Studies about a curriculum for languages and education courses and their relation with multilingual issues
- Studies about linguistic and cultural diversity in Brazilian schools

- Studies focusing on an end to discrimination and showing the wealth of the Brazilian sociocultural heritage represented by our diversity
- Studies about the development of plurilingual pedagogies that respond to the complex multilingual contexts of the twenty-first century (García & Flores, 2012), specifically in the Brazilian context
- Studies focusing on the challenges represented by the professional education of teachers, production of material, curricular development, assessment
- Studies such as those in Colombia (from Mejía, 2013) about the implementation of bilingual schools in public and private initiatives
- Studies about textbooks imported from the USA and Europe and about didactic proposals for bilingual schools
- Studies about teacher training with regard to linguistic diversity (Cavalcanti, 1999)

These are just some topics. The participation of applied linguists and a larger number of them being involved in the debate on public policies in such areas are of crucial importance; thus, generating proposals for a minimum regulation concerning educating professionals to work in the EBE field and to implement the so-called EBE schools.

### *A Particular Perspective: Professional Education of Educators in/for Elite Bilingual Education*

The field of applied linguistics in Brazil aims at seeking alternatives to the understanding of the multifaceted aspects of the contemporary social practices, inserted in a context “of socio-cultural-political-historical and epistemological effervescence that is called postmodernist [times]” (Moita Lopes, 2006, p. 22). In this scenario, the concern about questions on the professional education of teachers has led our research group, LACE<sup>7</sup>, to study the context of elite bilingual education.

<sup>7</sup> The research group LACE (Language Activities in the School Context – PUC/SP) focuses mainly on the training of critical-reflexive educators and includes critical and collaborative research that investigates the constitution of subjects, their forms of participation and the production of senses and meanings in education (Liberali, 2012)

Some aspects have turned this theme into an object of special interest (Liberali, 2013). In the first place, the lack of regulations for the education of EBE teachers and undergraduate courses with a focus on EBE reinforced by a lack of disciplines in languages and/or pedagogy courses dealing with this subject. Moreover, considering the exaggerated number of schools in Brazil, there are still very few extensions or postgraduate courses in this area. Internationally, the necessity of specific education concerning EBE issues has already been acknowledged. However, it is absolutely clear that many coordinators, educators, and school directors in Brazil have no idea of the needs in this area. Besides, there is an increasing search for educational proposals that come from publishing houses and/or curricula imported from other realities very distinct from the Brazilian ones.

This picture has driven us to carry out research on the following aspects within the frame of applied linguistics:

- education of EBE teachers
- implementation of practicing communities where in-service and pre-service
- teachers work with performance (Holzman, 2010; Lobman, 2005) in EBE
- education of EBE teachers in universities
- education of EBE managers
- education of educators in multilingual contexts (elite and deaf people)
- modes to establish a Brazilian syllabus in multilingual contexts (elite and deaf people)

The specific research of this group has turned to such issues related to the professional education of educators, each one of them with a specific focus. They have as their main theoretical axis the theory of socio-historical-cultural activity as postulated by Vygotsky and Leontiev and the methodology adopted is that of critical collaborative research which aims at creating contexts for critical learning and development (Magalhães & Fidalgo, 2010). According to Magalhães and Fidalgo (2010), the objective of this methodology is to challenge practices and speech in the researched contexts, focusing on social and cultural issues that historically have organized school (as non-academic

environments) and universities (as knowledge production environments).

Furthermore, the bilingual teacher education perspective developed and discussed by LACE researchers acknowledges that all participants are active in the construction of their professional development both by talking about teaching and learning practices and by engaging in activities that are present in bilingual school contexts (Liberali, 2013). In this sense, researchers and practitioners together are involved in the evaluation and reorganization of pedagogical actions through discussion, analysis and review of the social and historical forces that permeate their actions, establishing relationships between what they do and what the theories about bilingual education have proposed. This reflection involves understanding the needs and interests of bilingual schools, bilingual educators, families and students, the results of the research conducted in the area of bilingual education around the world, and the demands of the superdiversity which is materialized in the Brazilian realities.

## Conclusion

This paper focused on the presentation of an EBE Brazilian scenario from the point of view of an applied linguist. After analyzing 27 curricula from Brazilian bilingual schools, 43 texts taken from websites of bilingual schools and materials related to the bilingual schools' language allocation provided by publishers, we affirm that these schools followed the enrichment model (Hornberger, 1991). They all aim at developing a prestigious language while developing the students' competence in Portuguese. As for their cultural goal, the researched schools do not have clear guidelines within the framework of a multicultural perspective. All the curricula and related materials analyzed from these schools reveal a monoglossic view of language (García, 2009), once the languages are clearly separated by the teachers.

As for the research produced at universities, the vast majority of these productions have as a theoretical background heteroglossic views of

language (García, 2009). However, the field research took place in schools whose language ideology is monoglossic.

To conclude, we would like to emphasize that, as Blommaert (2010) suggests, even if modernity defines our modes of production, the transition to a different kind of social system compels us to redefine them. It is necessary that applied linguistics researchers problematize and propose reflections on people's rights and duties involving their participation in the economic, social, and political life of the communities which they are part of and which they may join. For this to be accomplished, there must be a conscientious multilingual education and not just teaching by means of a practice called "elite bilingual education" reinforcing its "elite" nature.

Therefore, studies and laws organizing the field are necessary, thus, offering a citizenly view for these EBE experiences that involve an attitude from which each individual may assume his/her choices and linguistic practices, and his/her particular modes of interaction, attentive to the sociocultural implications which they will have and the resulting relations and feeling of belonging.

Besides that, there is the need of actions to foster the approximation of universities and schools in Brazil, since many studies carried out at our universities do not reach our schools and, therefore, do not affect the school practices, which should be one of the most important aims of carrying out research in the field of applied linguistics. We observed that although heteroglossic views of language have been an important notion discussed at universities in order to rethink the teaching of language and the type of bilingual education provided in Brazil, these discussions do not reach the schools which continue to adopt monolingual views of language in their practices and policies.

This paper focused on the presentation of an EBE Brazilian scenario from the point of view of an applied linguist. We hope it may serve as a basis for reflection and a widening of the debate, research, and actions in this expanding subject matter.

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