

**PORTUGUESE AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE: INITIAL APPROACHES IN A
MULTICAMPUS CONTEXT**

***PORTUGUÊS LÍNGUA ESTRANGEIRA: PERCURSOS INICIAIS EM CONTEXTO(S)
MULTICAMPUS¹***

***PORTUGUÉS LENGUA EXTRANJERA: CURSOS INICIALES EN CONTEXTO(S)
MULTICAMPUS***

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ABSTRACT: The Portuguese language has gained prominence in the last thirty years, mainly due to the growth and development of training spaces, the rising quantity of publications in the field and the variety of studies focusing on many specific aspects of Portuguese as a Foreign Language (from now on, PLE [Português Língua Estrangeira]). The modern environment of globalization, transnationalization of languages and countries, together with the proposals for the internationalization of Brazilian higher education institutions highlight the need for investment in language teaching and drive a change in the way one sees Portuguese teaching, learning and professional training. Considering the projection of the field, we aim to summarize and analyze the initial approaches in PLE in the context(s) of a multicampus institution, which, despite not offering an academic course focused on PLE, has been contributing to promote the Portuguese language and to train teachers based on teaching experiments both face-to-face or in a virtual environment and investigations, thus putting into practice the dialogue between the university pillars.

KEYWORDS: Portuguese as a Foreign Language. Teacher education. Multicampus Context. University foundations.

RESUMO: *A língua portuguesa tem ganhado destaque nos últimos trinta anos, principalmente com a ampliação de espaços formativos, o aumento de publicações na área e a variedade de estudos que focalizam as especificidades de Português Língua Estrangeira (PLE). Os cenários atuais de globalização, transnacionalização das línguas e países, bem como as propostas de internacionalização das instituições de ensino superior brasileiras evidenciam a necessidade de investimento no ensino de línguas e impulsionam a mudança de olhares para a forma como enxergamos o português, seu ensino-aprendizagem e formação. Considerando a projeção da área, temos como objetivo retomar e analisar percursos iniciais*

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das ações em PLE em contexto(s) de uma instituição multicampus que, apesar de não ter habilitação na área específica, vem contribuindo para a promoção da língua portuguesa e para a formação de professores a partir de experiências docentes e investigativas presenciais e virtuais que colocam em prática o diálogo entre os pilares universitários.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: Português Língua Estrangeira. Formação de professores. Contexto multicampus. Pilares universitários.

RESUMEN: *La lengua portuguesa ha ganado protagonismo en los últimos treinta años, principalmente con la expansión de los espacios de formación, el aumento de publicaciones en el área y la variedad de estudios que se centran en las especificidades del portugués como lengua extranjera (PLE). Los escenarios actuales de globalización, transnacionalización de idiomas y países, así como las propuestas para la internacionalización de las instituciones de educación superior brasileñas destacan la necesidad de invertir en la enseñanza de idiomas e impulsan un cambio de visión a la forma en que vemos el portugués, su enseñanza-aprendizaje y formación. Teniendo en cuenta la proyección del área, pretendemos recuperar y analizar los cursos iniciales de actuación en PLE en el (los) contexto(s) de una institución multicampus, que, a pesar de no contar con titulación en el área específica, ha estado contribuyendo a la promoción de la lengua portuguesa y a la formación del profesorado a partir de experiencias de docencia e investigación presenciales y virtuales que ponen en práctica el diálogo entre los pilares universitarios.*

PALABRAS CLAVE: *Portugués Lengua Extranjera. Formación de profesores. Contexto multicampus. Pilares universitarios.*

Introduction

Faced with the so-called contexts of globalization (KUMARAVADIVELU, 2006), internationalization (DELL'ISOLA, 2014) and transnationalization (ZOPPI-FONTANA, 2009) of languages and countries, there is a need and importance of investing in teaching-learning and teacher initial education in foreign languages.

