

PROMOTING PORTUGUESE AS FOREIGN LANGUAGE TEACHING MEDIATED BY MULTIMODAL TEXTS IN EXTENSION PRACTICES

PROMOVENDO O ENSINO DE PORTUGUÊS LÍNGUA ESTRANGEIRA MEDIADO POR TEXTOS MULTIMODAIS EM PRÁTICAS EXTENSIONISTAS

FOMENTO DE LA ENSEÑANZA DEL PORTUGUÉS COMO LENGUA EXTRANJERA MEDIADA POT TEXTOS MULTIMODALES EN PRÁCTICAS DE EXTENSIÓN

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ABSTRACT : In this article, we present some results of the use of multimodal texts in teaching Portuguese as a Foreign Language (PFL) offered in an extension project at a public university. Participants are foreigners from different countries, in a situation of academic and social immersion in the city where the university is located. The objective is to characterize the multimodal text as a resource for intercultural and humanizing experiences of meaningful language learning (COSTA VAL, 2004), especially worked in a group on the social network Facebook. The results suggest that, although it has no educational purposes, the social network in question revealed itself as an environment with potential for the humanization of learning, due to its possibilities of interaction, socialization and communication in the target language, functioning as an intercultural and learning tool. collaborative online (FINARDI and PORCINO, 2016). The use of multimodal texts, due to their characteristics, promoted high connectivity and expansion between contents already worked on in classes and other complementary ones.

KEYWORDS: Portuguese as foreign language. Multimodal texts. Intercultural and humanizing teaching. Extension project. Public university.

RESUMO: Neste artigo, apresentamos alguns resultados do uso de textos multimodais no ensino de Português Língua Estrangeira (PLE) oferecido em projeto de extensão, junto a uma universidade pública. Os participantes são estrangeiros de distintos países, em situação de imersão acadêmica e social na cidade onde a universidade está inserida. O objetivo é caracterizar o texto multimodal como recurso para experiências interculturais e humanizadoras de aprendizagem significativa da língua (COSTA VAL, 2004), especialmente trabalhados em grupo da rede social Facebook. Os resultados sugerem que, embora não tenha propósitos educacionais, a rede social em questão revelou-se como ambiente com potencial para a humanização da aprendizagem, por suas possibilidades de interação, socialização e comunicação na língua-alvo, funcionando como ferramenta de aprendizagem interculturalista e colaborativa online (FINARDI; PORCINO, 2016). Os usos de textos multimodais, por suas características, promoveram alta conectividade e expansão entre conteúdos já trabalhados nas aulas e outros complementares.

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PALAVRAS-CHAVE: *Português língua estrangeira. Textos multimodais. Ensino interculturalista e humanizador. Projeto de extensão. Universidade pública.*

RESUMEN: *En este artículo presentamos algunos resultados del uso de textos multimodales en la enseñanza del Portugués como Lengua Extranjera (PLE) ofrecidos en un proyecto de extensión en una universidad pública. Los participantes son extranjeros de diferentes países, en situación de inmersión académica y social en la ciudad donde se ubica la universidad. El objetivo es caracterizar el texto multimodal como recurso para experiencias interculturales y humanizadoras de aprendizaje significativo de idiomas (COSTA VAL, 2004), especialmente trabajado en grupo en la red social Facebook. Los resultados sugieren que, si bien no tiene fines educativos, la red social en cuestión se reveló como un entorno con potencial para la humanización del aprendizaje, por sus posibilidades de interacción, socialización y comunicación en la lengua meta, funcionando como un medio intercultural y herramienta de aprendizaje colaborativo online (FINARDI y PORCINO, 2016). El uso de textos multimodales, por sus características, promovió una alta conectividad y expansión entre contenidos ya trabajados en las clases y otros complementarios.*

PALABRAS CLAVE: *Portugués Lengua Extranjera. Textos multimodales. Enseñanza interculturalista y humanizadora. Proyecto de Extensión. Universidad pública.*

Introdução

Language is an important means of humanizing social relationships, since all interactions are permeated by it. When it comes to approaching a new language in an immersion context, in which learners need to interact to survive and establish new social, work or study relationships, the task of humanizing discourse becomes even more relevant. For Matos (2010), it is essential to favor the positive self-image and linguistic self-esteem of learners, promoting them a minimum confidence as users of the language that consequently guarantees them a lexical, grammatical, argumentative, and cultural self-esteem, teaching them to “communicate for the good”.

