

NORTHEAST CULTURE IN TEACHING BRAZILIAN PORTUGUESE TO FOREIGNERS AT THE FEDERAL INSTITUTE OF RIO GRANDE DO NORTE

CULTURA NORDESTINA NO ENSINO DE PORTUGUÊS BRASILEIRO PARA ESTRANGEIROS NO INSTITUTO FEDERAL DO RIO GRANDE DO NORTE

CULTURA NORDESTINA EN LA ENSEÑANZA DE PORTUGUÉS BRASILEÑO PARA EXTRANJEROS EN EL INSTITUTO FEDERAL DE RIO GRANDE DO NORTE



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How to reference this paper:

SILVA, G. M. da; SILVA, B. R. C. V. da; ALVES, L. M. Northeast culture in teaching Brazilian Portuguese to foreigners at the Federal Institute of Rio Grande do Norte. **Rev. EntreLinguas**, Araraquara, v. 9, n. esp. 1, e023026, 2023. e-ISSN: 2447-3529. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.29051/el.v9iesp.1.18596>



| 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

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ABSTRACT: In this article, we present two proposals addressing the culture of northeastern Brazil for teaching Portuguese as an additional language, based on the experience of teaching international students at the *Instituto Federal de Educação, Ciência e Tecnologia do Rio Grande do Norte* (IFRN) within the scope of the Portuguese as an Additional Language in Network (PLA in Network) program for synchronous meetings with students from our Institution. The choice for the Brazilian Northeast was, among other reasons, due to the fact that our material available on Moodle for asynchronous study addresses the variety of the Brazilian South, and we argue that intercultural proposals should foster understanding between different cultures and, with this, make our students also value the cultures of regions far from the large urban centers of their countries of origin, which also tend to be made invisible, belittled and devalued.

KEYWORDS: Northeastern Culture. Teaching. Brazilian Portuguese for foreigners.

RESUMO: Neste artigo, apresentamos duas propostas abordando a cultura do nordeste brasileiro para o ensino de português como língua adicional, a partir da experiência de ensino para estudantes internacionais no Instituto Federal de Educação, Ciência e Tecnologia do Rio Grande do Norte (IFRN) no âmbito do programa Português como Língua Adicional em Rede (PLA em Rede) para os encontros síncronos com os estudantes da nossa Instituição. Optamos por focar no Nordeste brasileiro por diversos motivos, um deles sendo o conteúdo disponível em nossa plataforma Moodle, que se concentra na variedade linguística do sul do Brasil. Defendemos a importância de abordagens interculturais que promovam a compreensão entre diferentes culturas, levando os estudantes a valorizarem também as culturas de regiões distantes dos grandes centros urbanos de seus países de origem. Muitas vezes, essas regiões são invisibilizadas, menosprezadas e desvalorizadas.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: Cultura Nordestina. Ensino. Português Brasileiro para estrangeiros.

RESUMEN: En este artículo, presentamos dos propuestas que abordan la cultura del nordeste de Brasil para la enseñanza del portugués como lengua adicional, basadas en la experiencia de enseñanza a estudiantes internacionales en el Instituto Federal de Educação, Ciencia y Tecnología do Rio Grande do Norte (IFRN) en el marco del alcance del programa Português como Lengua Adicional en Red (PLA en Red) para encuentros sincrónicos con estudiantes de nuestra Institución. La elección por el Nordeste brasileño se debió, entre otras razones, a que nuestro material disponible en Moodle para estudio asincrónico aborda la variedad del sur brasileño y defendemos que las propuestas interculturales deben fomentar el entendimiento entre diferentes culturas y, con ello, hacer con que nuestros estudiantes también valoren las culturas de regiones alejadas de los grandes centros urbanos de sus países de origen, que también tienden a ser invisibilizadas, menospreciadas y devaluadas.

PALABRAS CLAVE: Cultura del Nordeste. Enseñanza. Portugués brasileño para extranjeros.

Introduction

In this article, we present two proposals addressing the culture of northeastern Brazil for teaching Portuguese as a foreign language based on the teaching experience for international students at the Federal Institute of Education, Science, and Technology of Rio Grande do Norte (IFRN) within the scope of the Portuguese as an Additional Language Network (PLA in Network) program, from the International Relations Forum (FORINTER) of the National Council of Institutions of the Federal Network of Professional, Scientific, and Technological Education (CONIF).