Starting in the 1960s, according to Bizon and Scaramucci (2021), the area of Portuguese for foreigners has been consolidating with expansions and diversifications in its research scope (no longer centered only on classroom interactions). Thus, in the last thirty years, approximately, we have seen that the Portuguese language has gained prominence on the world stage, is marked by different gestures of linguistic policies, which are driven by political and economic relations between institutions and countries.

Consequently, geopolitical changes and technological advances also contribute to this shift in the focus of studies, since the complexity of contexts generates other social demands and highlights the power and/or importance of language(s) in everyday relationships. Therefore, Portuguese is no longer seen only as a mother tongue and gains other

denominations and meanings: Portuguese as a foreign language, Portuguese as a second language, Portuguese as an additional language, Portuguese for speakers of other languages, Portuguese as a host language, not mother tongue, of inheritance and other terms used today to reflect the multiplicity of factors (cultural, linguistic, political, and social) that permeate communicative relationships and interactions.

Considering the relevance of the process of consolidation of an area on the rise, Portuguese as a Foreign Language (hereinafter PLE), we understand how fundamental it is to resume important discursive events that mark the place of the Portuguese language in the proposals for university internationalization intended by a Brazilian higher education institution (excerpt investigation). In other words, to understand the space we occupy today, plan future decision-making and promote new studies, it is essential to analyze the historical and discursive process of implementing the first actions in PLE of a university institution.

Thus, we aim to record, in this article, initial paths of the PLE implementation process in the context of a multicampus higher education institution, UNESP, highlighting the importance of extension actions that mark the pioneering of initiatives signaled as gestures of institutionalization of the area in three campuses located in different cities in the interior of São Paulo: Faculty of Sciences and Letters – Campus of Araraquara (FCLAr), Faculty of Sciences and Letters – Campus of Assis (FCLAs) and Institute of Biosciences, Letters and Exact Sciences – Campus of São José do Rio Black (IBILCE).

The present study is a deepening of discussions developed during the master's research, based on the reading of publications that deal with the subject (articles and academic works), analysis of Reports of Extension Projects on PLE available on the Portal da Pro-Rector of University Extension and Culture (PROEX), between 2013 and 2019; in addition to audiovisual recordings transcribed from the opening table of the I International Congress of Portuguese Non-Mother Language (CIPLíNM), which brought together, in December 2019, at the Araraquara Campus, teachers from the three units where there is education in Letters and who coordinate or guide actions in Portuguese as a foreign language.

The work is organized in three moments. In the first one, we propose a historical recovery of some events that mark the emergence of the area in the national context. In a second moment, we focus on the initial paths of actions in PLE in the three campuses of the aforementioned university. In the third, we outline some considerations that take up important topics and highlight the pioneering spirit that occurs in face-to-face and virtual environments in dialogue with the pillars of the university.

Courses in PLE: some landmarks

As Almeida Filho (2012) points out, although the professional self-perception of the PLE area is still recent (as a specialty), language teaching in Brazil has a long history, given that in the 16th century (colonial period) both Portuguese and Latin were taught as foreign languages to native peoples.

Since then, for many years, we have seen the Portuguese language only in the context of the mother tongue, largely crossed by identity and national construction. Consequently, language teaching focused only on classical and/or on English and French (examples of modern languages with significant cultural and social prestige).

Gradually, as we know, some important emergency movements (in the sense of urgent and necessary) are evidenced for the constitution of a specialty in the country. Rocha (2019, p. 108-110, our translation), based on Franca (1952) and Almeida Filho (2011), cites some of the key milestones of this journey in a chronological perspective, which we briefly comment on with additional readings and references by Bizon and Scaramucci (2021, p. 91-93, our translation).

In 1957, we have the publication of the first textbook of PLE entitled *The teaching of Portuguese for foreigners*, authored by Mercedes Marchant. In the 1960s, university courses in Portuguese as a Foreign Language were created in the United States and the publication, with the participation of Francisco Gomes de Matos and Dinah Silveira de Queiroz, of the book *Modern Portuguese* (1966).