In this scenario, the internet has transformed the ways in which we communicate, acquire information, and learn. In addition, the network increasingly allows people to access discursive and cultural repertoires constructed in other languages (MOITA LOPES, 2013), which reach us from various parts of the world, or even from Brazil itself. Given the speed with which information is produced and disseminated, multimodal texts emerge, which bring with them characteristics compatible with the virtual space in which they are produced. In addition to having a high degree of creativity in their composition, multimodal texts, which are, at the same time, oral, written, and imagery, carry traces of other productions found outside the digital realm, promoting empathy, and generating reader identification. For such

characteristics, we consider that these discursive manifestations have potential as a didactic input in Portuguese and foreign language teaching-learning contexts (hereinafter PLE)², as they facilitate learning, humanize the discourse, and promote mechanisms of interculturality and belonging.

In this article, in which we specifically address the teaching of PLE through humanizing experiences in an extensionist configuration project developed in a public university, we present as a didactic resource multimodal texts worked in a group on the social network Facebook, with emphasis on memes (although they are not the used), which are humor productions generated in a virtual environment from everyday themes and colloquial language³. Its use is justified because we consider that students' familiarity with such multimodal texts can facilitate the learning of Portuguese through activities that favor reading and written production in the target language, as well as meaningful and creative communication in the language.

Participants are foreigners from different countries, in a situation of academic and social immersion in the city where the university is located. Our objective is to characterize the multimodal text as a resource for intercultural and humanizing experiences of significant language learning (COSTA VAL, 2004), especially worked in a group on the social network Facebook, as highlighted above. The results suggest that, although it does not have educational purposes, the social network in question proved to be an environment with potential for the humanization of learning, due to its possibilities of interaction, socialization, and communication in the target language, functioning as an interculturalist learning tool, and collaborative online (FINARDI; PORCINO, 2016). In addition, the use of multimodal texts, due to its characteristics, promoted high connectivity and expansion between contents already worked on in classes, and other complementary ones.

² The term “foreign language” is attributed to Portuguese taught as another language, according to SIPLE – International Society of Portuguese as a Foreign Language

³ This article is an adaptation of the conference entitled “The humanizing language in the teaching of PLE with multimodal texts: experiences in social networks in an extension project of a public university”, which composed the roundtable “The teaching of PLE mediated by multimodal texts: reflections didactic-methodological”, during the I International Congress of Portuguese Non-Mother Language (CIPLiNM-UNESP), held by FCLAr-UNESP, on December 4th and 5th, 2019.

The extensionist context

The biggest context for the development of PLE teaching is the Extension Project “Portuguese as a Foreign Language (PLE)”⁴, whose activities began in the first half of 2012, at the Unesp campus in São José do Rio Preto, still as an extension event. At that time, the main objective was to meet the emergency demand of foreign undergraduate and graduate students, who had a primary need to study or continue their studies in Portuguese to communicate in university classes; express themselves in writing and orally in different situations; and socializing in their new spaces of action (academic and personal life). Over time, already registered as an extension project, our work with the PLE began to have a greater reach in terms of target audience, fulfilling its extension task of serving, above all, the external community. We can say that by 2015, most were foreign undergraduate and graduate students from IBILCE/UNESP, when, that year, we offered a special and emergency course to assist twenty-seven Syrian refugees. From 2016 onwards, a balance was established between foreigners from the external and internal communities and, from 2018 onwards, we noticed a predominance of foreigners from the external community, made up especially of Haitian, Syrian, and Venezuelan refugees, most of them with higher education or higher education. high school students, who need the Portuguese language to communicate in social situations and enter the job market.