Since the first offering of PLA in Network at IFRN, the classes formed consist predominantly of students whose native language is Spanish. The didactic material used is part of the e-Tec Languages without Borders program, created by the Brazilian federal government in 2014, aiming to assist the learner in communicating using the Portuguese language spoken in Brazil, so that they can interact in different communicative situations with people and cultures.

Activities and assessments are posted on the Moodle platform, and weekly, students have interaction with the teacher for 1 hour and 30 minutes through Google Meet. In our synchronous interactions and PDF-format didactic material, we present and discuss aspects of all our regions.

We consider that Brazilian culture, as well as the diverse identities and linguistic varieties in our country, should be present in the classes of the Brazilian Portuguese course for foreigners, especially in a teaching context where the majority of our students come from countries in South America, where the linguistic-cultural diversity of Spanish is vast and visible among regions.

However, the material we use was developed by IFSul of Pelotas and privileges the linguistic variety of Southern Brazil, mainly manifested in the audiovisual material (cartoon) produced for didactic purposes entitled "*Condomínio Brasil*," which presents the communicative content of each lesson. For this reason, we believe that we should include linguistic-cultural aspects of the Northeast region in synchronous moments.

Furthermore, the cultural diversity of Northeast Brazil is vast, as it comprises the largest number of states, namely Alagoas, Bahia, Ceará, Maranhão, Paraíba, Pernambuco, Piauí, Rio Grande do Norte, and Sergipe. Thus, the goal of our work is to contribute to a more

comprehensive education of our PLA students through didactic proposals focusing on the Northeast region explored in our weekly synchronous meetings.

Bagno (2015) asserts that when Northeastern characters appear in some television productions, speakers from this region do not identify with the speech characteristics imitated by actors who do not come from the same region, which would characterize a caricature of our linguistic diversity, as well as a lack of respect and distortion of Brazilian dialectal reality.

Therefore, we understand that including these linguistic varieties and Northeastern culture is a political decision, manifested both through our orality and methodological choices. This is reflected in the emphasis given to activities based on elements of Northeastern culture, such as musical selection, the use of regional expressions, and the approach to socio-cultural and geographical issues, as well as other components related to language.

Theoretical Framework

The Teaching of PLA in Brazil and at IFRN

The Portuguese language has gained prominence in recent years, especially in the field of Applied Linguistics. However, it is worth noting that, according to Almeida Filho (2012), since the colonial period, both Portuguese and Latin were taught as foreign languages to native peoples.

Regarding the nomenclature of Portuguese as an Additional Language (PLA) adopted by the authors of this work, we inform that we recognize the existence of other terminologies, such as Portuguese as a Foreign Language (PLE); Portuguese Second Language (PL2); Portuguese as a Non-Native Language (PLnM); among others, but we adopt PLA because we understand that our students are not monolingual and that, most of the time, they are adding more languages to their linguistic repertoires. In this sense, Schlatter and Garcez (2009) highlight that the term additional language emphasizes the fact that the new language learned can be added to the other languages already existing in the student's linguistic repertoire, which expands their possibilities for global action.

According to Schlatter, Bulla, and Costa (2020), the first milestone in the teaching of PLA in Brazil is the book "*Português para estrangeiros*" (Portuguese for Foreigners) by Mercedes Marchant, published in 1954, and from as early as 1960, the first PLA courses emerged in universities in the United States and later in Brazilian universities such as the University of São Paulo (USP) and the State University of Campinas (UNICAMP).

According to the authors, the teaching of PLA in Brazil began in the 1950s and experienced significant progress from the 1990s onwards, with the implementation of the Certificate of Proficiency in Portuguese as a Foreign Language (CelpeBras) by the Brazilian Ministry of Education and the expansion of the lecturer's program abroad.

At IFRN, since August 2021, three classes of the Brazilian Portuguese course for foreigners have been offered to affiliated foreign universities as part of the Portuguese as an Additional Language Network Program (PLA Network), in partnership with CONIF. The course offering is aligned with the internationalization policy of the Forum of International Relations Advisors (Forinter) of the National Council of Federal Institutions of Professional, Scientific, and Technological Education (Conif), which aims to expand the teaching of Portuguese as an Additional Language (PLA) as a joint action aimed at strengthening the internationalization policies of Federal Institutions of Professional, Scientific, and Technological Education.