In the 1970s, PLE courses were created and offered at the University of São Paulo (USP) and the State University of Campinas (Unicamp) – among other universities –, enabling the creation of teaching materials in these spaces and allowing, through the first experiences, reflections, and theories about the area under construction. Thus, important research professors are hired for Unicamp's faculty, including Prof. Dr. José Carlos Paes de Almeida Filho.

With the Communicational movement newly arrived in Brazil, a didactic series in PLE (called Brazilian Portuguese for foreigners) was published in 1978, authored by Francisco Gomes de Matos (Yázigi Center for Applied Linguistics).

In the 80s, we have the publication of the first articles, under the guidance of Professor Almeida Filho. Then, the hiring of Prof. Dr. Matilde Virginia Ricardi Scaramucci (at that time with a master's degree) for the composition of professors at Unicamp, more specifically to work in the teaching and research of English as a foreign language. In the following years,

Professor Matilde Scaramucci, invited by Professor Almeida Filho, began to work in the area of PLE, participating in a project to create a proficiency test for foreigners to be used at the university, an evaluation that would give rise to the Certificate of Proficiency in the Portuguese Language for Foreigners (Celpe-Bras), according to Bizon and Scaramucci (2021, p. 92-93, our translation).

The following decade will be interpreted as the so-called “boom” of Portuguese as a foreign language, marked by different gestures of linguistic policies, which are related to the foundation, in 1992, of the International Society of Portuguese as a Foreign Language (SIPLE); the elaboration and first application of Celpe-Bras (in 1993 and 1998, respectively); the creation, in 1998, of the first Degree in the area, entitled Brazilian Portuguese as a Second Language, at the University of Brasília (UnB); and the implementation of several courses for teacher education in universities in Argentina (ROCHA, 2019, p. 112, our translation).

During the 2000s, three other undergraduate courses were created and implemented in Brazil: from 2005, the Qualification in Portuguese as a Foreign Language, at the Federal University of Bahia (UFBA); in 2015, the Degree in Languages Spanish and Portuguese as Foreign Languages, at the Federal University of Latin American Integration (UNILA); and, in 2017, the Qualification in Portuguese as a Second and Foreign Language (L2/FL), at Unicamp.

Currently, there are many events, research and publications developed and/or under development in Brazil and abroad; however, the number of qualifications in the area remains low in Brazil. Despite this, we cannot fail to point out that there are other actions put into practice, dialoguing with the so-called academic tripod (teaching, research, and extension) of Brazilian higher education institutions (HEIs) and that also collaborate for the promotion and diffusion of the language, as well as for the education of teachers in PLE.

According to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Brazil (MRE), in the publication of the Panorama of Brazil's contribution to the diffusion of Portuguese (2021, p. 169, our translation), “[...] university extension can be considered a founding element of the area of PLE/PLA in Brazilian HEIs, being until today the most consolidated space in terms of teaching Portuguese to speakers of other languages”. Thus, the first actions take place through the offering of courses that dialogue with larger policies concerning the discourse of internationalization.

In a large country like Brazil, there are distinctive elements that determine the emergence of the area depending on the context in which the HEIs are inserted (extension, undergraduate, and graduate): “a) offer of PLE/PLA courses; b) offer of courses for PLE/PLA

teachers; c) development of research in PLE/PLA and d) foundation of PLE/PLA Institutes, Programs, Nuclei or Groups” (MRE, 2021, p. 169, our translation).

Thus, from now on, we direct the observations to the context(s) of a multicampus institution.

