

PROOFREADING AND REWRITING TEXTS IN THE ACQUISITION OF
COMMUNICATIVE COMPETENCE IN WRITING IN PORTUGUESE AS A
SECOND LANGUAGE

*REVISÃO E REESCRITA DE TEXTOS NA AQUISIÇÃO DA COMPETÊNCIA
COMUNICATIVA ESCRITA EM PLNM*

*REVISIÓN Y REESCRITURA DE TEXTOS EN LA ADQUISICIÓN DE LA
COMPETENCIA COMUNICATIVA ESCRITA EN PORTUGUÉS COMO LENGUA
EXTRANJERA*



Liliane SANTOS¹
e-mail: liliane.santos@univ-lille.fr

How to reference this paper:

SANTOS, L. Proofreading and rewriting texts in the acquisition of communicative competence in writing in Portuguese as a second language. **Rev. EntreLinguas**, Araraquara, v. 9, n. esp. 1, e023023, 2023. e-ISSN: 2447-3529. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.29051/el.v9iesp.1.18505>



| Submitted: 10/07/2023
| Revisions required: 22/09/2023
| Approved: 16/10/2023
| Published: 20/11/2023

Editor: Prof. Dr. Rosangela Sanches da Silveira Gileno
Deputy Executive Editor: Prof. Dr. José Anderson Santos Cruz

¹ University of Lille (ULille), Villeneuve d'Ascq – France. Associate Professor, Department of Roman, Slavic, and Oriental Studies. Coordinator of the Master's Degree in Lusophone Studies at the University of Lille – France. Doctoral degree in Language Sciences.

ABSTRACT: With special attention to the activities of review and rewriting, this paper presents some observations on the acquisition of communicative competence in writing by a group of students from a two-course Portuguese undergraduate program at the University of Lille in France. The project-based learning methodology is employed to address the broad diversity of the context in question and the considerable heterogeneity of the group with which the study is being conducted. This is achieved through a protocol that stipulates the development of individual projects by students throughout the academic semester.

KEYWORDS: Portuguese as a Second Language. Communicative Competence in Writing. Proofreading. Rewriting.

RESUMO: *Com uma atenção especial para as atividades de revisão e de reescrita, é apresentado, neste trabalho, algumas observações sobre a aquisição da competência comunicativa escrita por um grupo de alunos de uma disciplina de dois cursos de graduação em Português da Universidade de Lille, na França. Para atender à ampla diversidade do contexto em questão e à considerável heterogeneidade do grupo com o qual o trabalho está sendo conduzido, recorre-se à metodologia de aprendizagem por projetos. Isso ocorre por meio de um protocolo que estipula o desenvolvimento de projetos individuais pelos alunos ao longo do semestre letivo.*

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: *PLNM. Competência comunicativa escrita. Revisão. Reescrita.*

RESUMEN: *Con especial atención a las actividades de revisión y reescritura, en este trabajo presentamos algunas observaciones sobre la adquisición de la competencia comunicativa escrita por parte de un grupo de estudiantes de dos cursos de la licenciatura de Portugués en la Universidad de Lille, en Francia. Para responder a la gran diversidad de nuestro contexto y a la gran heterogeneidad del grupo con el que trabajamos, recurrimos al aprendizaje basado en proyectos, siguiendo un protocolo según el cual los estudiantes desarrollan proyectos individuales durante el semestre lectivo.*

PALABRAS CLAVE: *Portugués como Lengua Extranjera. Competencia comunicativa escrita. Revisión. Reescritura.*

Introduction

This article is part of an ongoing reflection on the acquisition of written competence in Portuguese as a Non-Native Language, a reflection that we initiated several years ago (see, for example, SANTOS, 2010a, 2010b, 2011a, 2011b). It is characterized as a movement in which we seek to reflect on the work of students and the practice of the teacher.

Here, we present the work we have been developing in the *Grammar and Written Expression* (GEE) course, in the 2nd year of two Portuguese undergraduate programs at the University of Lille (ULille), in France. Considering that our specific conditions largely explain the implementation of our project, we begin this work by describing our context. First, the broader context of Portuguese teaching in the French university and at ULille, and then the specificities of our context, characterized simultaneously by diversity in terms of our students, the courses we teach, the number of native languages (LM) present in class, the heterogeneity of the levels of proficiency in the Portuguese Language (LP) among students, and a limited hourly volume.

Next, we present the response we offer to our working conditions, which includes the use of distinct materials and the implementation of personalized assessments within the scope of project-based learning (PBL). This occurs through individual projects developed by students throughout the academic semester. After presenting our conception of **grammatical competence** and **written competence**, both as parts of more general competence and **communicative competence**, we present the three phases in which we divide the **writing production**: *planning, drafting, and revision*. We then elaborate on our work protocol and the tools provided to assist in revising and correcting texts intended for students. Finally, we present examples and provide observations on the students' performance, explaining why our protocol requires the submission of a final version of the texts, which does not necessarily need to be definitive.

In our concluding remarks, we emphasize the *conditions for text production* and the student's *prior knowledge* as two underlying elements in our exposition, which are crucial for the development of the ability to produce meaningful writing. Lastly, we offer a brief reflection on our work's future directions, considering the recent launch of generative artificial intelligence resources.

The teaching of Portuguese at the French University and the University of Lille

As indicated above, the work presented here is being developed in a university context in France. In the French university system, Portuguese is integrated into the departments and faculties of foreign languages (LE), meaning it is part of units that do not include French, which constitutes a separate unit. Portuguese can be a major discipline (equivalent to a course) or an elective (included in the curriculum of another course as an option)². In addition to these possibilities, Portuguese can also be offered as a separate course, the *Diploma Universitaire de Formation en Langues* (University Diploma in Language Training), or DUFL, which is exclusively for beginners, open to the community, requires separate registration, and spans three years of training at a pace of 2 hours per week per semester, in 12-week semesters (equivalent to the usual duration of an academic semester for courses in literature, languages, and humanities in general). Typically, DUFL students and elective discipline students are grouped together in the same classes, organized according to levels of the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages* (CEFR; see CONSELHO DA EUROPA, 2001).

Both in the undergraduate (*licence*), lasting three years, and in the master's (*master*), two years, and doctoral (*doctorat*), three years, programs, Portuguese can be offered in two specializations (FRANÇA; LIMA-PEREIRA; MEIRELES, 2022; NOGUEIRA FRANÇOIS; SANTOS, 2015)³:

- Foreign Languages, Literature, and Cultures⁴ (*Langues, Littératures et Civilisations Étrangères et Régionales* – LLCER), focusing on literature, translation, culture, language/grammar, and possibly linguistics;
- Applied Foreign Language (*Langues Étrangères Appliquées* – LEA). Professionalizing, focused on two or three foreign languages, with English as a

² As a result of the signing of the *Bologna Declaration* in 1999, which established the European Higher Education Area, the French government mandated the inclusion of an option in foreign languages (LE) for all undergraduate courses.

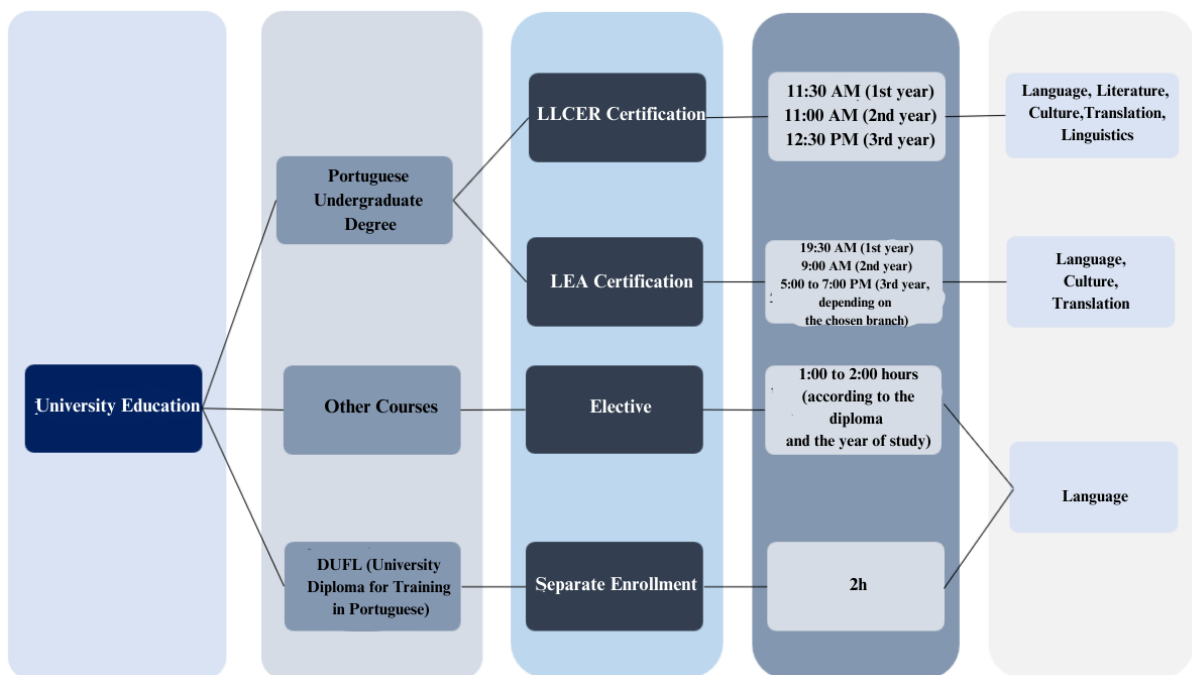
³ According to França, Lima-Pereira, and Meireles (2022, p. 280), fifteen French universities offer at least one of the two specializations in Portuguese.