Since 2021, IFRN has offered 360 vacancies through five calls for applications opened semiannually, destined for five institutions with agreements signed with IFRN and whose native language is Spanish, namely: University of Almería (Spain), National Pedagogical University (Colombia), State University of Santa Elena Peninsula (Ecuador), Technological University (Uruguay), and University of Chile (Chile).

IFRN offers two Continuing Education courses (FIC) in Brazilian Portuguese for Foreigners, each with two levels of 188 hours. According to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR), the first level covers contents related to A1 and parts of A2, while the second level covers contents of A2 and parts of B1. Each of these levels consists of 18 lessons, with 17 lessons covering new content based on specific communicative objectives and the 18th lesson of each level dedicated to course review.

Cultural Learning and Linguistic Diversity in the Teaching of PLA

Language teaching cannot be reduced to the mere acquisition of linguistic elements, as we understand, much like Serrani (2005, p. 29, our translation), that "for a language to be a good instrument, it is necessary to consider it much more than just an instrument. It is the raw material of identity formation." In this sense, we cannot believe that the sole reason for studying a language is to have a better resume.

The cultural component is a significant draw for many students who enroll in language courses. Besides improving living conditions, such as finding a job or securing a scholarship for an exchange program, a second language provides the opportunity to establish relations with the culture(s) of others and, at the same time, to learn more about our own culture, which will be constantly compared. Thus, the concept of interculturality emerges, which is essential in the world we live in.

Examining the evolution of the concept of interculturality, one always observes the presence of words like empathy, tolerance, respect, awareness, justice, and alterity, which constitute a descriptive framework of the needs and aspirations of our society, seeking to find alternatives to deal with the long-term problems of modernity (PAIVA; VIANA, 2017, p. 251, our translation).

These "keywords" should guide teachers of additional/foreign languages in developing lessons that foster understanding between cultures and minimize prejudice. Considering lesson planning where interculturality is present, Serrani (2005) outlined three objectives that the teacher must achieve to be considered an intercultural agent:

- a) stimulate in students the establishment of cultural bridges with other societies and cultures;
- b) provide education on socio-cultural diversity and questioning of ethnocentrism and exoticism;
- c) give cultural components significant weight in language course planning (SERRANI, 2005, p. 22, our translation).

We may wonder whether it is essential to include these objectives in the planning of language courses or additional language classes in basic education, considering that the teacher's workload is often very limited. Due to the significant migratory flow currently, especially in border regions of Brazil with South America, we should consider an approach that eliminates or minimizes potential conflicts, or situations like those Santos Valdez (2010) encountered in the discourse of Spanish students who participated in the course "Exploring Latin American Borders" in the city of Porto Velho, one of the Brazilian capitals closest to Bolivia:

'Bolivia is a country where there are only Indians, they speak the Indian language, and they are very poor.' Additionally, there was a manifestation of prejudice regarding Castilian, classified by many students, derogatorily, as the 'Bolivian language, our t' (SANTOS VALDEZ, 2010, p. 143, author's emphasis, our translation).

We observe, therefore, that a purely linguistic approach in the classroom will not be sufficient to deal with comprehensive issues of the world, such as racism, xenophobia, sexism, or misogyny. It is evident that prejudice manifests through language, highlighting the need for teachers to adopt Serrani's (2005) proposal to combat these negative attitudes. Furthermore,

Culture is what allows us to perceive, distinguish, exercise, or research linguistic and extralinguistic habits, idiosyncrasies, and unconscious mechanisms that may underlie the production and reception of the source text and the target text. It is what leads the interlocutor to understand the communication process, whether that process is symbolic, verbal, or non-verbal (AGRA; BURGEILE, 2010, p. 19, our translation).

Thus, Serrani (2005, p. 23, our translation) asserts that "language is heterogeneous by definition and there are always multiple linguistic varieties (social, regional, registers in different contexts, etc.) that are realized in particular discursive genres". For the author, contact with more than one language or more than one linguistic variety can facilitate overcoming ethnocentrism. In this sense, literature can be a useful sociocultural legacy for foreigners to contemplate this diversity in Brazilian Portuguese classes.

[...] Literature emerges as a fundamental need for the student, assisting them in the process of acquiring the new language studied. Literary texts provide models of syntactic structures and stylistic variations, present a rich vocabulary, and function as representatives of cultures and speech from different regions and different countries, thus resulting in a valuable resource for the classroom (SILVA; ARAGÃO, 2013, p. 170, our translation).