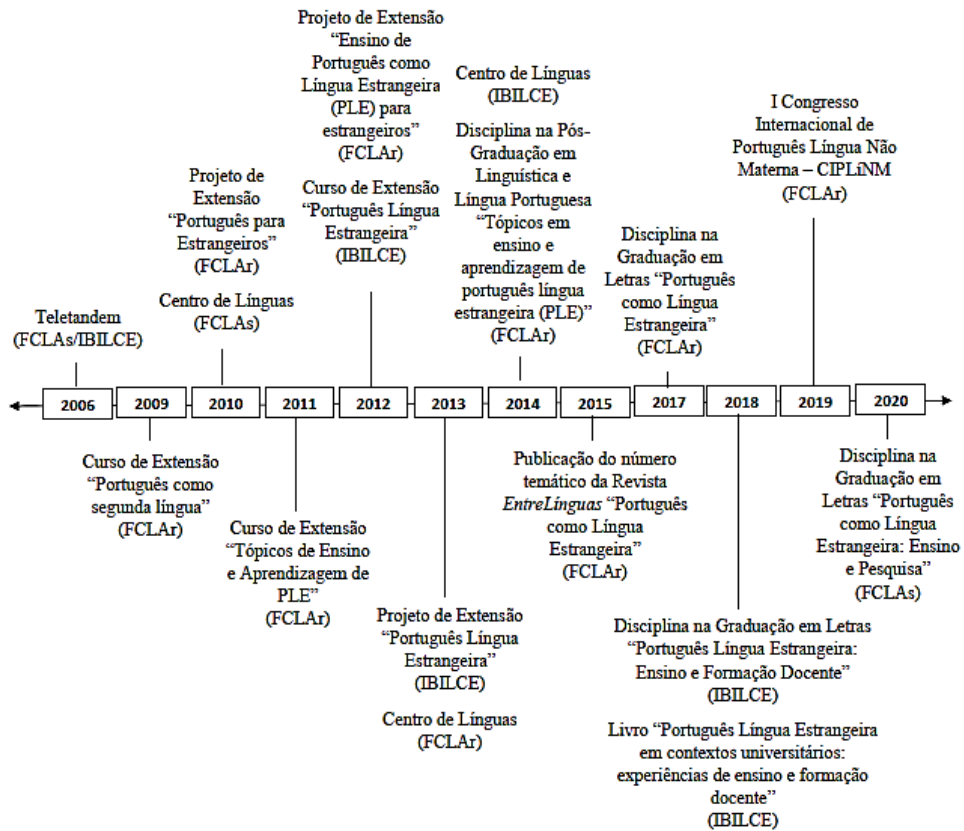
Pathways in PLE: an institution, different contexts

Considering the specificity(s) of the PLE implementation process in the different HEIs, we focus in this work on the initial course of the area in a multicampus higher education institution, UNESP, which, despite not offering a specific qualification in the area, develops actions that contribute to the promotion and diffusion of the language, as well as to the initial education of teachers, production of research and publication of scientific works in PLE.

The complexity of the university environment is precisely related to its organization and constitution. It is a public higher education institution made up of 34 campuses located in 24 cities in the State of São Paulo, where there is educating in Letters performance, and coordination of actions in PLE in three of its units located in the interior of the State: Faculdade of Sciences and Letters – Araraquara Campus (FCLAr), Faculty of Sciences and Letters – Assis Campus (FCLAs) and Institute of Biosciences, Letters and Exact Sciences – São José do Rio Preto Campus (IBILCE).

To describe and analyze how the process of implementing Portuguese as a foreign language takes place in the aforementioned context(s), we start from the infographic organized by Severino (2020, p. 125, our translation) in which he chronologically places important institutional milestones on PLE at UNESP:

Figure 1 – Timeline: institutional frameworks in PLE



Source: Severino (2020, p. 125)

When viewing Figure 1, we notice that the starting point for discussions and practices in Portuguese as a foreign language at the institution is quite recent, especially if we compare it to the national context, in which the first courses are offered in the 60s.

The pioneering action in the area takes place from the research project *Teletandem Brasil: foreign languages for all*, developed between 2006 and 2010 on the campuses of Assis and São José do Rio Preto, financed by the Fundação de Apoio à Pesquisa do Estado de São Paulo (FAPESP) from 2007.

According to Telles (2015, p. 604, our translation), the term “Teletandem” is based on the telecollaboration modality for technology-mediated foreign language learning; that is, it is a virtual, collaborative and autonomous context for foreign language learning, combining audio, video, and written communication resources, in which students work together to teach/learn by interacting and helping in their proficient languages.