⁴ Although aware of the imperfect nature of this solution, in this work – as in others – we translate "*civilisation*" as "culture," considering it to be the Portuguese term that closest aligns with the French notion. As Armando (1989, p. 318) notes regarding the discipline of Brazilian Civilization, "the inclusion of this discipline in French university curricula (...) denotes a relevant (...) conception: that the knowledge of the language is inseparable from the culture it encompasses and expresses." Similar to the author, however, we will (...) refrain from entering into the discussion of concepts, avoiding the differentiation between 'culture' and 'civilization.' We also agree with her assertion that it is possible to state that "admitting the difference between the two concepts, the discipline encompasses elements of both," and ultimately, "it is the association of the study of culture with the study of language that underlies the mentioned conception".

mandatory component and a set of "applied" disciplines (international trade, law, marketing, international relations, tourism, depending on the university) that will constitute the specialization or "branch" the student will choose. The disciplines related to language specialization are concentrated in three areas: contemporary culture, language/grammar, and translation.

These details are summarized in Figure 1, which illustrates the structure of the two specializations in the undergraduate program and the DUFL in Portuguese at ULille, indicating the weekly hourly volume of Portuguese language classes⁵.

Figure 1 – Undergraduate and DUFL in Portuguese at ULille



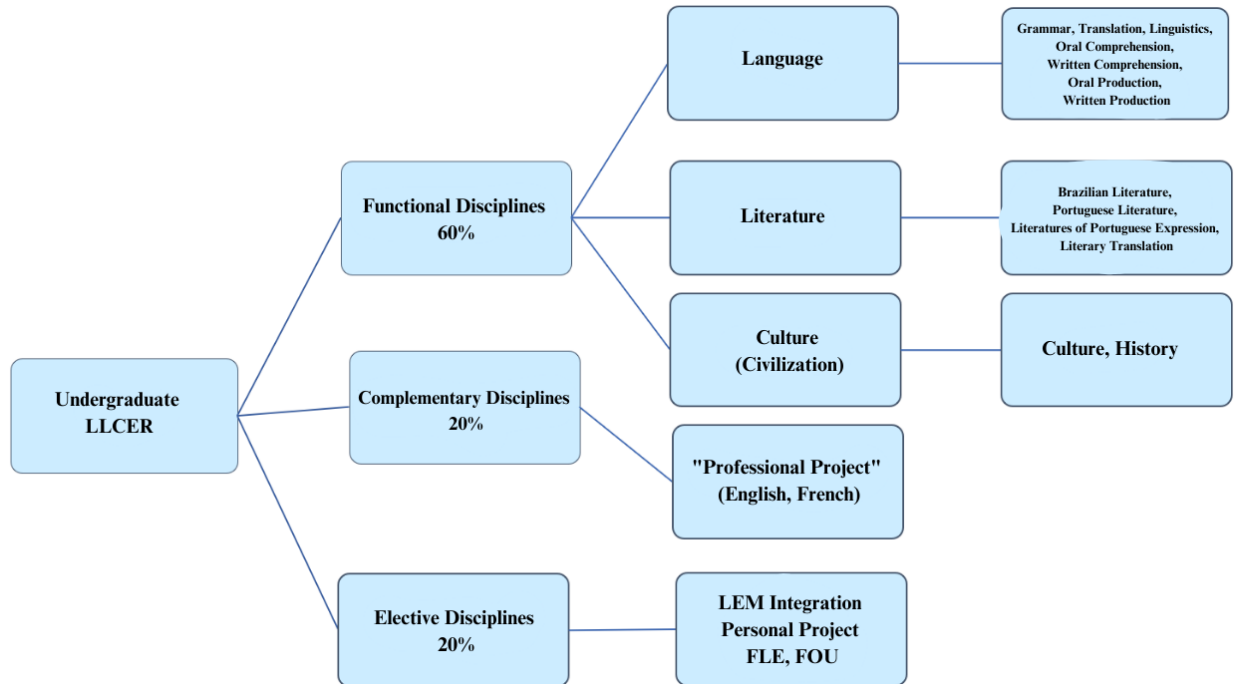
Source: Developed by the author.

As seen, the hourly volumes vary according to the academic program and, at the undergraduate level, depending on the specialization and year of study. This implies that the curriculum structures differ, with undergraduate programs sharing three categories of courses: *core, complementary, and elective*. To illustrate these observations, we provide a concise

⁵ It should be noted that while the overall structure of curriculum grids in French universities, as well as the total hourly volumes of courses, is determined by the Ministry of Higher Education, each university, unit, and program has the autonomy to decide on the concrete implementation of its curriculum within the limits set by the Ministry.

overview of the curriculum structures for undergraduate studies in the two specializations in Portuguese at ULille, as depicted in Figure 2 and Figure 3⁶.

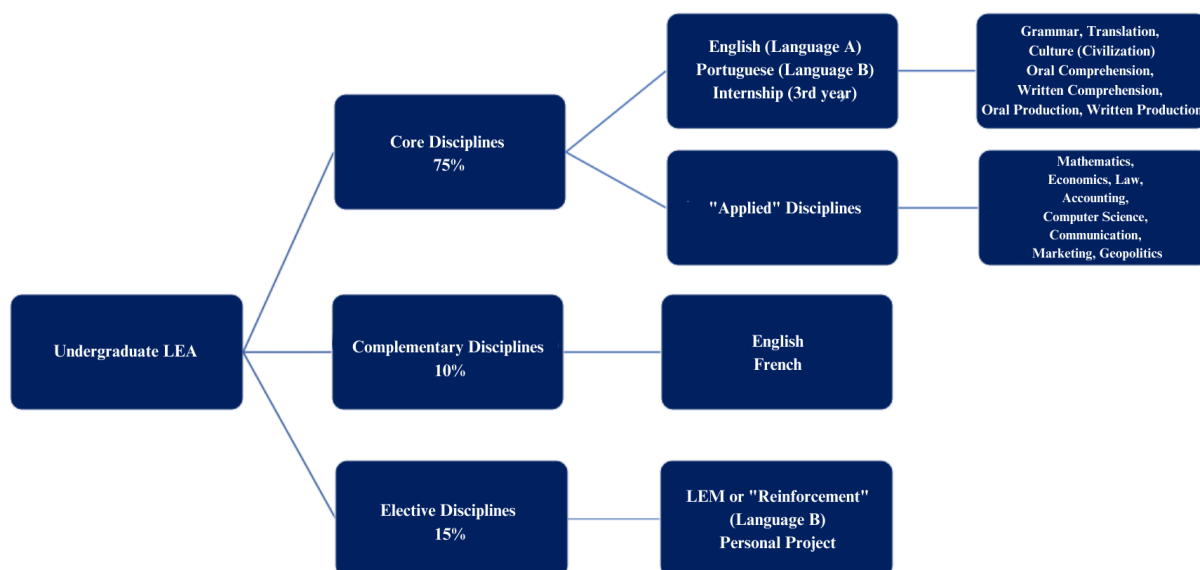
Figure 2 – Summarized curriculum for the Portuguese LLCER specialization: undergraduate, ULille



Source: Developed by the author.

⁶ CE: Reading Comprehension; CO: Listening Comprehension; FLE: French as a Foreign Language; FOU: French for Academic Purposes; LEM: Modern Foreign Language; PE: Writing Production; PO: Oral Production. We will not present the curriculum structures for the five Master's options, as they vary significantly and will not be discussed in this work.

Figure 3 – Summarized curriculum for the Portuguese LEA specialization: undergraduate, ULille



Source: Developed by the author.

It is relevant to highlight that at ULille, as in most French higher education institutions offering both specializations, students from both undergraduate programs are grouped in the so-called "core" subjects (language, grammar, translation, and culture). It is also worth noting that, although the total weekly hours for this set of subjects range from 5 to 12 hours and 30 minutes, this hourly volume is distributed among various specific disciplines that make up the curriculum. For instance, GEE, the discipline in which we have developed the work presented here, has a weekly hourly volume of 2 hours in the 1st and 3rd years and 1 hour in the 2nd year, which is the focus of our attention in this work.

Before introducing our work protocol, it seems pertinent to provide a more detailed description of our context, mainly focusing on our target audience and the courses we offer.