As for the configuration of the project, in addition to the face-to-face classes offered twice a week (1h40min each), the students had complementary oral and written activities. Currently, these courses continue on a remote basis, with activities remodeled to the context of pandemic distancing. In any case, the PLE project has an extensionist configuration, with the potential to develop: Teaching activities (language courses and preparatory courses for the CELPE-Bras exam); Cultural-linguistic improvement activities (Puxa-Conversa; Cineclubes PLE; Foreigners Choir; thematic mini-courses); Social and humanitarian assistance (Refugees and immigrants in general, in partnership with the Municipal Labor Department, churches, and other community centers); Cultural activities (I and II Intercultural Exhibition of Foreigners of PLE/IBILCE; Recitals by the Foreigners Choir; excursions); Technological, scientific, academic and teacher training activities (improvement courses for PLE teachers; pedagogical meetings; CI guidelines; presentations of works in symposia; book organization;

⁴ Extension project developed with the Dean of University Extension (PROEX) of the São Paulo State University “Júlio de Mesquita Filho” (UNESP), at the Institute of Biosciences, Letters and Exact Sciences (IBILCE), São José do Rio Preto.

creation of a mandatory subject of the Licenciante in Letters course; master's dissertations; website and page on Facebook and Instagram; interviews).

Regarding the objectives, we envision, therefore, contributing to the humanistic training of all those involved, through the integration of the university and social demands (universalization of teaching); to enable teacher training (initial and continuing) for/in PLE, the expansion of the world view and knowledge of teachers and future teachers involved; promote dialogue between languages and cultures, through the practice of a communicative-humanizing approach to teaching PLE; envision the breaking of geographical and ideological boundaries, through deterritorialization processes and consequent reterritorializations (MOTA, 2010, p. 49, our translation); generate research related to teaching and teacher training in PLE, from the perspective of Applied Linguistics (AL); publicize the institution, the city and the region as social and linguistic-cultural centers for foreigners of different origins.

Regarding the Facebook group, of private status, to which only members have access (teachers, foreign students, and the project coordinator), its purpose is the “exchange of information, notices, tasks, photos, and other activities related to the Project of Extension 'Portuguese as a Foreign Language' of IBILCE-UNESP”, as described by the group (see Figure 1), where the use of multimodal texts is common to achieve the described objective. In this way, we seek to establish a climate of spontaneous interaction, generating learning (or reinforcing it) that we believe to be more humanized and meaningful.

Figure 1 – PLE-IBILCE private group homepage



Source: Author's collection

Relevant conceptual reflections

Multimodal or multisemiotic texts are new textual compositions instigated by technology, arising from multiple forms of language (written, oral, visual). The wide presence of imagery and visual elements, mixing writing and image, expands the possibilities of communication and understanding of the text, consisting of both verbal and visual elements (SILVA, 2013). Text, therefore, is defined as all linguistic production that can make sense in a situation of human communication (COSTA VAL, 2004), promoting a meaningful understanding of the language.

Concerning social networks, even though Facebook was not created with educational purposes, it proved, in the case of the PLE Project in question, as an environment with potential for the realization of learning, due to its possibilities of interaction, socialization, and communication in the classroom. target language, functioning as a collaborative learning tool online (FINARDI; PORCINO, 2016). As already mentioned, the uses of multimodal texts, due to their characteristics, promoted an important relationship between contents already worked on in class and other complementary ones, allowing the expansion of their uses and their understanding. Other pedagogical and humanizing advantages of Facebook perceived in the interactions were the reduction of power relations between teacher and students, the replacement of formal management systems (increased autonomy), in addition to new, less systematized ways of dealing with knowledge. We actually have a (co)construction of knowledge, through participatory learning, shared authority and the expansion of the face-to-face model in a digital environment (ALEGRETTI *et al.*, 2012).

The use of Facebook in language learning can also align with the assumptions of Vygotsky's sociocultural theory (1999), for whom human development and the construction of knowledge and identities take place through the mediation of thought and language. Concerning PLE learning in focus, the aforementioned social network favors the specific use of the selected language for communication, promoting more meaningful and authentic constructions of the language-culture. Thus, lexical and syntactic structures also become more appropriate to the context and to the production of a more understandable input in the target language, promoting the activation of positive emotional factors, such as empathy, strengthening relationships between participants, self-confidence and motivation to learn and use/live the language. The ongoing interaction, promoted by the page administrators, in this case the coordinator and teachers of the extension project, helps in the development of communicative competence in the target language (ARAGÃO; DIAS, 2016).