According to MRE (2021, p. 329, our translation), the telecollaborative proposal arises from the face-to-face tandem experience experienced by researchers Maria Luísa Vassallo (Italian and Italian reader) and João Antônio Telles (Brazilian and professor at the Department

of Didactics at UNESP/Assis – FCLAs). Such an approach has existed since the 1960s in Europe, having as guiding principles: “the separation of languages, reciprocity, and autonomy” (cf. BRAMMERTS, 1996 apud MRE, 2021, p. 329, our translation). Commonly, the idea of “tandem” is associated with the metaphor of the bicycle for two people, in the sense that learning happens together (sharing knowledge, making decisions, and helping the partner to make the process happen).

Fernandes and Telles (2015, p. 264, our translation) emphasize that the Teletandem “[...] constitutes an innovative context for dealing with issues related to the professional educating of future language teachers”; in addition, they also highlight the possibility of inserting technologies in the course of these teachers even during their graduation in Letters.

When we refer to the relationship between Teletandem and PLE, we can emphasize the pioneering spirit of the project, given its contribution to the promotion, dissemination and practice of and in Portuguese. For the first time at the institution, Portuguese is no longer seen only as a mother tongue (LM). The principles proposed by the project allow, at this first moment, important changes and reflections on the relationship that undergraduates in Letters and teachers in initial formation have with their language (now also perceived as foreign).

Currently, the expressiveness of its actions is revealed by the insertion of an exclusive entry on Teletandem in the work *Panorama of Brazil's contribution to the diffusion of Portuguese* (MRE, 2021, p. 329-336, our translation), in addition to expanding its operations with institutional partnerships between Brazilian and foreign HEIs, registering an increase in research and publications that link collaborative teaching and learning to Portuguese as a foreign language and the promotion of Brazilian culture(s) beyond territorial limits.

Returning to the observations on the timeline of milestones in PLE at that institution, we see that in 2009 an extension course entitled “Portuguese as a second language” began at the Araraquara Campus (FCLAr). According to Martins (2011), with the coordination and guidance of Professor Cássia Regina Coutinho Sossolote, from the Didactics Department, the extension course was linked to the disciplines of Mother Tongue Teaching Practice and focused on exchange students from African countries. who were in Brazil through international agreements and who, enrolled in the Letters course, faced difficulties in specific disciplines of Literature.

Rocha, Evangelista, and Gileno (2016) emphasize that the first actions in PLE at FCLAr arise from the need to meet the demand of foreign students enrolled and covered by the PEC-G program (Student Program – Graduation Agreement, administered by MRE). At that moment, it became necessary to create strategies to insert them into the Brazilian local

and university context; in addition to offering means to improve their knowledge in Portuguese (Brazilian variant) and their respective cultures and literatures. In this way, the first course becomes an extension project the following year (in 2010) and is entitled “Portuguese for Foreigners”, also being coordinated by Professor Cássia Regina Coutinho Sossolote.

In summary, the pioneering actions in Araraquara arise from the emergency (urgency and need) to offer Portuguese language courses to foreign students, to develop teaching materials that address their specificities and to integrate the concept of a foreign language into the formation of students in Letters in this language that, until that moment, it was only understood/perceived as Mother Tongue. We observe, therefore, that the implementation movement arises from practice.

Aligned with practical experiences and the need to think about teacher education from this new perspective, at the end of the same year (2010), taking advantage of the event I Meeting of Licentiate in Letters (ELIL), the institution's professors decided to invite the Professors Almeida Filho (UnB) and Nelson Viana (UFSCar), important researchers and specialists in PLE, to approach and discuss the topic with professors and students from FCLAr/UNESP. For its event, the institution had the financial support of the Postgraduate Program in Linguistics and Portuguese Language.