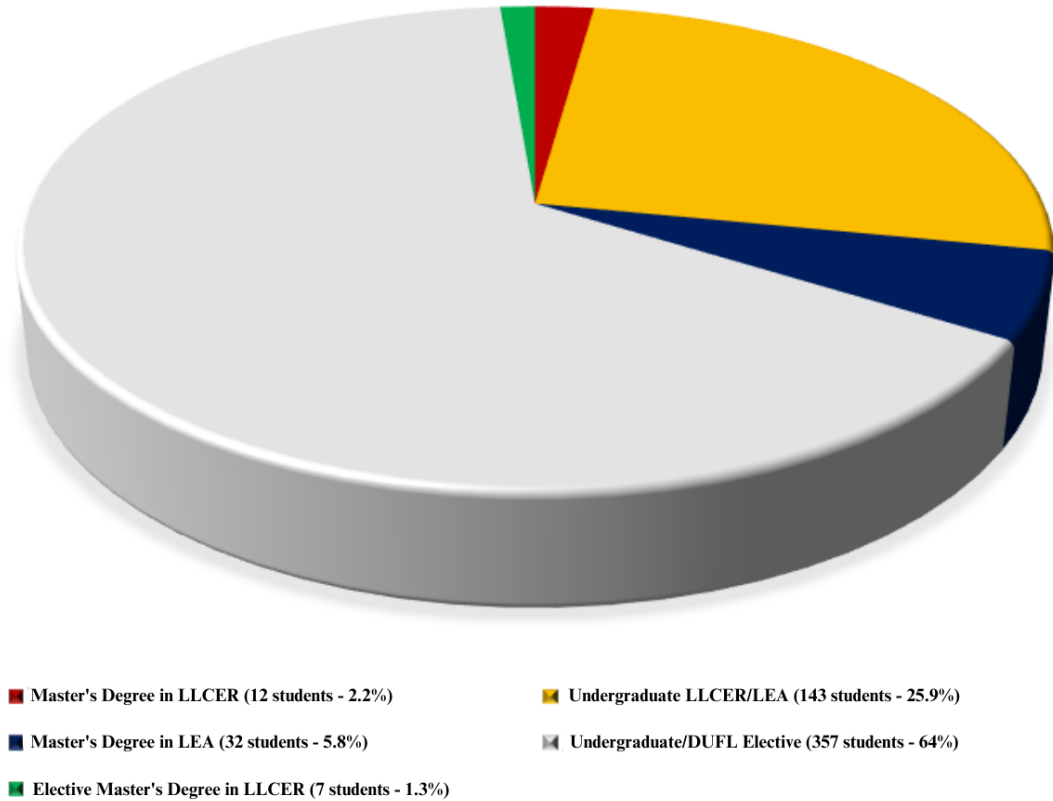
Our Context

The predominant characteristic of our context is diversity, and we will emphasize the three elements that we consider most prominent: the various courses and disciplines that bring together teachers and students, the different native languages spoken by students, and the varied levels of proficiency in the Portuguese Language (LP) among students.

At ULille, Portuguese is offered from undergraduate to doctoral levels in the two specializations described above, in addition to being proposed as an elective for other courses

and as a University Diploma in Foreign Language (DUFL). In the 2021-2022 academic year⁷ our six courses brought together 551 students, whose distribution is presented in Graph 1.

Graph 1 – Distribution of students enrolled in different Portuguese courses and disciplines (ULille, 2021-2022)



Source: Developed by the author.

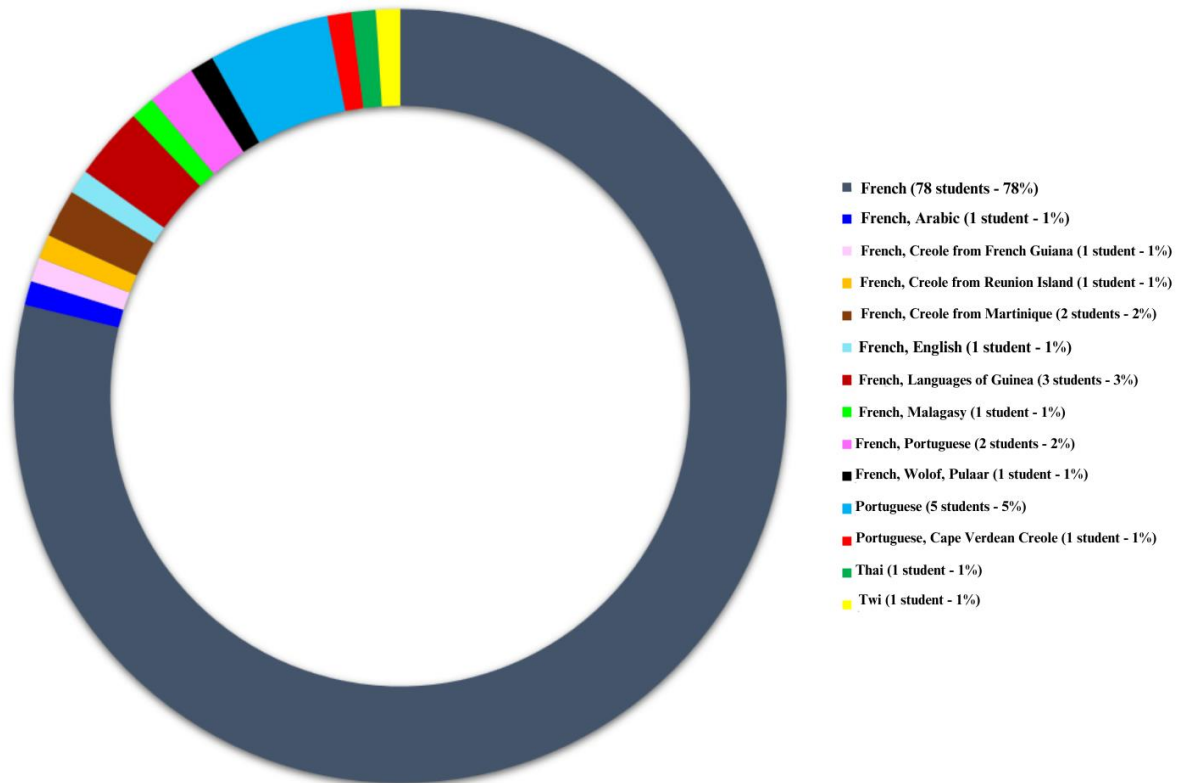
To operate in these six courses, the Portuguese Language department at ULille had, in the academic year 2021-2022, a teaching staff composed of eight instructors (two professor-researchers, a high school teacher assigned to higher education, two contracted professors, one language assistant, and two occasional professors). This teaching staff delivered 1,794 class hours in that academic year across 75 subjects and 90 groups.

The second characteristic element of diversity in our context lies in the fact that our students, coming from different geographical origins, speak other native languages (LM). In the same academic year, we conducted a survey among the students in our two undergraduate courses, one of the questions inquiring about their native language(s). As shown in Graph 2,

⁷ The chart comprises five categories because, on the one hand, we did not have enrollees in the Doctorate program in 2021-2022, and, on the other hand, we grouped those enrolled in the elective course and the DUFL into a single category.

out of 143 undergraduate students, the 99 who responded to the survey spoke 17 different native languages, with fifteen of these students declaring themselves bilingual.

Graph 2 – Native languages spoken by undergraduate students of Portuguese at ULille (2021-2022)



Source: Developed by the author.

The data for the 2nd year indicate eight native languages⁸ and seven bilingual students out of the 42 who responded to the survey.

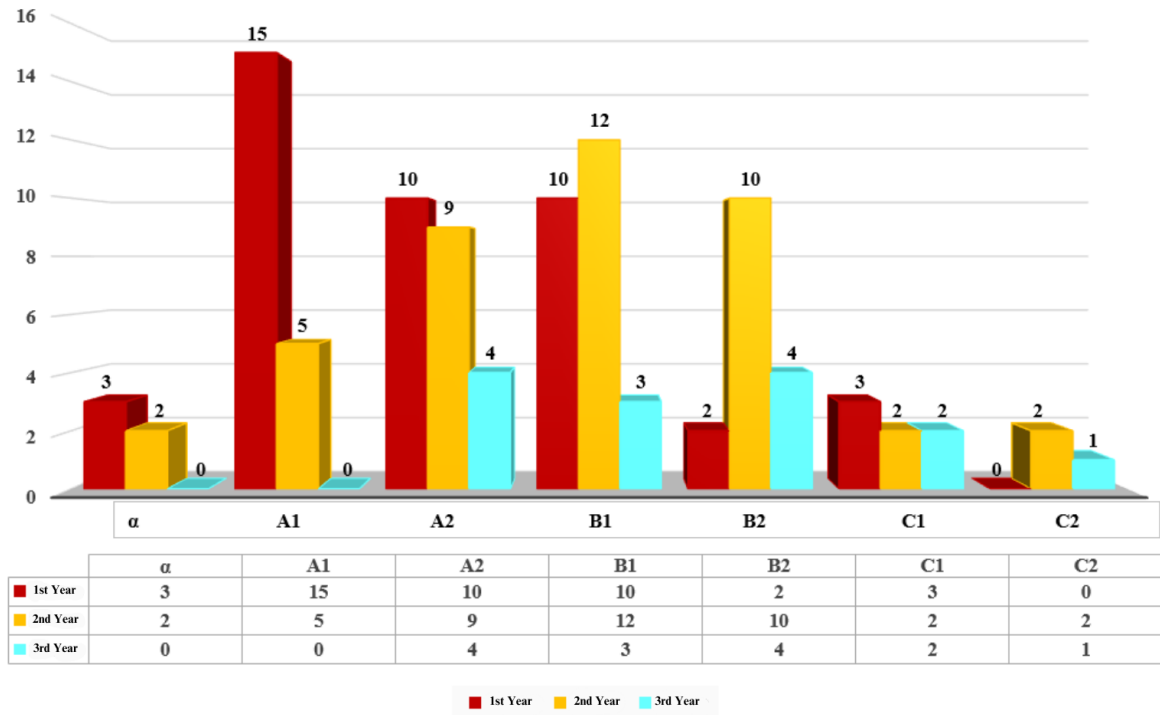
The second aspect indicating the diversity of our audience pertains to the varied proficiency levels in the Portuguese Language (LP). Classified according to the CEFR⁹, the

⁸ French (32 students, 76%); French + Arabic (1 student, 2.4%); French + Guianese Creole (1 student, 2.4%); French + Reunionese Creole (1 student, 2.4%); French + Martinican Creole (1 student, 2.4%); French + English (1 student, 2.4%); French + Portuguese (2 students, 4.8%); Portuguese (2 students, 4.8%); Portuguese + Cape Verdean Creole (1 student, 2.4%).

