

**IDENTITARY SYMBOLISMS AGENCIATED IN PLH CLASSES FOR
'BRASILEIRINHOS'**

***SIMBOLOS IDENTITÁRIOS AGENCIADOS NAS CLASSES DE PLH PARA
'BRASILEIRINHOS'***

***SIMBOLISMOS IDENTITARIOS AGENCIADOS EN LAS CLASES PARA
'BRASILEIRINHOS'***

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ABSTRACT: This article is a modified and reduced version of one of the chapters of my doctoral thesis. I present here reflections on the national symbols used by initiatives, formed by Brazilians abroad, that propose to maintain and/or teach Portuguese as Heritage Language to their children and other children of Brazilians, with the aim of awakening in children a "sense of belonging" of also being Brazilian. For the research, a qualitative methodology was used that triangulated different approaches, which allowed mediating communication between the researcher and her interlocutors. Based on ethnographic work and participant observation, I present here how the symbols of an "imagined brazilianess" are brought to the context of maintenance and teaching of the PLH. I show how this symbolic universe appears in the pedagogical proposals and practices of the initiatives, as well as the concerns that sustain the methodologies and didactic options for this specific didactic context.

KEYWORDS: Heritage Language. Brazilian immigration. Language and culture of Brazil. Catalonia.

RESUMEN: *Este artículo es una versión modificada y reducida de uno de los capítulos de mi tesis doctoral. Presento aquí reflexiones sobre los símbolos nacionales utilizados por iniciativas, formadas por brasileñas y brasileños en el exterior, que proponen mantener y/o enseñar el Portugués como Lengua de Herencia a sus hijos y otros hijos de padre o madre brasileños, con el objetivo de despertar en los niños un "sentido de pertenencia" de también ser brasileño. Para la investigación se utilizó una metodología cualitativa que trianguló diferentes enfoques, lo que permitió mediar la comunicación entre la investigadora y sus interlocutores. A partir del trabajo etnográfico y la observación participante, presento aquí cómo los símbolos de una "brasilidad imaginada" son llevados al contexto de mantenimiento y enseñanza del PLH. Muestro cómo este universo simbólico aparece en las propuestas y prácticas pedagógicas de las iniciativas, así como las inquietudes que sustentan las metodologías y opciones didácticas para este contexto didáctico específico.*

PALABRAS CLAVE: *Portugués Lengua de Herencia. Inmigración brasileña. Lengua y cultura de Brasil. Cataluña.*

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RESUMO: *Este artigo é uma versão modificada e reduzida de um dos capítulos de minha tese de doutorado. Apresento aqui reflexões acerca dos símbolos nacionais utilizados por iniciativas, formadas por brasileiras e brasileiros no exterior, que se propõem a manter e/ou ensinar o Português como Língua de Herança para seus filhos e outras crianças com pai ou mãe brasileira, com o objetivo de despertar nas crianças um “sentimento de pertencimento” de também serem brasileiros. Para a investigação, foi utilizada uma metodologia qualitativa que triangulou diferentes aproximações, em que se permitiu mediar a comunicação entre a investigadora e seus interlocutores. A partir do trabalho etnográfico e observação participante, apresento aqui como os símbolos de uma “brasilidade imaginada” são trazidos para o contexto de manutenção e ensino de PLH. Mostro como este universo simbólico aparece nas propostas e práticas pedagógicas das iniciativas, como também as preocupações que sustentam as metodologias e escolhas didáticas para este contexto específico de ensino.*

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: *Português Língua de Herança. Imigração brasileira. Língua e cultura do Brasil. Catalunha.*

Introduction

This article is a reduced and extensively modified version of a chapter of my doctoral thesis², in which it presents qualitative research that I carried out over four years, a period in which I accompanied the actions developed by the initiatives of Brazilian immigrants in Europe teaching Brazilian Portuguese as a Heritage Language (PLH). This is a relatively new phenomenon, which began in the late 1990s, intensified throughout the 2000s, and has become very significant in the different countries where Brazilian immigration is present: first, in the United States, a country where the largest community of Brazilian immigrants is found, and where a process began that has spread to the countries of Europe since 2005, finally reaching Spain and more specifically also Barcelona, a city that was the main observation unit of this investigation. To do this investigation, it was necessary to use a qualitative methodology that related different approximations, which possibilities to mediate the communication between the researcher and its interlocutors, and think about an “ethnographic focus” articulating document data and observation data.