As a result of the initial reflections, in 2011 there is the promotion of an extension course aimed at undergraduate and graduate students, focusing on the education of future teachers to work in the teaching and learning of Portuguese as a foreign language. The extension course, entitled “Tópicos de Ensino e Aprendizagem de PLE”, was organized in partnership with two departments of the Letters course, the Department of Linguistics and the Department of Modern Letters, with the coordination of Professors Marina Célia Mendonça, Nildicéia Aparecida Rocha and Maria Cristina Reckziegel Guedes Evangelista. The success of the proposal and its acceptance by the academic community influenced the creation and expansion of other actions in the area, such as courses, workshops and events, including PLE workshops for foreigners who were at the institution that year.

With the non-continuity of the first extension project (2010), at FCLAr, and the maintenance of the demand for service to foreign students arising from the increase in partnerships with institutions abroad, a second extension project was created in 2012, which started to receive institutional support from 2013 with its institutionalization and the receipt of scholarships (via PROEX) so that students of the Letters course could act as teachers of Portuguese language courses for foreigners and complement their education.

This project gains autonomy and constitutes a coordination and guidance network for extension actions in PLE in the Araraquara Campus, bringing together professors, undergraduate and graduate students to promote courses, events, research and education in the area. Under the coordination of Professors Nildicéia Aparecida Rocha and Rosangela Sanches da Silveira Gileno, from the Departments of Modern Arts and Didactics respectively, the project takes place from 2012 to 2017, being gradually linked and later incorporated into the University's Language Center (formerly known as CEL and now as CLDP – Center for Languages and Teacher Education⁴).

When we return to the observations in Figure 1, we realize that the beginning of the activities of the University's Language Centers does not happen in the same period in the three studied campuses; therefore, their link with PLE shares also does not occur in the same way, depending on the production conditions in which they are inserted. In any case, the link between teaching-learning actions and training in foreign languages from the same extension project/action, such as the Language Center, can be perceived as a political-institutional strategy of unification, articulation, and interrelationship. For the institutionalization of foreign languages included in the university's internationalization proposal, a moment in which FLs gain a prominent and highly relevant place.

Thus, at the Assis campus (FCLAs), the Language Center began in 2010 and has since been linked to Portuguese as a foreign language, as well as Teletandem, as highlighted in the works of Ramos (2012; 2013).

In Araraquara (FCLAr), as we mentioned, the PLE extension project is gradually incorporated into the Language Center, between 2013 and 2014; when in 2017, the project, which was previously autonomous, becomes part of the unit's CLDP as a strategy to remain institutionally linked and to raise support and investment for its permanence, from a process of restructuring the university's extension actions, as says Professor Nildicéia Aparecida Rocha in her speech at the opening table of the CIPLiNM event (ROCHA, 2020 apud SEVERINO, 2020, p. 97, our translation).

At the São José do Rio Preto campus (IBILCE), the Language Center was created a little later, in 2014. And according to Tavares Pinto and Kfoury-Kaneoya (2015), Portuguese as a foreign language has been part of the list of languages offered for extension courses, along with English, French, and Italian.

⁴Although we recognize the changes that have taken place in structuring and naming, in this work we will refer to the Language Center - both for the first moment (CEL) and for the second moment (CLDP).

However, IBILCE's PLE actions were not limited to correspondence with the Teletandem and the proposals of the Language Center, since in 2012 there was the creation of an extension course entitled "Portuguese as a Foreign Language" - which becomes an extension project in 2013 (with the support of PROEX). Both under the coordination and guidance of Professor Marta Lúcia Cabrera Kfoury Kaneoya, from the Department of Education.

According to the project's website (<https://pleibilce.wixsite.com/curso>), the first PLE course was born out of a partnership between the Department of Education and the Food Engineering course at IBILCE to meet the need to teach Portuguese language to undergraduate and graduate students who arrived at the university campus; thus, it would be a strategy to insert this public in the linguistic, cultural, and social contexts of the university, the city and the country. Gradually, the actions are expanded to serve not only foreigners from the academic community but also from the city; promoting, consequently, varied extracurricular activities.