⁹ To quickly assess the proficiency level in the Portuguese Language of our students, we converted the CEFR self-assessment grid (see UNIÃO EUROPEIA; CONSELHO DA EUROPA, 2004-2020) into an online form, which students fill out at the beginning of the academic year. The results of this self-assessment correspond to the levels presented here. The Pre-A1 level, introduced in the Supplementary *Volume of the CEFR* (EUROPEAN COUNCIL, 2020) and represented by the symbol "α" (alpha), was assigned to students who indicated being "complete beginners" and answered "no" to all competencies described in the self-assessment grid.

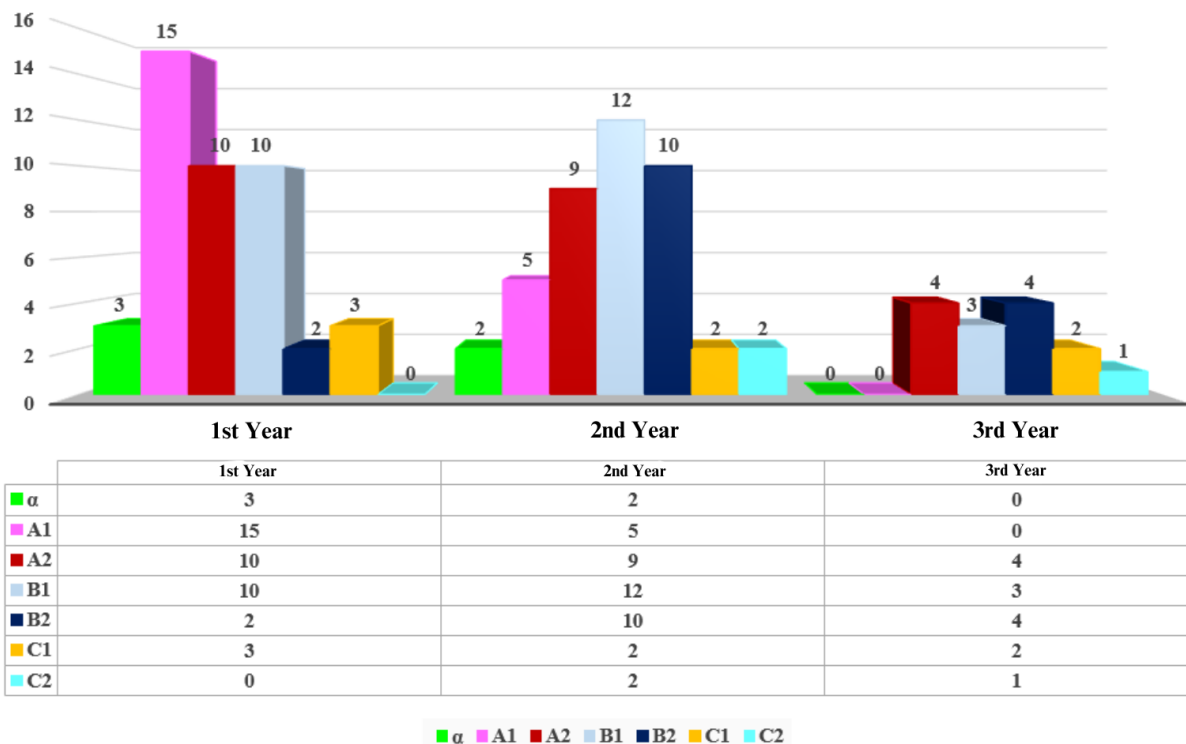
results of the same 99 students who participated in our survey are presented in Graph 3 and Graph 4.

Graph 3 – Proficiency Levels in the Portuguese Language of Undergraduate Students in Portuguese at ULille, according to the CEFR (2021-2022)



Source: Developed by the author.

Graph 4 – Proficiency Levels in the Portuguese Language of Undergraduate Students in Portuguese at ULille, according to the CEFR, by Year of Study (2021-2022)



Source: Developed by the author.

It is noteworthy that, as indicated in Graph 2, five students declared Portuguese as their native language. However, as shown in Graph 4, only three (two from the 2nd year and one from the 3rd year) reached the C2 level upon completing the self-assessment.

As mentioned above, in this article, we describe the work developed in the *Grammar and Written Expression* course in the 2nd year of undergraduate studies. For this work, we annually face the challenge of solving an equation with at least five variables:

- a course that brings together students from two different programs;
- a sizable group of students who speak various native languages;
- an extremely heterogeneous group of students in terms of proficiency in the Portuguese Language (from Pre-A1 to native speakers);
- if some students wish to adopt the European variant of the Portuguese language, while others prefer the Brazilian variant;
- a limited hourly volume (1 class hour per week).

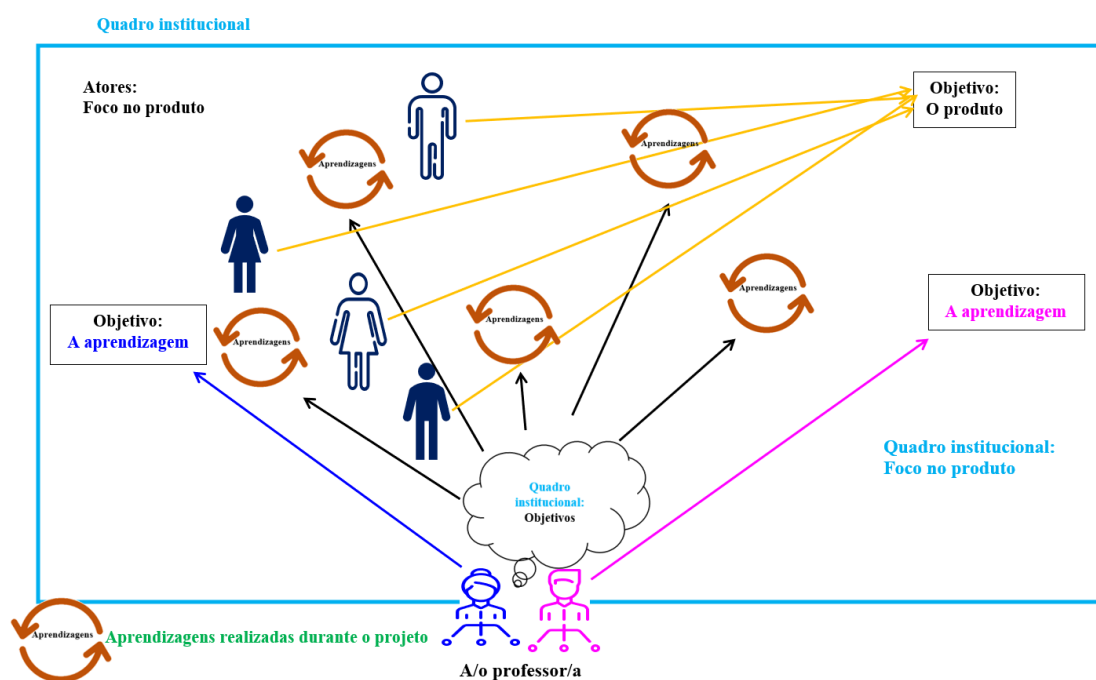
Considering that the equation in question must incorporate at least one additional factor, the pedagogical contract that establishes the relationships between the teacher, student, and institution, we identified the development of individual projects as the method that seems most appropriate for reconciling the diverse needs of the various participants in the teaching-learning process in which we are involved. This topic will be addressed in the next section.

Individual Projects

Considering the constitutive elements of our context, we have become convinced that the best way to respond to the implicit and explicit pedagogical contract that binds us as teachers to the institution and the students is to work with differentiated material and provide individualized assessment.

From our perspective, the development of an individual project allows each student to focus on their work and, therefore, their needs, serving as an instrument for the development of more autonomous learning. The way we understand and apply Project-Based Learning (PBL) in our context can be illustrated in Figure 4.

Figure 4 – Project-Based Learning



Source: Compiled by the author, based on Lombard (2010).

Project-based learning (PBL), and in our case, working with individual projects, is the approach that best responds to the different pressures exerted on the pedagogical process and that best allows for the alignment of interests among the various actors involved. While students and the institution focus on the product (the actual output of the student, which will be evaluated), it is the teacher who bridges the gap between the institution and the student, simultaneously focusing on the process (learning) and the product (achievement of objectives), seen as the means to transition from the process to the product or the pathway that ensures the process results in the product.