The people involved in PLH projects in Europe, and in the other continents, are mostly women, especially Brazilian mothers, and they come from various regions of Brazil. Although most of them are from the Southeast, there are people from the North to the South of the country, which means that the cultural and linguistic diversity of mothers and fathers

² Thesis defended in November 2019 at the Autonomous University of Barcelona/Es, with the title “In the name of the “brasileirinhos”? Heritage language and Brazilian identity in Catalonia”, in which I aimed to analyze who they are, why they organize themselves and how Brazilian immigrants who form associations abroad act, with the aim of promoting the so-called heritage language for their children, based on the concrete experiences of such associations in Catalonia.

committed to teaching PLH is wide, since Brazil is a country with a lot of cultural and linguistic diversity³ from Portuguese (SAMORA, 2019). According to Dorneles (2017), POLH classes are taught in a context of great cultural diversity, which has given a multicultural and intercultural meaning to pedagogical practices, further enriching the linguistic universe of students.

Because Brazil is so large and so diversified in terms of culture and linguistic variety, we also need to instrumentalize them with teaching resources so that this cultural and linguistic multiplicity enriches POLH classes (DORNELES, 2017, p. 183, our translation).

Although the main objective of the PLH initiatives are the classes, the pedagogical practices and the meetings that take place in the associations are varied, and these practices are equally important for the analysis of the actions carried out, such as: the meetings on the occasion of Brazilian festive dates, the meetings and assemblies of the partners, beyond other recreational activities that involve songs, games and theater. I emphasize that it is in these contexts that regional symbolic elements are activated and introduced into the dynamics of the activities carried out.

National symbols, such as the Brazilian flag and the colors green and yellow, are frequently activated as markers of Brazilian identity, in addition to the term 'brasileirinhos', used by PLH agents, which identifies the idea of a Brazilianness expressed in the finished. According to Jennings-Winterle and Lima-Hernandes (2015), promoters of Brazilian culture and representatives of initiatives that promote Brazilian Portuguese in the most diverse countries in the world refer to children and adolescents who have a cultural connection with the language. and the culture of Brazil, such as 'brasileirinhos', “underage children or grandchildren of one or more Brazilian citizens who went abroad” (JENNINGS-WINTERLE; LIMA-HERNANDES, 2015, p. 15, our translation).⁴it is presented as a form of differentiation and recognition in the context of migration. Some project founders emphasize that the articulation between initiatives in Europe is also an attempt to approach, from abroad, with the Brazilian Government to make it "assume its responsibility concerning the promotion,

³According to the IPEA (Brazilian Institute of Applied Economic Research), this country is among those with the greatest linguistic diversity. It is estimated that there are more than 200 languages, including “indigenous languages, immigration languages, sign languages, languages of Afro-Brazilian communities and Creole languages”. The Portuguese language is the official and widely understood language from north to south of the country, despite the specificities and the great diversity of accents. Available: http://www.ipea.gov.br/desafios/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=3053&catid=28&Itemid=39. Access: 10 Jan. 2021.

⁴Many initiatives use the term to name their projects, for example: Brasileirinhos DK; Brazilians in Malaga; Brazilians in Stuttgart; Casa dos Brasileirinhos in Rovigo; Clube dos Brasileirinhos, among others.

dissemination and preservation of the Portuguese language among the new generations of 'brasileirinhos'".

I also emphasize that, in addition to the articulation strategies to gain visibility, the movement of women who are active to maintain and transmit their language, and their idea of culture of origin, is characterized by a transnational dynamic of immigration, since they seek to maintain the ties with their homeland and "present the idea of fluidity from one place to another, across borders, of people, objects, ideas, symbols" (MARGOLIS, 2013, p. 242, our translation; MARGOLIS, 2008, p. 296, our translation).