The timeline allows us to expand the discussions beyond the proposals for courses and extension actions. As a gesture of institutionalization of the area, the insertion of new disciplines in the undergraduate courses in Letters (of the three campuses) and in the postgraduate courses in Linguistics and Portuguese Language (from FCLAr) stands out.

That said, the pioneering discipline in the area began in 2014 in the postgraduate course of Araraquara, being entitled "Topics in teaching and learning Portuguese as a foreign language (PLE)", under the responsibility of Professor Nildicéia Aparecida Rocha. Also, at FCLAr, the discipline "Portuguese as a Foreign Language" is offered for the first time in 2017, inserted in the curriculum of the undergraduate degree in Letters as an elective and linked to the Department of Linguistics of the same campus, taught by substitute professors (initially with no experience in the area, since that the institution did not open competition for the hiring of a specialist professor). Although the first teachers did not have in-depth knowledge about PLE, from the beginning there was the establishment of communication between the members of the extension project (teachers and students who already worked in partnership with the Language Center in the area of PLE) and the teachers who assumed the discipline.

At the São José do Rio Preto Campus, the compulsory subject "Portuguese as a Foreign Language: Teaching and Teacher Education" is taught for the first time in 2018, after changes in the curriculum of the Letters course, with the coordination and delivery of classes

by Professor Marta Lúcia Cabrera Kfouri Kaneoya, from the Department of Education at IBILCE.

In Assis, the optional course “Portuguese as a Foreign Language: Teaching and Research” was taught for the first time in 2020, after reformulating the Language Arts curriculum at FCLAs. It is linked to the Department of Education, under the responsibility of Professor Karin Adriane Henschel Pobbe Ramos.

To finalize the analysis of some of the main milestones that permeate the history of PLE at UNESP, mainly regarding the process of implantation and institutionalization of the area, we cannot fail to point out the publication of the thematic issue of the *EntreLínguas Magazine* “Português como Língua Estrangeira”, in 2015 (FCLAr), with the participation of important professors-researchers-specialists in the area (such as Professors Almeida Filho and Edleise Mendes, among others). Another publication draws attention in 2018, the book *Portuguese as a Foreign Language in University Contexts*, organized by Professor Marta Lúcia Cabrera Kfouri Kaneoya (IBILCE) and which also brings together articles by prestigious and influential professors in the area (such as those mentioned above).

Finally, the organization and promotion of the I Congress of Portuguese Non-Mother Language (CIPLiNM), by FCLAr/UNESP, between December 4th and 5th, 2019, marks a place of recognition in the area, demonstrating not only the implementation of actions in PLE but also the registration of a movement for its consolidation. The event, attended in person and online internationally, brought together specialists, scholars and professors from Brazilian and foreign HEIs, acting as an important instrument of institutional policy for the promotion and dissemination of the Portuguese language, as well as for the education of professors in the area with the exchange of experiences. It is worth noting that this event took place in December 2020 remotely, with the participation of PLE experts from more than 20 countries (See: <https://ciplinm.wordpress.com/>).

The opening table of the aforementioned event resumes the trajectory of the area at the university, with the presence of professors from the three units that coordinate and develop actions in PLE, namely: Profa. Dr. Nildiceia Aparecida Rocha (FCLAr), Prof. Dr. Karin Adriane Henschel Pobbe Ramos (FCLAs), Profa. Dr. Marta Lúcia Cabrera Kfouri Kaneoya (IBILCE) and Prof. Dr. Douglas Altamiro Consolo (IBILCE). In this way, they share practices and propose integration actions between the different campuses of the same institution, guidance also signaled with the creation of a University Language Policy instituted in 2016, but this is a topic to be discussed in another article.

Some considerations: between face-to-face and virtual

The area of Portuguese as a Foreign Language is part of the studied campuses differently, as we can see in the discussions and analyses discussed here. The actions, for the most part, are divided into two modalities: face-to-face and virtual. The key to understanding the PLE at UNESP involves the virtual context of Teletandem and in-person extension initiatives (comprising courses, projects, workshops and other proposals expanded a posteriori), in addition to research and academic works that focus on, reflect, and theorize the experiences of these contexts.