As we mentioned, focusing on both the process and the product, or on learning and student objectives/production, is achieved through working with individual projects. Citing Share and Rogers (1997)¹⁰, *World Bank e Global SchoolNet Foundation* (1995-1999) define Project-Based Learning based on the following characteristics:

- a) Students make decisions, and they have a framework in which to do so;
- b) There's a problem without a predetermined solution;
- c) Students design the process for reaching a solution;
- d) Students are responsible for accessing and managing the information they gather.
- e) Evaluation takes place continuously.
- f) Students regularly reflect on what they're doing.
- g) A final product (not necessarily material) is produced and is evaluated for quality.
- h) The classroom has an atmosphere that tolerates error and change.

According to the same document, concerning student autonomy, PBL allows for

- a) choose what they will work on;
- b) plan their own project;
- c) participate in defining criteria and rubrics to assess their project;
- d) solve problems they encounter while working on their project;
- e) make some sort of presentation of their project.

In our work in Grammar and Written Expression (GEE) in the 2nd year of undergraduate studies at ULille, we employ the principles of Project-Based Learning (PBL) to assist students in developing written communicative competence through a written text project they work on throughout the semester. This project and the resulting text serve as the basis for an oral

¹⁰ SHARE, E.; ROGERS, L. Get Real! Project-Based Learning, Practical Advice. **Learning Magazine**, Jan./Feb. 1997.

presentation in the *Oral Comprehension and Expression* (CEO) course at the end of the same semester. However, before presenting our work protocol, we will discuss some elements of the relationship between written production and grammatical competence.

Written Production and Grammatical Competence

Starting from the premise that grammatical competence and written competence are parts of a broader competence in language use, whether spoken or learned and that, just as there is no grammar without text, there is no text without grammar, our perspective is that grammar and writing should be addressed together. To better explain our viewpoint, we provide some considerations here.

Firstly, it is essential to define the notion of **communicative competence**. When Hymes (1972) incorporated the sociocultural aspect into Chomsky's (1965) concept of **competence**, he showed that knowledge of phonology, vocabulary, and syntax/grammar is not sufficient for effective communication. Being competent means knowing "when to speak, when not, and (...) what to talk about with whom, when, where, in what manner" (HYMES, 1972, p. 277). Thus, the author considers *competence* "the most general term for [designating] an individual's capacities." For him, "competence as the most general term for the capacities of a person (...). Competence is dependent upon both (tacit) *knowledge* and (ability for) *use*" (HYMES, 1972, p. 282, author's emphasis). According to the CEFR, this communicative competence, which enables the user/learner to use the language effectively, is the goal to achieve in teaching/learning a foreign language (CONSELHO DA EUROPA, 2001, p. 147-184)¹¹.

Both grammatical competence and written competence are components of communicative competence, with the former being "defined as the knowledge of formal resources from which correct and meaningful messages can be developed and formulated, as well as the ability to use them" (CONSELHO DA EUROPA, 2001, p. 157, maintaining the original spelling). More specifically,

Grammatical competence can be defined as the knowledge of the grammatical resources of a language and the ability to use them. Formally, the grammar of a language can be understood as the set of principles governing the combination of elements into meaningful and defined sequences (sentences). Grammatical competence is the ability to comprehend and express meaning through producing and recognizing well-constructed sentences and

¹¹ It should be noted that communicative competence is composed of three basic competencies: linguistic, sociolinguistic, and pragmatic (see CONSELHO DA EUROPA, 2001, p. 34-35).

expressions according to these principles (as opposed to memorizing and reproducing them) (CONSELHO DA EUROPA, 2001, p. 161, our translation).

In our work with students, we present written production as consisting of three main phases, which we refer to as *planning*, *drafting*, and *revision*. As the name suggests, the planning phase is when the author activates the necessary knowledge for structuring the text: it is the stage where they reflect on the elements to be used and organize them.

During the second *drafting* phase, the author retrieves the elements from the previous stage, assembling them in an articulated manner to write their text. This phase can pose a significant challenge for foreign language learners, who, even when capable of recognizing textual structures (bearing in mind that Portuguese and French share types and genres of texts), may not yet master (or only partially master) the primary and intermediate elements necessary for text creation¹². This means that constructing sentences and utterances, typically an unconscious operation for a native speaker, may require much attention and become highly conscious for a non-native speaker. However, this doesn't imply that the latter is incapable of handling complex ideas; instead, they may lack all the tools to craft complex sentences and utterances.

Hayes and Flower (1980) propose two sub-stages for *revision*: *rereading* and *editing*. In the first stage, the author focuses on correcting grammatical and linguistic-discursive deviations, while in the second stage, they distance themselves from the text, allowing them to concentrate on the compatibility between the resulting text and the initial objectives. As the self-assessment provided by revision allows for the activation and reflection on different and new possibilities for language use, the revision stage can assume a fundamental importance in learning a foreign language.

Finally, it is essential to note that although we have addressed the three phases of the writing process separately, and although each of these three phases can be the focus of specific attention in the classroom at certain precise moments, they occur simultaneously and recursively throughout the text production: the separation we have made here and the one we

¹² Our perspective here is that the elements necessary to elaborate a text are distributed across three levels: *macro*, *meso*, and *micro*. At the **macro** level, we find the text's structure and the pragmatic, social, and cultural elements related to the textual structure; at the **meso** level, we have the elements that give texture to the text (vocabulary, syntax, elements responsible for structuring the text into paragraphs, and for textual cohesion and coherence); and at the **micro** level, we find the relationships between phonetics/phonology and spelling, in addition to morphology.

make when presenting the project to our students, therefore, serves more the purpose of exposing ideas than presenting our *modus operandi*.

Our Work Protocol

In order to reconcile, as indicated, the conditions of our context and the requirements of the pedagogical contract, we have decided to implement a protocol that allows, at the same time,

- (a) that students work as much as possible;
- (b) that each student can work according to their abilities and their level of proficiency in Portuguese;
- (c) that each student receives personalized feedback;
- (d) that the assessment is as individualized as possible so as not to favor advanced students or disadvantage beginners;
- (e) that there are moments of common work in the classroom.

Our protocol includes three main elements, which we titled drafting, text, and theme: throughout the semester (12 weeks), students must write a text of approximately three pages (around 1,700 words, 8,500 characters without spaces, 10,000 characters with spaces¹³), on a theme "related to the 'world of the Portuguese language'"¹⁴ and for which they must conduct research. The texts can contain images and, in that case, may total more than three pages. From the beginning, i.e., from the initial research, they must create a document on Google Drive®, which they must share with the teacher.

Throughout the semester, they must write and revise the text, with the help of the tools indicated by the teacher (see later), reflect, and take notes on the revision suggestions presented by these tools. At the end of the semester, they must submit a final (not necessarily definitive) version of the work, in any format except PDF, on the course Moodle platform (a university

¹³ We made the decision to provide rather precise instructions regarding the length of the text after initial implementation, with less exact instructions, revealing that certain students could write much more or much less than indicated. Clearly, these are approximate values, with the sole purpose of avoiding the shortages and excesses previously observed.

¹⁴ Considering that students must work with the same material for a considerably long period, or in any case, longer than what is typically done, it is essential for the theme of the work to correspond to their interests. Thus, we left this instruction open enough for them to find a topic about which they "would like to know more," an instruction also used by the colleague in charge of the Oral Comprehension and Expression (CEO) component.

requirement for the assessment to be valid), accompanied by two brief reflections on two topics related to Portuguese (grammar, vocabulary, pragmatics, etc.) that they learned during the writing process throughout the semester.

Coupled with how we address grammatical issues (see later), this latter requirement has a triple objective: to ensure that the work is effectively carried out throughout the semester, help students understand the close relationship between grammar and written production, and assist them in taking responsibility for their learning. Throughout the semester, we all work both inside and outside the classroom:

- In class, we work on writing itself, revision, and addressing linguistic issues (grammatical, textual, pragmatic) brought by the students. When possible, and for students who request and agree, we use examples from the texts under construction to illustrate broader problems and solutions;
- Outside of class, students work on writing and revision;
- Both inside and outside the class, we worked on the notes made to elaborate on the two topics of the final commentary.

In addition to these practical conditions, two other theoretical elements are part of our protocol: the notions of *interlocution and authenticity*. Since students are not writing solely for the instructor of the course but for a broader audience (peers who will attend the oral presentation and the instructor from the other course), it is not about "simulations," in the sense of Freiermuth (2005), but rather natural productions directed at real interlocutors. Beyond assessment and grades, it is the interlocution that gives a purpose to the text and thus ensures its *authenticity*.

As not all students are familiar with all the recommended tools, the first two classes of the semester are dedicated to presenting and explaining how the text revision tools work, a topic we can revisit during the semester if students wish. We will now present these tools.

The Tools

Always aiming to individualize students' work and work on written competence in relation to grammatical competence, we introduced the use of online and *offline* tools for text correction and revision. Below are the tools we make available to students, mainly on the

course's *Moodle* platform. In some cases, these are documents we created, but most of these tools are available on the internet: whether they are websites or *plugins*, the *links* are cataloged on *Moodle*.