The family bond (with the people who stayed in Brazil) is a very present characteristic in the speeches of these agents, as already highlighted; the valorization of their identity, of their idea of being Brazilian in different migration contexts, in addition to their strategies of recognition and visibility in the spaces in which they are inserted, make these women develop networks, based on an ideology of life that involves both the society of origin as well as the host society.

Transnational practices have indeed been present to a greater or lesser extent in migratory movements, it is a fact that new information technologies are responsible for enabling new dynamics and relationships in the immigration space, whether to investigate and obtain information about the destinations that interest them, either as a facilitator of multiple contacts (studies, jobs, travel, cheap flights) or facilitating the adaptation and reconstruction of the lives of immigrants.

The family that has stayed in Brazil, for example, does not seem to be so far away, since they can talk and look at their relatives when they need to, using technological means of communication, removing the feeling of loneliness. In addition, in the specific case of my research, these media have made it possible for people with the same interests to meet and work together, in a network, seeking recognition and visibility in the new spaces of residence, maintaining their links with their places of origin.

The guidelines for the teachers and others involved with the PLH are marked by speeches on maintaining ties with Brazil, in which family connections, symbols, and memories of the country are highlighted. Professor Doctor Maria Luiza Ortiz, who conducts training for PLH teachers, stresses that

The heritage language must become a way of being and living, a link that leads us to our culture, to our roots; learning it means revitalizing our contacts with it, living together and maintaining the ties that bind us to it (SOUZA; LIRA, 2017, p. 11, our translation).

Dorneles (2017), a PLH professor, highlights that, in the teaching of POLH, the concern goes beyond systematizing the teaching of the language; “it is necessary to consider the teaching of Brazilianness as a way of creating a feeling of belonging to the language and culture” (DORNELES, 2017, p. 183, our translation).

I highlight the definition provided by the doctor professor of the APBC⁵about heritage language:

The heritage language is a language of communication related to a familiar sociocultural context, which helps to structure thought, speech and its meanings. The culture of heritage, as well as the language, if it is not transmitted by the family, will hardly be learned, since, in most cases, the descendants of immigrants were born or arrived at a very young age in the country of residence (GOMES, 2017, p. 38, our translation).

Since the heritage language is a language transmitted by relatives and shared with other people who identify with it in a minority linguistic context, the moments of interaction in PLH initiatives, especially those dedicated to children, bring to these context components that symbolize Brazil. These moments of interaction are promoted by immigrant fathers and mothers who consider important to their stories, their idea of a person who also belongs, at least in part, to another place and culture. They are mothers and fathers looking to make their children feel Brazilian too.

Imaginary of Brazil in the teaching of Portuguese as a Heritage Language

According to Margolis (2013), most Brazilians carry with them a cultural imaginary of their region of origin, which is only perceived after arrival anywhere abroad. According to the author, national identity is an abstraction in Brazil, since Brazilians have their stamp in the context of immigration, and many times they only learn what Brazil is after they leave the country. In addition to the imaginaries that these immigrants carry from their regions, there are more general imaginaries of Brazil: such as the national flag, samba, capoeira, the country's Independence Day, soccer, and certain foods.

When dealing with the teaching of the language and culture of Brazil for children abroad, the symbolic elements brought to this context are also rescued from the memory of these Brazilian women who, through their imaginary and personal stories, seek to transmit their language. and his culture.

⁵Associação de Pais de Brasileirinhos da Catalunha/APBC, located in Barcelona/ES, where I carried out direct and participant observation.

As I have highlighted before, these Brazilians have their origin in various provinces of Brazil. It is a very extensive country, with 8,516,000 km², characterized by its diversity of climate, belief, and culture. Each region has its unique characteristics, but when we talk about Brazilian culture outside of Brazil, in addition to local memories coming to mind, national symbols are incorporated.