These positive attitudes are reflected in the face-to-face classroom, consequently improving the work carried out and the interactions between speakers of such different languages, as is the case in our multicultural context⁵.

It is important to emphasize that the connection of participants in a social network group (in this case, private) increased their trust among themselves, their willingness to learn and, consequently, to act and show emotions. According to Aragão and Dias (2016), emotional aspects are contagious. Therefore, we can say that a more humanizing language was established through the relationships in the Facebook group, especially promoted by the humor contained in the messages of the memes.

In this sense, despite being the manager of the group, the teacher is not the only one to have a voice in a social network with pedagogical configurations, as in this case. Learners also need to understand and express their views on the heterogeneity of cultures, peoples, languages and languages. The teacher's role becomes that of an articulator of many voices, linguistic and cultural varieties (KFOURI-KANEOYA, 2008), which must appear contextually, sharing with foreign students the language they teach in operation and reflecting with them on the linguistic and cultural variations. cultural differences existing in their country, as well as in the country of origin of these students. In addition, the teacher also assumes himself as an aggregator of cultural identities and a promoter of a humanizing language (MATOS, 2010), through an intercultural perception that values creative communication, minimizes, clarifies, and contextualizes cultural shocks, promoting linguistic cultural competence. Thus, teacher and students begin to observe the positive effects of communication, seeking to humanize worldviews and reorganize multicultural identities, as they see themselves in the perspective of the other (MATOS, 2014).

The PLE teacher, in his role as an interculturalist and humanizing agent, performs several tasks in search of effectively dialogic communication of the group, taking advantage of what the learners already know about the new language, valuing the previous knowledge and educational experience in their languages/countries. of origin and using their mother tongue carefully, to provide adequate and meaningful learning. According to Little (2002), the teacher who teaches his language as a foreigner has the potential to develop a metalinguistic awareness in himself, mainly because he has to think more about his language to teach it to speakers of different languages. Furthermore, it promotes a humanizing basis for the

⁵ Over nine years of activity, the “Portuguese Foreign Language Extension Project (PLE)” has, so far, served foreigners from thirty-four different origins and diverse experiences (personal, professional and language cultural), characterizing it as a multilingual and multicultural context (OLIVEIRA, 2014).

discussion of international questions, prevailing a dialectic between the global and the national/local, the multicultural mediation (FAIRCLOUGH, 2001).

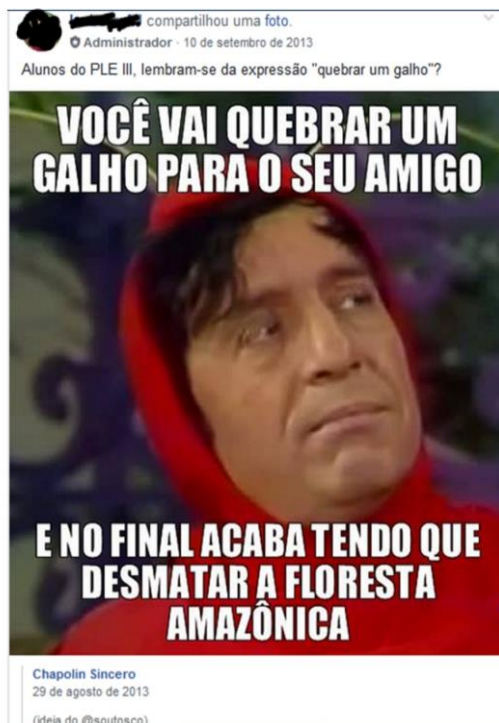
Finally, when we use Facebook as an environment to complement learning and expand interaction, we understand more clearly that language is not a mere instrument to be mastered by the learner in grammatical structures or pre-defined communicative situations. Learning languages is characterized as an intercultural, discursive process, directly related to sociocultural identity, in which an affective dimension underlying the interculturalist perspective in language learning predominates, which constitutes the subjectivity and linguistic-cultural identity of discursive beings (SERANI, 2005). Thus, the foreign language and culture are revealing of the mother's language and culture, and teaching and learning involve observing the effects of communication on the other (MATOS, 2010).