1. Documents Created by the Teacher

- (a) *Accented Letters and Special Characters in Portuguese*: With the French AZERTY keyboard, it is more challenging to know how to use accents, especially acute accents and tildes. Therefore, we have created an illustrated tutorial in Portuguese and French, in PowerPoint and PDF formats, indicating three possible methods. Since the Mac computer keyboard functions similarly to mobile phones (a longer press on a key displays all available accents and diacritical marks for that letter), the tutorial is primarily valid for PC users.
- (b) *Accentuation Rules*: In the form of an illustrated tutorial, we created a PDF document (this time, only in Portuguese) presenting the accentuation rules in Portuguese, indicating the differences between the Brazilian and Portuguese norms.

2. Documents and Tools Available for Download

- (a) *Orthographic Agreement*: Full text of the *Acordo Ortográfico da Língua Portuguesa* (Orthographic Agreement of the Portuguese Language) of 1990, published by the Federal Senate (BRASIL, 2014).
- (b) *Lexibar Portuguese*: A small bar that overlays the text, online and offline, simplifying the insertion of accented and special Portuguese characters that are not quickly accessible on the keyboard in use. This tool only works with PCs. As the website is not available in Portuguese, we provide the address in French (see LEXICOOL, 2000-2023).

3. Websites

- (a) *Priberam Online Dictionary of Portuguese (DPLP)*: From our perspective, it has a significant advantage: many definitions are illustrated by a photograph. The DPLP is presented on the website as follows:

A contemporary Portuguese language dictionary with approximately 164,000 lexical entries, including idioms and phraseologies (...). The dictionary provides synonyms and antonyms for each meaning and also allows verbal conjugation. It is also possible to consult information about the origin of the majority of words and pronunciation guidelines.

The DPLP allows consultation according to the norm of European Portuguese or according to Brazilian Portuguese, with or without the graphic changes provided by the Orthographic Agreement of 1990 (PRIBERAM INFORMÁTICA, 2023a; we maintained the original spelling).

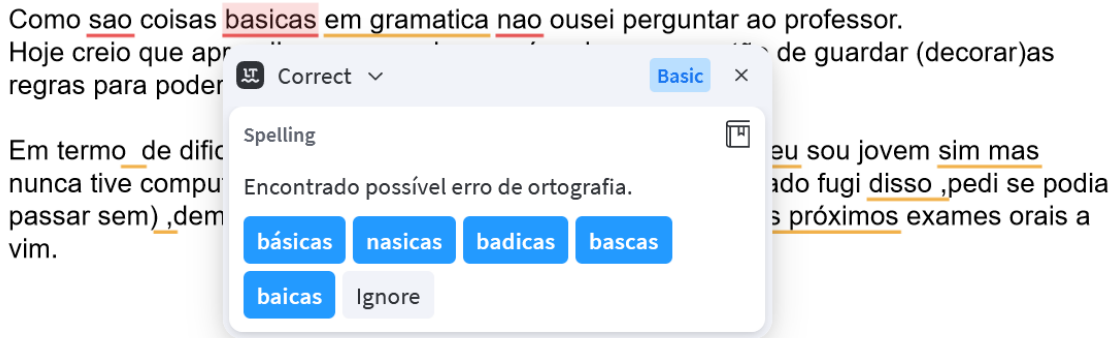
- (b) *LX-Conjugator*: "A free online service for the complete conjugation of Portuguese verbs (...), developed and (...) maintained by the NLX-Speech and Natural Language Group at the Department of Informatics, University of Lisbon" (PORTULAN CLARIN, n.d.).
- (c) *FLiP Conjugator*: A verbal conjugation engine that allows choosing between European Portuguese and Brazilian Portuguese, as well as Spanish (Spain). "In both varieties of the Portuguese language, it is possible to use versions with and without the Orthographic Agreement of 1990." However, this conjugation engine has some restrictions: "This tool allows you to view simple conjugation (without compound tenses or pronominal conjugation) of the active voice of the typed verb" (PRIBERAM INFORMÁTICA, 2023b; we maintained the original spelling).
- (d) *FLiP Spelling and Syntactic Corrector*: Similar to the verb conjugator, it is possible to choose between the Brazilian and European variants of the Portuguese language (in addition to the Spanish language). However, this tool has a limitation: "The text to be reviewed is limited to 3000 characters," as it is "a demonstration version that does not have all the functionalities" (PRIBERAM INFORMÁTICA, 2023c). It is worth noting that this tool does not always provide answers to students' questions, or it may not always provide satisfactory answers, which may be due to the fact that it was designed to be used by native speakers, as suggested by the results of tests we conducted with students.

4. *Plugin* (or extension)

- *LanguageTool*: A multilingual spelling, style, and grammar checker that assists in correcting or rewriting texts (LANGUAGETOOL, n.d.). For Portuguese, it allows choosing between the Angolan, Brazilian, Mozambican, and Portuguese variants. No account is required to use this plugin; you can add it to your internet browser for online use. For offline use, it needs to be downloaded from the company's website. The strength of this tool lies in the fact that revision suggestions cover everything from

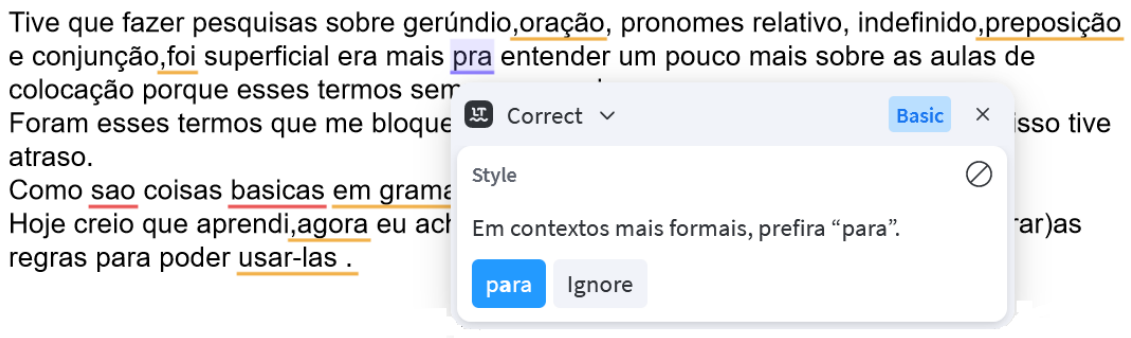
typing to style, including punctuation, spelling, and grammar. Furthermore, explanations and suggestions are provided, which the user can choose to accept or decline, as illustrated in Figures 5 and 6.

Figure 5 – Suggested correction of accentuation error by the LanguageTool plugin



Source: Compiled by the author.

Figure 6 – LanguageTool Plugin Stylistic Correction Suggestion



Source: Compiled by the author.

5. Other relevant tools, as presented in (b), are primarily used for the final review before submitting the work on the Moodle platform:
 - (a) Google Drive's *revision* feature,
 - (b) Word/OpenOffice/LibreOffice/Pages revision feature.

Examples and Observations

Now, we will proceed with presenting some examples related to the use of these tools, focusing our attention, especially on the last two categories: the plugin and the revision function in text editor programs, for which we keep records. The decision to adopt the solution provided

by Google Drive® was based on the fact that this platform allows for checking the document's revision history, which is not possible when using only offline documents.

(1) Accentuation/Spelling and Typing

A gastronomia brasileira tem uma mistura inteligente de culturas.

As histórias do Brasil e de sua culinária são fortemente marcadas pela ~~colonizaçã~~ colonização portuguesa do século XVI, pelos escravos importados da África e pelos povos indígenas.

Os colonos trouxeram sua cultura, mas também sua gastronomia, cujas influências permeiam a culinária brasileira atual. Os escravos que vieram da ~~AFrica~~ África para trabalhar nos canaviais também deixaram sua marca, influenciando até os nomes dos pratos brasileiros. Da mesma forma,

As observed, simple mistakes such as typing errors and accentuation errors are readily recognized and corrected easily, while addressing syntax-related issues may pose greater complexity.

(2) Morphosyntax

Calema é um grupo musical composto por dois irmãos, António Mendes Ferreira e Fradique Mendes Ferreira de São ~~Tomé~~ Tomé e Príncipe com origens ~~portugueses~~ portuguesas. Eles cantam juntos desde a infância, num primeiro lugar foi um lazer e depois tornou-se uma verdadeira paixão. Em 2008, os dois irmãos vieram ~~em Portugal~~ Portugal para seguir os seus estudos na música. Fradique pegou um diploma em multimédia e António pegou um diploma em produção de vídeo, duas áreas que podem ser ~~muitas~~ muito importantes na indústria musical.

More straightforward morphosyntactic issues (agreement in gender and number, verb "come" government, "very" as an adverb vs. "much" as an indefinite pronoun) can also be quickly resolved, especially if the student has a more advanced level of language proficiency.

(3) Syntax

D) A cozinha brasileira

~~Povo o mais mestiço da~~ Povo o mais mestiço da terra, os brasileiros possuem todos os fenótipos, como a ~~imigração~~ imigração ~~continuada~~ continuada ao longo de sua história desde a chegada dos primeiros colonizadores portugueses. Vindo de todo o mundo como colonos, exploradores, escravos ou migrantes econômicos, homens e mulheres das mais diversas origens vieram se misturar com os nativos locais. O que é óbvio é a facilidade com que todos evoluem juntos. E provavelmente o único país do mundo onde o caldeirão realmente funcionou e onde os filhos dos migrantes se sentem em casa numa única geração.