In the events where I was on Portuguese as a heritage language, the orientation of the pedagogical work related to the issues addressed, always emphasized the idea that each PLH teaching context is unique, and it is necessary, based on each local reality, to program the contents to be taught, bringing to classes symbolic elements of a more unified idea of Brazil, in addition to the specificities of regional origin of the immigrants involved with their children in the projects. As an example of these orientations, during the I SEPOLH event⁶In Munich, in 2015, one of the organizers highlighted that the heritage language has its specificities, and it is necessary to associate the "ethnic and cultural baggage" of children to the context in which they are inserted.

A very recurrent methodology, which I observed during the classes at the APBC, consisted of the teacher asking the children to talk with their Brazilian mothers or fathers about their lives and their childhood stories, as well as about the characteristics of their region of origin. In Brazil, and the continuation brought to class and reproduced these stories for the group. This generated a conversation between the children and the teacher about the idea of regional diversity of their origins, characterization of the ways of life and the symbology of what is imagined as common to Brazil.

According to Gomes (2017), the starting point for planning the teaching of a heritage language is the emotional and cultural bond that children have and, "more than knowing their learning needs, we consider it essential to reveal the representations of the language and culture of Brazil that the students take with them" (p. 275, our translation). This argument has become central in the defenses of the PLH projects carried out by the associations.

Gomes reinforces that

In the classes, it is possible to explore the memories built by the children through trips, visits from Brazilian relatives, and even conversations constituted in this language and also promote contact with more Portuguese-speaking contexts, such as associations, cultural, artistic events, or other interlocutors other than family members and teachers (GOMES, 2017, p. 277, our translation).

⁶SEPOLH: "Simpósio Europeu sobre o Ensino de Português como Língua de Herança", event promoted by the agents involved in the teaching of PLH in Europe.

The PLH has become a language of feeling that awakens an entire number of concepts about Brazil, in this case. The observations of Gomes (2017) allow us to understand the difference between the methodology in the teaching of Portuguese as a heritage language (PLH) and Portuguese as a foreign language (PLE). The PLH searches the children's repertoire for the content to be explored, and Portuguese as a foreign language has a technical and grammatical foundation for pragmatic applications. Professor Edleise Mendes (2015) highlights that, in most teaching materials for Portuguese as a Foreign Language, or second language, for example, the elements of the common imaginary stand out, representing the cultural wealth of a people, such as popular festivals, cuisine, and traditions. "Language, in this way, is seen just as a system that Works to cultural transmission, from generation to generation, in a uniform and static way" (MENDES, 2015, p. 208, our translation).

I understand that, in the teaching of Portuguese as a foreign language, culture is used to try to insert the learner into a context, but it does not activate memories, feelings, ties, as happens in the teaching of Portuguese as a heritage language. The culture approached in LE is standardized, materialized, it comes to have a unique meaning, like a product.

However, this does not mean that the elements of the common imaginaries of those involved are not present in the teaching of the heritage language; the exploration of Brazilian gastronomy; the commemoration of festive dates in Brazil; Brazilian literature, mainly children's and youth; Traditional songs and games are combined with the specific knowledge brought by the students, in addition to the experiences lived by the Brazilian men and women adults involved in the initiatives. The personal memories of these immigrants and their feelings about their places of origin are converted into national symbols of the PLH teaching. Therefore, they are more plural, diverse, and playful, sharing space with more homogeneous symbols, such as the national flag, for example.

In the APBC classes, the teachers rescued popular songs and games that were recurrent in Brazil to work on the Portuguese language with the children. Many times, those songs and games were retrieved from their childhood memories. Mothers and fathers were also invited to participate in the classes, presenting cultural elements that were part of their regions of origin in Brazil. In a meeting with a mother, I asked her how she saw the work of the teachers considering the origin of the partners. The mother replied that they were very careful to attend to the diversity of origins in the classes, and she exemplified it by saying that once the teachers carried out a project to present all the regions of Brazil and invited the mothers and fathers to go talk about their places of origin in Brazil.