Multimodal texts in PLE: methodological strategies and their effects

As we have pointed out, the multimodal texts have worked, in the PLE classes of the focused project, as a rich resource for complementing learning and humanizing interactions, especially in a social network environment. Next, we present some methodological strategies developed with the purpose of using multimodal texts to illustrate or complement points of the language and culture worked in the classes, as well as their effects to enhance the learning of PLE, on the social network Facebook.

Strategy 1: Use of multimodal texts to illustrate colloquial/slang expressions

Figure 2 – Use of a meme to explain idiom “quebrar um galho”



Source: Author's collection

Figure 3 – Use of movie poster (visual media) to explain movie expression/title “Minha mãe é uma peça”



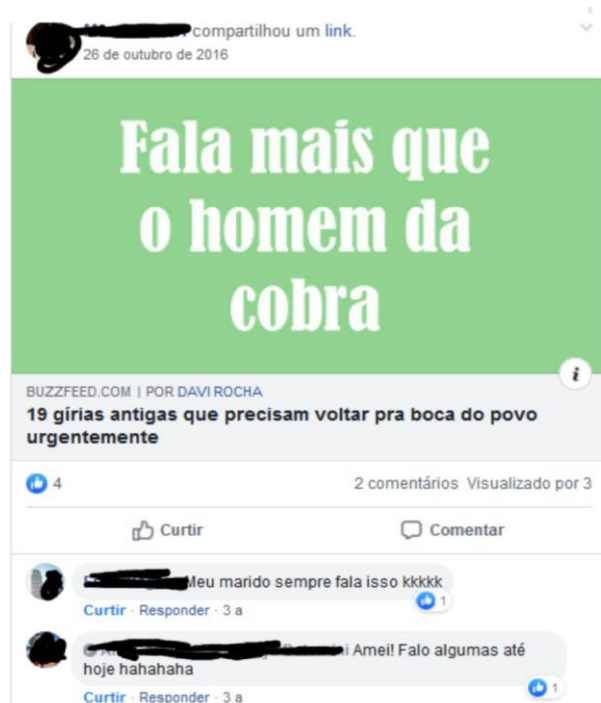
Source: Author's collection

Figure 4 – Comments generated on the Facebook page from working with the movie



Source: Author's collection

Figure 5 – Post used to illustrate the idiomatic expression “fala mais que o homem da cobra”



Source: Author's collection

Strategy 2: Use of multimodal texts to illustrate linguistic variations

Figure 6 – Meme used to illustrate linguistic variation regarding the word “veja” (to see)



Source: Author's collection

Figure 7 – Meme used to illustrate linguistic variation in the characterizations of the Northeastern people of Brazil



Source: Author's collection

Strategy 3: Use of multimodal texts to illustrate phonetics and phonology aspects

Figure 8 – Meme used to illustrate phonetic topics through jokes



Source: Author's collection

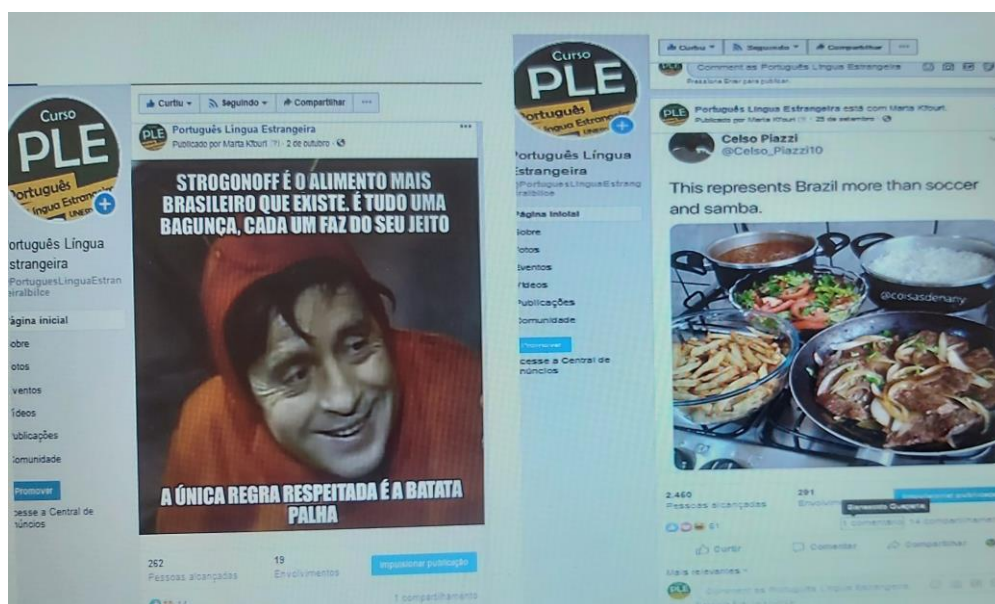
Strategy 4: Use of multimodal texts to illustrate lexical topics