D) A cozinha brasileira

A gastronomia brasileira tem uma mistura inteligente de culturas.

Probably with no other resources to express what he means beyond the literal translation of the French construction, the student deleted the highlighted building but used it again. Once again, accentuation errors are rarely a source of hesitation and are immediately corrected. This example also shows that the machine is not the sole answer to all questions: as seen in the penultimate line, the verb "é¹⁵", without an accent, was not highlighted. This is a moment where feedback from the teacher, or preferably from peers, can be quite helpful.

(4) Style



~~Seu~~ seu primeiro álbum foi em 2010, chamado "Ni Mondja Anguené", é um nome em crioulo de São Tomé e Príncipe. Eles fizeram este álbum quando estiveram em Portugal, o álbum não conheceu muito sucesso. Depois, os dois irmãos vieram à França e fizeram a emissão "The Voice France" em ~~2013~~ mas 2013,



mas só fizeram o primeiro ~~show~~ 'show' e os juízes ~~não viraram~~ senão se viraram.

¹⁵ This verb in Portuguese is the same as "to be" in English.

Without forgetting the syntactic adjustment regarding the position of the complement pronoun in the last line of this example and the punctuation modification (comma before "but"), we can see that most adjustments in this example pertain to style: "o seu" instead of "seu"¹⁶ makes the text "more Portuguese"¹⁷, double quotation marks for the TV show title, and single quotation marks for the foreign word.

However, certain students go (far) beyond simple revision with the support of the tools provided by the teacher but use this moment to reread and redo their work. This is illustrated by the next two examples, both from the same text (and thus authored by the same student).

(5) Overall Revision (1)

De repente, as ameaças aos judeus se multiplicaram ~~e os judeus~~. Aqueles ~~entreque~~, entre outros, foram identificados como inimigos nacionais. Os judeus vão sentir-se rapidamente agredidos com o estabelecimento do Tribunal do Santo Ofício na cidade histórica de Lisboa em 1536 que foi concedido pelo Papa Clemente VII. Ironicamente, seu nome não reflete o ~~seu~~-temperamento dele. ~~Este~~-A figura que finalmente autorizou a democratização repentina da erradicação dos judeus que foram vilipendiados e postos sob a ameaça da dizimação, e ~~espoliação~~. Essas nomeações constituíram os eventos chaves que selaram o futuro dos judeus, e conduziram Portugal a entrar nas trevas ~~ideológicas~~. As medidas empregadas pioraram o clima geral acerca da religião. Desde esse momento, a Santa Fé consolidou sua dominância inquestionável e tentou priorizar a permanência dos ideais cristãos, através da normalização da punição contra as heresias. Esse enrobustecimento das regras que ordenaram um controle estrito das atividades consideradas como repudiáveis (segundo o padrão cristão) resultou numa cisão entre os novos-cristãos e antigos-cristãos. A fé católica monopoliza o palco público, e as mensagens de seus porta-vozes engendra a estratificação da sociedade.

What stands out the most in (5) are the author's attempts to reconstruct his text, a reconstruction for which he employs three main strategies: modifying the order of words, introducing new words, and adding new sentences. It is worth noting that, except for the absence of the tilde in "*cristão(s)*"¹⁸, this text does not present spelling or accentuation errors, undoubtedly allowing the author to address other issues more comfortably. More or less, the same can be said regarding example (6) from the same student.

¹⁶ "O seu" and "seu" in English mean "Your."

¹⁷ These are words from the student who authored the text from which example (4) was extracted, following the Portuguese standard.

¹⁸ In English, this word means Christian.

(6) General Revision (2)

☞Enfim, quero comentar ~~esse~~o trecho ~~acima~~ para demonstrar a crueldade que ~~permeou~~permeou em Portugal ~~durante esses anos de decadência e depravidade tão incompreensível e alienígena nessa~~durante esses anos de decadência e depravidade tão incompreensível e alienígena pelos padrões da época. O uso preciso dos termos “povos baixos e villaos” para descrever os crentes que assaltaram os novo-cristaos mostra que eles cometeram fatos que indignaram uma parte da população que o autor relata como “cruzas, roubos” ou ainda imundas “vilezas”. O autor os qualifica abertamente de criminosos-, agindo em completa ilegalidade, ~~através de vilanias~~imperdoáveis. Garcia de Resende indica que os vivos alimentaram as fogueiras, onde eles ~~pereceram~~faleceram ~~como em mártires~~mártires, recebendo a punição de seus castigadores. Ele vilifica os atuantes dessa cena e os menospreza legitimamente por ter arquitetado, chefiado uma campanha de genocídio com base na divergência religiosa. Sem extrapolar ou especular podemos imaginar que o número de mortos o surpreendeu ~~tant~~imensamente, ~~que sua escrita até~~ fazer transparecer toques de emoções ~~na sua escrita~~. Essas descrições ~~da segregação entre os crentes~~ rendem as dores mais visíveis e perceptíveis.

The revision strategies employed in (6) consist primarily of introduction, substitution, and displacement – among others, the introduction of a discourse marker (closing: "finally"), substitution of the demonstrative ("this (excerpt)": "(the excerpt) above", "at that time": "by the standards of the time"), and the shift of "your writing" from the subject position to that of a verbal argument. However, these strategies do not guarantee that the student avoids, among other aspects, some accentuation errors ("*genocidio*"¹⁹, or example), punctuation errors (lack of a comma between "speculate" and "we can"), a lexical calque ("*depravidade*"²⁰) and a nominal agreement error ("decadence and depravity so incomprehensible and alien"). These are errors that, despite potentially appearing simpler to resolve for a native speaker, persist in the text after several revisions, highlighting the challenges the non-native learner faces during the writing phase. This is precisely because, as mentioned earlier, they do not yet master (or only partially master) the primary and intermediate elements necessary for text composition.

As mentioned above, we expect students to submit a final version of the text at the end of the semester, which does not necessarily have to be the definitive version. The two final examples clearly illustrate why we adopt this perspective: not only because "a text is never definitive" in the sense that with each review, we identify sections that can be improved, but also because we can say, based on our experience, that people are more inclined to focus on

¹⁹ The word "genocide" in Portuguese requires an accent on the "i," becoming "*genocídio*."

²⁰ "*Depravidade*" is a synonym for the word "*depravação*." This word does not have an exact equivalent in English, but the translation of its synonym in English is "depravity."

certain types of issues. Thus, we believe we can generally state that while some may concentrate more on formal issues, others may pay more attention to meaningful relationships.

Finally, it is worth noting that when dealing with foreign learners, we must also take into account their experiences with schooling in their native language and other languages, as well as their familiarity (or lack thereof) with writing production activities. In other words, the ease (or difficulty) with which a foreign student approaches written production in Portuguese as a second language may be more connected to the mastery of the textualization activity than to the mastery of the Portuguese language.

Final Considerations

Of all the elements presented in this work, it seems necessary to highlight two that run through it in an underlying manner and appear to be the most significant for the development of the ability to produce meaningful writings: the production *conditions of the texts* and the student's *prior knowledge*. As indicated by Lemos (1977), the verisimilitude of the production conditions of texts, including enunciation conditions, is essential to allow the transition from the condition of a learner to that of a language user. In the same vein, it is worth recalling the observations of Pécora (1983) and Geraldi (2011), stating that it is indispensable to establish a precise framework of interlocution in natural conditions to construct written textual competence. It also seems important to remember, as we stated earlier (SANTOS, 2010b, 2011b), the importance of using students' prior knowledge as a ramp to access the condition of users of the language being learned. In our opinion, this is even more true when working with textual genres spoken by speakers of a language close to Portuguese.

It is pertinent to present a brief reflection on the future directions of our work. To answer this question, we would like to emphasize that when we implemented our work protocol some years ago, generative artificial intelligence (GAI) resources, of which ChatGPT® is the most well-known, had not yet been launched. Considering what we currently know about this type of tool, it seems possible to use it as support for learning the Portuguese language. The next steps of our project may, therefore, include, once again in an individualized manner and accordance with the principles of Project-Based Learning, the use of GAI resources for text to acquire written communicative competence, not with the aim of writing on behalf of the students, of course, but to provide them with personalized feedback.

We envision a protocol where students request and receive feedback on the texts they write, and they must decide whether to accept or reject the machine's suggestions, justifying their decision. This approach, in our view, can have at least three advantages: allowing the teacher to free up time for other tasks beyond correction, without leaving correction solely to the machine; enabling students to receive feedback beyond what is given by the teacher; and addressing the difficulty posed by the cultural resistance to peer feedback among French students.

REFERENCES

ARMANDO, M. L. C. “Professora de Brasil” na França (Pot-pourri). *Travessias*, n. 16, 17, p. 315-355, 1989. Available at: <https://periodicos.ufsc.br/index.php/travessia/article/view/17481/16057>. Accessed in: 10 Aug. 2023.

BRASIL. Senado Federal. **Acordo ortográfico da língua portuguesa: atos internacionais e normas correlatas**. 2. ed. Brasília, DF: Senado Federal, 2014. Available at: <https://www2.senado.leg.br/bdsf/bitstream/handle/id/508145/000997415.pdf>. Accessed in: 12 Aug. 2023.