The idea that permeates the process of implementing Portuguese as a foreign language is linked to the need to meet the demands of the specificities of each campus, as well as the internationalization discourse that transits between the new agreements/partnerships between countries and foreign institutions and the access to training in foreign languages, including Portuguese.

The use of new technologies as a tool for teaching-learning languages reveals the dynamics of current globalization, with the so-called breaking and/or disappearing of borders (cf. KUMARAVADIVELU, 2006). In this sense, Teletandem appeared on the Assis and São José do Rio Preto campuses, in 2006, as the possibility of offering Letters undergraduates the opportunity to practice a foreign language with partners from other countries who also wish to learn Portuguese (in an interactive, collaborative and autonomous), in addition to provoking changes in the way they understand their language.

At FCLAs, the face-to-face context was created from the beginning based on the link with the Language Center and the offer of classes to exchange students, but as the Assis Campus received a relatively smaller number of foreigners due to its location – “far from tourist routes and international trade” (TELLES; VASSALO, 2009, p. 43, our translation), the Teletandem functioned as a more accessible context for the insertion and strengthening of the PLE.

At IBILCE, São José do Rio Preto, the virtual context of Teletandem opened space for the first steps of Portuguese as a foreign language and the significant arrival of foreigners in later years boosted the creation of courses and projects that also focused on the face-to-face modality to meet the needs of demand of foreign students interested in learning Portuguese and the need to insert these exchange students in the university, in the city and in the country. Thus, face-to-face actions are offered both through an autonomous extension project, and through courses promoted by the Campus Language Center, acting concomitantly.

In Araraquara, at FCLAr, as the Teletandem arrived a little later, in 2012, according to the project website (<https://teletandem.wixsite.com/fclar/>), the pioneering actions are not linked to the virtual context, but to the offer of on-site courses and projects to meet the demand of foreign students who arrived at the university. Thus, face-to-face activities gain weight and importance both for the offer of classes and for the preparation of materials and teacher education (undergraduates in Letters and postgraduates in Linguistics and Portuguese Language). The existence of integration between the actions of an autonomous extension project and the Language Center also contributed to the rapid expansion and diversification of activities in the area.

What seems to have in common between the campuses when we talk about PLE, without a doubt, is the expressive link and dialogue with the university pillars (teaching, research and extension). Although they coexist with their respective specificities, initiatives in Portuguese as a foreign language transit between teaching, learning, and reflecting. They start from practice, are investigated, gradually institutionalized, and expanded beyond the walls of the university, leaving signs for consolidation.

Such signs can be verified at present, given the establishment of International Research Networks (IRIs) linked to the Institutional Program for Internationalization (CAPES-PrInt) with initiatives coordinated by professors Karin Adriane Henschel Pobbe Ramos and Nildicéia Aparecida Rocha, on the campuses of Assis⁵ and Araraquara⁶ (respectively). The two RPIs have contributed to the continuity and expansion of actions in PLE, from the establishment of partnerships with HEIs in other countries, namely: Germany, Spain, France, United States, Mexico, and Portugal.

The record of the work performed gains prominence and expansion through the increase of studies and publications in the area. The organization and publication of the book *Portuguese as a Foreign Language and its Interfaces* (ROCHA; GILENO, 2021), as well as the launch of this Special Dossier of *EntreLínguas Magazine* on Portuguese Non-Mother Language (in the same year), illustrate the quality of the actions and the commitment to the area.

⁵International Research Network entitled “Diffusion of Language, Culture and Literature in the Context of Telecollaboration”, coordinated by Prof. Dr. Karin Adriane Henschel Pobbe Ramos (UNESP/FCLAs) – Assis.

⁶International Research Network entitled “Teaching and learning Portuguese as a Foreign Language and Spanish as a Foreign Language: Interfaces (EAPLE)”, coordinated by Professor Dr. Nildicéia Aparecida Rocha (UNESP/FCLAr) – Araraquara.

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