Figure 9 – Use of photos in a post to illustrate fruit lexicon



Source: Author's collection

Figure 10 – Use of photos in a post to illustrate a lexicon about typical dishes



Source: Author's collection

Figure 11 – Use of photos in a post to illustrate the “coxinha”



Source: Author's collection

Strategy 5: Use of multimodal texts to illustrate the use of polite expressions

Figure 12 – Use of memes, illustrations, and comics to illustrate the use of expression of politeness



Source: Author's collection

We can notice in all the figures above the clear reinforcement of the learning of the topics covered in the face-to-face classes, as well as the humanizing and affective involvement of all the participants (administrators/teachers of the group and foreign students) through multimodal resources and the use of an informal language, typical of the social network, however, reinforcing learning and significant interactions among group members. The use of a humanizing language to construct the discourse and involve the learners in the proposal of the posts appears in several moments of the strategies listed, as in “Queridos alunos” and “Abraços” (figure 3), “students of PLE III” (figure 2), as well as the positive comments generated from the posts, almost always associated with the foreigners' personal experiences, such as: “Gostamos muito” (figure 4), “Meu marido sempre fala isso kkk” and “Amei! Falo algumas até hoje hahaha” (figure 5), “Gostei e nunca vou esquecer...boa demais kkk” (figure 8), “Humm... professora, muito gostosa. Lembra-me meu querido país, o Senegal” (figure 9). In figures 11 and 12, we see that the teacher uses the context of the post to, in the first case, reinforce and involve the students in the activity proposed in the classroom as a task (make and take a recipe for coxinha to class) and, in the second, reinforce the use of “obrigado” and “obrigada”. Regarding posts where there are no explicit comments, the use of emojis such as “positive”, indicated by the raised thumb, heart and laughter also denote the positive emotional involvement of the participants around the learning of PLE.

Final considerations

In the context of the PLE extension project presented, we visualize the use of multimodal texts as an essential resource for the resignification of learning, the understanding of the language-culture in focus and the possibilities of intercultural and humanizing teaching, especially in a social network environment such as the Facebook group. The PLE Project is also a fundamental and anticipatory environment in offering space for the formation of students aware of the emancipatory power of communication through languages, in the sense of favoring interculturality, celebrating linguistic-cultural differences and dealing with diversity, above all when it comes to a country with continental dimensions like Brazil. This attitude undoubtedly also favors initial and continuing teacher training in/for the PLE, on a university campus where there is still no such degree, in the sense of leading future teachers to reflect on teaching their language as a foreign language, having as an ally the internet and its resources. In addition, we see that the Project goes beyond the boundaries of an extension work to the local community, reaching the social, political and humanitarian spheres, and breaking borders, in a global context. The PLE Project is a scenario of intercultural education and humanizing training of PLE teachers, envisioning their performance in new post-pandemic contexts, in which technology will be massively present. we visualize that the Project goes beyond the boundaries of an extension work to the local community, reaching the social, political and humanitarian spheres, and breaking borders, in a global context. The PLE Project is a scenario of intercultural education and humanizing training of PLE teachers, envisioning their performance in new post-pandemic contexts, in which technology will be massively present. we visualize that the Project goes beyond the boundaries of an extension work to the local community, reaching the social, political and humanitarian spheres, and breaking borders, in a global context. The PLE Project is a scenario of intercultural education and humanizing training of PLE teachers, envisioning their performance in new post-pandemic contexts, in which technology will be massively present

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