Beyond regional issues, I asked a teacher if they worked with national commemorative dates, such as the Independence of Brazil, Flag Day, and the day of the Proclamation of the Republic, for example, which are holidays in Brazil. She affirmed that yes, they worked on the dates of the proclamation and independence of Brazil only with the older children, and on the day of the flag with everyone. This referred to the symbols of official national memory, turning them also into the signs that become part of the narratives of Brazilian identity abroad, with the hope that they would have effects on children who have always or almost all their lives lived distant from the country of origin of their father or mother, or both.

I emphasize that the Brazilian flag is the national symbol, used by all the initiatives that I have accompanied in the investigation, beyond Catalonia. In the events, meetings, and in the headquarters of the initiatives, the flag or its colors constitute the greatest visual representation of identification with the country of origin. The reference to Brazil is also reiterated in the logos of the initiatives of the most different PLH associations, through the colors green, blue, and yellow and through symbolic Brazilian elements of fauna, flora, cultural objects, games, boys, and girls. I emphasize that in the illustrations, another symbol full of meanings are trees, which convey the idea of roots and connections between generations, a symbol of prosperity.

In addition to the Brazilian flag and the frequently used colors, the dates of Brazilian holidays are celebrated throughout the school year by PLH initiatives: Carnival, Easter, Day of the "Indians", June Parties, June 7, September (Brazilian Independence Day), Children's Day (October 12), and Christmas. Although several parties are not of Brazilian origin, they do have a Brazilian way of being celebrated. Songs, games, and literature from various parts of Brazil are used and cultivated in all festive settings, events, and classes at PLH.

Brazilian gastronomy is another element explored in the teaching of Brazilian culture, with the idea of keeping the "culture and stories alive and present of our" *brasileirinhos* "through the cultivation of affective memories acquired around the table.⁷". The organization *Brasil em Mente*, on its website, has the category "culinariando", which includes recipes and the history of some Brazilian foods. Among the foods that stand out the most, when it comes to the Brazilian heritage language, especially related to children, are the dishes known as *brigadeiro*, *coxinha*, and *pão de queijo*. The author Abdala (1997 p. 161 apud MORAIS, 2011b) talks about the *pão de queijo*, food characterized as *Mineira*⁸, which "allows a

⁷Information available on the website of the *Brasil em Mente* initiative. Available: <https://brasileirinhos.wordpress.com/category/culinariando/>. Access: 23 June 2019.

⁸*Cozina mineira* refers to the meals of the State of Minas Gerais, located in the southeast of Brazil.

reference to the tradition that is recognized in the flavor of childhood and in an imaginary purity” (p. 249, our translation). I include, along with the pão de queijo, the brigadeiro, and the coxinha, which are part of the childhood flavors of many mothers, mainly from the Southeast and South of Brazil.

The gastronomy of Brazil is very varied, and each region has specific dishes, which are often not widely consumed in other regions of the country. According to Da Matta (1986), the food code is important, since its symbolic possibilities allow mediation "between head and belly, between body and soul, allowing a series of cultural codes to operate simultaneously" (DA MATTA, 1986, p. 35, our translation). According to Morais (2011b), cooking is how identities assume some materiality, and can still contain discourses. “Food also speaks”, she says (MORAIS, 2011b, p. 294). The moments of encounter in the PLH associations, where food is part of the ritual, corroborate the idea that this Brazilian-style fraternization.

I bring such a reflection on food as part of this symbolic universe that, along with literature, music, colors, games, cultural objects, and nature, gain a sense of Brazilianness. The “typical Brazilian” food brought to these immigration spaces is understood as a reinforcement for the recognition and construction of identities, of the Brazilianness that is at stake and reveals an important dialogue with the memory of the people.

Morais (2011a) highlights that typical food is not just any food; its meaning "represents lived experiences, represents the past and, in doing so, connects it to those who live in the present" (MORAIS, 2011a, p. 243, our translation), also presenting itself as components of the official memory of the group.