In the "Brazilian Portuguese for Foreigners" course at IFRN, we address and discuss aspects of the normative grammar of the Portuguese language spoken in Brazil with learners. However, we also base ourselves on aspects of our linguistic and cultural diversity. Therefore, we endorse Bagno's (2015) position that institutions focused on culture and education should abandon the idea of a "unity" of Brazilian Portuguese. Recognizing the importance of valuing the country's linguistic diversity implies considering all varieties of language use.

According to Bagno (2015, p. 19, our translation), "A recipe for cake is not a cake, the pattern of a dress is not a dress, a world map is not the world... Also, grammar⁴ is not the language". We present, to some extent, the most diverse regional linguistic varieties, but we situate our speech location, as speakers of some of the northeastern varieties of Brazilian Portuguese, these aspects of language are marked in our discursive practices in online meetings.

⁴ In this case, the author refers to prescriptive grammar.

Cultural Proposals for PLA Teaching at IFRN with a Focus on the Brazilian Northeast

Here, we present two proposals for activities aimed at communication and human formation of our Brazilian Portuguese students through culture expressed in song and literature. The first proposal is with the genre "song" and is intended for level 1 students to explore the contents of lessons 11 and 12, whose objectives are:

Lesson 11: Leisure activities; Inviting, accepting, and refusing an invitation; Verbs, complements, and sense relationships; Recurrent leisure habits in the past.

Lesson 12: Expression of feelings; Verb "to feel" in the present and past imperfect indicative; Linking verbs in the expression of feelings; Imperfect and perfect past indicative (VEIRAS *et al.*, 2015, p. 65-79, our translation).

As we can appreciate, the past imperfect indicative is the common grammatical content in these two lessons. With this verb tense, one usually talks about actions that were repeated in the past and to make descriptions. Therefore, we chose the song "*Petrolina Juazeiro*" sung by Alceu Valença from Pernambuco and Elba Ramalho from Paraíba because it presents a considerable amount of verb tense and because it deals with two important cities in the interior of Bahia and Pernambuco.

Proposal 1 - The city of Petrolina in Pernambuco

Objectives:

1. Describe repetitive situations and places from the past.
2. Learn about the cultural aspects of the city of Petrolina in Pernambuco

Level: 1

Time: 2 lessons (2 synchronous meetings)

Skills addressed: reading and listening comprehension and oral expression.

Petrolina Juazeiro

From the magic of São Francisco River was born the beauty
And its nature, it preserved
Jesus blessed it with His divine hand
So nostalgia won't kill me, I'm going back to Petrolina
(Jesus blessed it with His divine hand)
(So nostalgia won't kill me, I'm going back to Petrolina)

On the other side of the river there's a town
That in my youth, I'd visit every day
I'd cross the bridge, and what a happiness!
I'd be in Juazeiro, Juazeiro da Bahia
(I'd cross the bridge, and what a happiness!)
(I'd be in Juazeiro, Juazeiro da Bahia)

I still remember that in my childhood
Strange were the carrancas and the whistle of the train
But I'd find so beautiful when the bridge was risen
And the steam boat would pass deliciously from side to side

Petrolina, Juazeiro, Juazeiro, Petrolina
I find both cities beautiful
I like Juazeiro and I love Petrolina

I like Juazeiro (and I love Petrolina)
I like Juazeiro (and I love Petrolina)
I like Juazeiro (and I love Petrolina)

Next, we ask the students to guess which city we will explore in this lesson. We play an audio clip from the Portuguese textbook for foreigners, "*Bem-vindo*", (Welcome) which talks about the childhood of two friends who lived in Petrolina and moved to a "big city." Figure 1 shows the transcribed audio document with verbs in present, past perfect, and imperfect indicative:

Figure 1 - Childhood in Petrolina



Source: Ponce, Burim and Florissi (2004, p. 23).

Through this audio resource developed for educational purposes, students have access to the linguistic variety of the Brazilian Northeast, while achieving the objectives outlined for lessons 11 and 12. To enrich the cultural themes addressed in the song about Petrolina, we provide an explanation of the word "*carranca*" taken from a journalistic text adapted from the *Folha de Pernambuco*. This content is made available in image format on Canva and used as a projection resource during synchronous moments in Brazilian Portuguese classes.