CHOMSKY, N. **Aspects of the Theory of Syntax**. Cambridge (Estados Unidos): MIT Press, 1965. Available at: <https://fr.scribd.com/document/246054424/88948915-Chomsky-1965-Aspects-of-the-Theory-of-Syntax-pdf>. Accessed in: 12 Aug. 2023.

CONSELHO DA EUROPA. **Quadro Europeu Comum de Referência para as Línguas – Aprendizagem, Ensino, Avaliação**. Lisboa (Portugal): Edições Asa, 2001. Available at: <https://www.dge.mec.pt/quadro-europeu-comum-de-referencia-para-linguas>. Accessed in: 10 Aug. 2023.

DECLARAÇÃO DE BOLONHA. *In*: WIKIPÉDIA, a enciclopédia livre. Flórida: Wikimedia Foundation, 2021. Available at: https://pt.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Declara%C3%A7%C3%A3o_de_Bolonha&oldid=61102681. Accessed in: 05 Aug. 2023.

EUROPEAN COUNCIL. **Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, teaching, assessment – Companion volume**. Strasbourg (França): Council of Europe Publishing, 2020. Available at: <https://rm.coe.int/common-european-framework-of-reference-for-languages-learning-teaching/16809ea0d4>. Accessed in: 05 Aug. 2023.

FRANÇA, M. B.; LIMA-PEREIRA, R.; MEIRELES, V. O ensino de português em dois espaços: Caiena e Montpellier. *In*: MEIRELES, V.; VIEIRA, M. dos S. M. (org.). **Variação e ensino de Português no mundo**. São Paulo: Blucher, 2022. p. 279-298. Available at: <https://openaccess.blucher.com.br/download-pdf/556/23340>. Accessed in: 10 Aug. 2023.

FREIERMUTH, M. R. Purposeful Writing in the ESP Classroom: Assessing the ‘Beg, Borrow or Steal Simulation. **Electronic Journal of Foreign Language Teaching**, v. 2, n. 1, p. 16-24, 2005. Available at: <http://e-flt.nus.edu.sg/v2n12005/freiermuth.pdf>. Accessed in: 10 Aug. 2023.

GERALDI, J. W. Concepções de linguagem e ensino de português. *In*: GERALDI, J. W. (org.). **O texto na sala de aula: leitura & produção**. São Paulo: Ática, 2011. Available at: https://edisciplinas.usp.br/pluginfile.php/5388957/mod_resource/content/1/GERALDI%2C%20Jo%2C%20Wanderley.%20et%20al.%20%28orgs.%29.%20O%20texto%20na%20sala%20de%20aula.%203.%20ed.%20S%2C%20Paulo%20%2C%20%281tica%2C%201999.%20.pdf. Accessed in: 15 Aug. 2023.

HAYES, J. R.; FLOWER, L. Identifying the organisation of Writing Processes. *In*: GREGG, L. W.; STEINBERG, E. R. **Cognitive Processes in Writing: An Interdisciplinary Approach**. Hillsdale (Estados Unidos); Lawrence Earlbaum Associates, 1980. p. 3-30. Available at: <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/200772468>. Accessed in: 12 Aug. 2023.

HYMES, H. D. On communicative competence. *In*: PRIDE, J. B.; HÓLMES, J. (ed.) **Sociolinguistics**. Selected Readings. Harmondsworth (Inglaterra): Penguin Books, 1972. p. 269-293. Available at: <https://www.jyu.fi/hytk/fi/laitokset/kivi/tutkimus/hankkeet/paattyneet-tutkimushankkeet/fidipro/en/courses/on-communicative-competence>. Accessed in: 12 Aug. 2023.

LANGUAGETOOL. **LanguageTool**. Potsdam (Alemanha): LanguageTool, s/d. Available at: <https://languagetool.org/pt-BR>. Accessed in: 12 Aug. 2023.

LEMOS, C. T. G. Redações no vestibular: algumas estratégias. **Cadernos de Pesquisa**, v. 23, p. 61-71, 1977. Available at: <https://www.fcc.org.br/pesquisa/publicacoes/cp/arquivos/346.pdf>. Accessed in: 15 Aug. 2023.

LEXICOOL. **Lexibar Portugais**. Chambéry (França): Lexicool, 2000-2023. Available at: https://www.lexicool.com/lexibar_portuguese_special_keyboard_characters.asp?IL=1. Accessed in: 12 Aug. 2023.

LOMBARD, F. **Les vecteurs de motivation en un schéma**. Available at https://tecfa.unige.ch/perso/lombardf/ped_projet/. Accessed in 13 Aug. 2023.

NOGUEIRA FRANÇOIS, M. C.; SANTOS, L. O ensino de Português na universidade francesa: entre a norma portuguesa e a brasileira. *In*: NASCIMENTO, L. do. (org.). **Leitura e escrita: o ensino de Português na Alemanha, no Brasil, na França e na Suécia**. Saarbrücken (Alemanha): Novas Edições Acadêmicas, 2015. p. 601-631. Available at: https://www.academia.edu/29103705/LEITURA_E_ESCRITA_o_ensino_na_Alemanha_no_Brasil_na_Fran%C3%A7a_e_na_Su%C3%A9cia. Accessed in: 05 Aug. 2023.

PÉCORA, A. **Problemas de redação**. São Paulo: Martins Fontes, 1983.

PORTULAN CLARIN. **Documentação do LX-Conjugador**. Lisboa (Portugal): Portulan Clarin, s/d. Available at: <https://portulanclarin.net/workbench/lx-conjugador/>. Accessed in: 12 Aug. 2023.

PORTULAN CLARIN. **LX-Conjugador**. Lisboa (Portugal): Portulan Clarin, s/d. Available at: <https://portulanclarin.net/workbench/lx-conjugador/>. Accessed in: 12 Aug. 2023.

PRIBERAM INFORMÁTICA. **Dicionário Priberam Online de Português**. Lisboa (Portugal): Priberam Informática, 2023a. Available at: <https://dicionario.priberam.org/>. Accessed in: 12 Aug. 2023.

PRIBERAM INFORMÁTICA. **Conjugador FLiP**. Lisboa (Portugal): Priberam Informática, 2023b. Available at: <https://www.flip.pt/flip-on-line/conjugador>. Accessed in: 12 Aug. 2023.

PRIBERAM INFORMÁTICA. **Corrector Ortográfico e Sintático FLiP**. Lisboa (Portugal): Priberam Informática, 2023c. Available at: <https://www.flip.pt/FLiP-On-line/Corrector-ortografico-e-sintactico>. Accessed in: 12 Aug. 2023.

SANTOS, L. Sur la construction de la compétence communicative écrite en portugais langue étrangère. **Recherches en didactique des langues et des cultures**, v. 7, n. 2, 2010a, s/p. Available at: <http://journals.openedition.org/rdlc/2189>. Accessed in: 02 Aug. 2023.

SANTOS, L. Sur la construction de la compétence communicative écrite en Portugais Langue Étrangère. Du travail des étudiants à la pratique de l'enseignant. **Actes du Colloque Acedle 2009**, 2010b, p. 309-314. Available at: <https://journals.openedition.org/rdlc/2100>. Accessed in: 02 Aug. 2023.

SANTOS, L. Ensino de português para estrangeiros e gramática comunicativa: dos enunciados gramaticalmente corretos aos enunciados idiomáticamente adequados". **Estudos Linguísticos**, v. 40, n. 2, p. 715-725, 2011a. Available at: <https://revistas.gel.org.br/estudos-linguisticos/issue/view/40>. Accessed in: 02 Aug. 2023.

SANTOS, L. A Gramática Comunicativa no Ensino de Português Língua Estrangeira: Construção da Competência Comunicativa e Apropriação da Língua pelo Aprendiz. **UBILETRAS**, n. 2, p. 181-197, 2011b.

UNIÃO EUROPEIA. CONSELHO DA EUROPA. **Quadro Comum de Referência para as Línguas**. Grelha de autoavaliação. Strasbourg (França): Conselho da Europa. Available at: <https://europa.eu/europass/system/files/2020-05/CEFR%20self-assessment%20grid%20PT.pdf>. Accessed in: 05 Aug. 2023.

WORLD BANK. GLOBAL SCHOOLNET FOUNDATION. **1. What is Project Based Learning (PBL)?**. Available at: https://tecfa.unige.ch/perso/lombardf/ped_proj/worlbank-PjBl/whatis.htm. Accessed in: 07 Aug. 2023.

CRediT Author Statement

Acknowledgements: I would like to express my gratitude to my students, who assisted me in evolving as both a teacher and a researcher and have provided the material used in this work.

Funding: There was no funding for this project.

Conflicts of interest: There were no conflicts of interest.

Ethical approval: Yes. In France, this type of work is not subject to an ethics committee, given that the data is completely anonymized.

Data and material availability: No, the data and documents are derived from student productions made available solely to the teacher (for teaching and research purposes, with the condition that they remain anonymous and inaccessible to a broader audience).

Authors' contributions: There is only one author who contributed entirely to the entirety of the work.

Processing and editing: Editora Ibero-Americana de Educação.
Proofreading, formatting, normalization and translation.