Another highly explored element in the teaching of the language and culture of Brazil is literature, especially children's and youth literature. Classical authors of Brazilian literature are used and suggested as a way of carrying out the pedagogical activities. In addition to exploring classic writers of Brazilian children's literature, such as Monteiro Lobato, creator of the “Sítio do Pica-Pau Amarelo” and Mauricio de Souza, creator of the “Turma da Mônica”. Most likely, the parents were socialized in childhood, from these writers and their characters, through Brazilian schools and the diffusion of these characters on open TV.

These authors, characters, and stories, among others of the genre, also made up the collection of the APBC library, and very often the teachers suggested these books for the children. I emphasize that they are stories and characters from the childhood of the fathers and mothers, in a period in which certain school literary references became universal in Brazil and that they ended up being what they sought to transmit to their children as a Brazilian heritage

in the teaching projects of the tongue. Again, it is the memory of their experiences that were triggered as a symbolic and affective bond of an idea of identification with Brazil.

Other references are contemporary Brazilian writers and actors who tour European countries and are also invited to make presentations for the 'brasileirinhos'. The shows are often organized and promoted by initiatives that are involved in teaching the language and culture of Brazil. They are presentations that value playful elements of the way of telling stories, singing, and playing, they are spoken in Portuguese and refer to the symbolic universes of the regional cultures of Brazil.

The strategies used by the initiatives to strengthen ties and bring children closer to Brazil, exploring Brazilian symbolic elements through the use of colors, songs, games, books and food, seek through these resources to give meaning in teaching and learning Portuguese as a heritage language, to make the children involved in these projects feel Brazilian as well.

Moroni (2017), one of the main articulators in Barcelona, highlights that the role of the initiatives is to provide heritage language learners with opportunities to experience significant cultural practices in the language, expanding the range of affective experiences; from the accompaniment of the activities developed by these initiatives in Europe. From what I have analyzed, it seems to me that these have been fulfilling the objectives that they propose in the movement of teaching Portuguese as a language of Brazilian heritage, including in the case of Barcelona.

The pedagogical experiences of the "Associação de Pais de Brasileirinhos da Catalunha"

The activities developed for the children who participate in the APBC follow a pedagogical project called Educational-Cultural Project⁹. The work carried out in Portuguese as a Heritage Language classes seek for children to develop their skills to interact in Brazilian environments, that is, it is not only knowing the language but also what is meant by culture, customs and habits. from Brazil. According to the Project, considering the linguistic and cultural diversity of children, they are invited to explore and bring different axes of their identity. These teaching projects are characterized by the connection between the language and musical, literary references, images and games that have relationships with the Brazil of their mothers and fathers.

The Project proposes that the teachers of younger children carry out activities that rescue and reinvent the culture of childhood: wheel songs, popular games, storytelling, often

⁹More information Available: <http://apbc.cat/>.Access: 29 Aug. 2021.

with the participation of parents. For older children, activities include reading, writing, and content production. The celebrations promote meetings that bring together children and their families and spread the Brazilian culture in the local community, since families of mixed nationality predominate among the associates, especially Catalan (MORONI; GOMES, 2015).

According to the APBC teachers, the pedagogical dynamic is made up of monthly meetings, where they talk and think about what they will do in the next school period. By choosing a theme, they develop a common project for all classes, while with objectives following pedagogic ideas for the different age groups. Then they introduce the partners (mothers; fathers) and among them, they analyze what is feasible or not and suggest changes and additions. According to a teacher with whom I was a few times in the field, the projects are born from the needs of the students, which are detected in the current school year. From the manifestations, narrations, and themes brought by the children in the classes, the teachers know the memories and expectations of the parents, and this allows that, later, teachers create a pedagogy from the experiences they had.

The association's activities enabled the children not only to learn the Brazilian language but also fostered social interactions that created situations for the use of the language outside the family context. Outside the classroom, the contact with other children of different ages and other adults who speak Portuguese (not their fathers, mothers, and teachers) made them live different experiences, expanding their vocabularies, valuing the language, feeling safer in circles of friendship.

Juliana Gomes (2017), who was a professor at the APBC, highlights in her Thesis on the subject of heritage language that the weekly classes in the association serve as support for families, since one meeting per week is not enough to contemplate the formal teaching of the Brazilian language and culture, but it is a moment of social interaction that promotes situations where children can express themselves in different ways in the Portuguese language, although some express themselves more and others less. For Gomes (2017), the important thing is to enable these moments of coexistence among children in the Brazilian language.

The relationship between symbolism, cultural and social capital, the trajectories of the main agents of the process in Catalonia, and the practices of the association through the understanding of what the PLH is referring to the uses of the symbolism of memories, of culture, affections, and solidarities that support this type of proposal, beyond learning a language. The immigrant partners, their partners, and children are the main people involved in the sociability produced by the meetings (assemblies, meetings, workshops, parties) and

classes. It is important to say that women have an important role in this context and I understand that the “Brazilians” are the motivation, the language is the medium and the association is the way in which their social experiences of coexistence and identities in immigration are concretized.

Final considerations

The purpose of this article was to present how PLH initiatives use the national and cultural symbols of Brazil in their work teaching the Brazilian language and culture. These initiatives are present in various countries around the world, and promote the teaching of Portuguese as a Heritage Language for 'Brasileirinhos', children and adolescents, sons and daughters of Brazilian and Brazilian immigrants. I presented how the symbols of an 'imagined brasilidade'¹⁰ are brought to the context of maintenance and teaching of PLH, especially in the Association of Parents of 'Brasileirinhos' in Catalonia/ES. I emphasize that the idea of "Brazilian culture" is understood here as an abstract concept, which the agents activate and fill with meaning in their immigration trajectories, but they also do so from the more general meanings that were built from the academy, literature, arts, media and politics in Brazil. I presented how this symbolic universe appears in the proposals for events promoted by the associations, especially by the APBC, and in the pedagogical practices, including the PLH classes for 'brasileirinhos', considering the heterogeneity (linguistic knowledge, age differences, for example) of children from different regions of Brazil.

The pedagogical practices are elaborated from the rescue of a symbolism of what has been lived, of affection, in which the stories, the characters, the games, the songs and the meals are recovered from the memories and experiences lived in childhood by the mothers and parents involved in the projects. Language ends up functioning as a transmission vehicle, as well as a symbolic element through which the affective dimension is revealed and felt in the vision of the agents of this process.

This does not mean that in the teaching of the heritage language elements of the common imaginary about national symbols are not present among those involved, such as the colors of the flag, the commemoration of Brazilian holidays, Brazilian literature, songs and traditional games. All this is combined with the specific knowledge brought by the students, in addition to the experiences lived by the Brazilian men and women adults involved in the

¹⁰The idea of an "imagined Brazilianness" is inspired by the notion of "imagined community" by Anderson (2008), where agents share common signs and symbols, which make them recognize themselves as belonging to the same community of feeling.

initiatives. The personal memories of these immigrants and their feelings about their places of origin are converted into national symbols of the PLH teaching. Therefore, they use general national symbols, also more plural, diverse and playful, sharing space in their memories and personal affections with more homogeneous symbols, such as the national flag.

The relationship between symbolism, cultural and social capital, the trajectories of the main agents of the process in Catalonia, and the practices of the association through the understanding of what the PLH is referring to the use of a symbolism of memories, of culture, and affections that support this type of proposal, beyond the learning of a language. Portuguese as a Heritage Language is in full expansion, associated with migratory flows that consist of dynamic and fluid movements that depend on the particular factors of the places of destination but also on movements of government policies. These questions are intrinsically connected, since, in the vast majority of contexts, the heritage language emerges in immigration, where it is understood as a minority language spoken in the family or in groups.

I emphasize that these mothers, partners, and founders, have a social profile with a high level of schooling, are considered middle class, form couples of mixed nationalities, value their origins and many of them further their studies, invest in research and specific training a theme. From what they represent from the quantitative and qualitative data in this research, it is possible to say that for Brazilian mothers the initiatives are also a key element that favors their chances of recognition, political representation, and social mobility in immigration.

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