Figure 2 - The term "*carranca*" in Brazilian Portuguese class

Centro de Artes Ana das Carrancas

Quando Ana Leopoldina dos Santos saiu da cidade de Santa Filomena/PE para Petrolina, fugindo da seca na década de 1950, tinha certeza de que na nova cidade existia um rio que nunca secava. Lugar onde ela começou a confeccionar as carrancas de barro, que são esculturas colocadas na proa dos barcos para espantar os maus espíritos. O trabalho ganhou forma e logo foi reconhecido por uma peculiaridade: os olhos vazados em homenagem ao marido de Ana, que era cego. Parte desse acervo está no museu preservado por suas filhas, que reúne ateliê, lojinha e memorial com peças da artista.



Source: Custom-created Canva with text adapted from Souza (2021).

Spanish-speaking students often question the term "*carranca*"⁵ because they do not retrieve this word from the transparency of related languages. As it is a cultural aspect of the region, we chose not to explain it at the moment of the song since the text from Folha de Pernambuco explains the term, the history of the creator of the "*carrancas*," and also addresses the grammatical content of lessons 11 and 12, as we can see from the verbs underlined by us in Figure 2.

To expand on the cultural content about Petrolina and reinforce the past imperfect indicative tense, we chose a journalistic text from the G1 website of Petrolina and region that discusses the history of longtime residents of the city, as we can appreciate in Figure 3:

⁵ The wooden carranca is a sculpture with a human or animal shape, produced in wood and initially used on the bow of vessels that sailed along the São Francisco River.

Figure 3 - The history of residents of Petrolina

História de Petrolina é lembrada por moradores

Euvaldo de Aragão tem 79 anos, ele conta que é nascido e criado em Petrolina. Apesar da formação como agrônomo, alimenta até hoje com lucidez a história da sua cidade natal. “A área que hoje é Petrolina era chamada 'Passagem de Juazeiro' no século 19. Os tropeiros vinham de outras cidades e acabavam passando pela vila para vender materiais do campo. Quando a população se estabeleceu foi em 1854 e começaram a usar o nome de Petrolina”. Curioso pela história, Euvaldo relata que nos documentos da época que teve acesso encontrou o termo 'Passagem de Petrolina'. “Aqui nessa região tinha pessoas que eram procuradores do fisco, e algumas dessas pessoas escreviam desta forma no documento.

Petrolina pertenceu a Santa Maria da Boa Vista até 1872”, destaca.

Quanto ao 21 de setembro ser comemorado o aniversário da cidade, ele conta que a lei que validava a criação da cidade era de setembro e data foi “A lei é de julho, mas o governo provincial resolveu a elevar a categoria de cidade, a data é 25 de setembro de 1895. Mas a data que escolheram ao foro de cidade foi 21 de Setembro”.



Source: Custom-created Canva with text adapted from Peixinho (2014).

Once again, we chose to underline the verbs in the past imperfect indicative tense so that students become familiar with their forms, especially because in this testimony, three of the four only irregular verbs in this tense appear: *tinha* (to have), *era/eram* (to be), and *vinham* (to come). In this way, through all these materials explored during synchronous moments, students would be able to talk about their childhood and describe their city or countryside.

In this sense, we are considering the culture of the Brazilian Northeast through written and oral documents that bring cultural aspects and characteristics of the speech of our region. Another critical point is to include in the classes the cultural component of places away from the capitals or large urban centers; for this reason, we did not choose Recife or Salvador as a source of inspiration for lessons 11 and 12.

Considering Silva's perspective (2022), which highlights literature as a reflection of the cultures and discourses of various regions and countries, offering the teacher numerous possibilities for choice, our second proposal, aimed at level 2 students, presents a text from the "*literatura de cordel*" (string literature). This literary form is a characteristic expression of Brazilian popular culture, particularly rooted in the Northeast region, encompassing states such as Pernambuco, Alagoas, Paraíba, Pará, Rio Grande do Norte, and Ceará.

According to Nobre (2017), the term "*literatura de cordel*" originates from the Iberian Peninsula, a term popularly used in Portugal to refer to the production of low-cost literary texts

accessible to people of limited financial means. Sold at open-air markets, the cheap paper booklets were hung on strings or cords; hence, the term "string" derived from this form of display of the pamphlets.

Poets often define "*literatura de cordel*" as a literary genre with three elements: meter, rhyme, and prayer. Through sung poetry, they address themes of popular culture, such as drought in the Northeast, politics, social injustice, historical events, legends, love, and hatred, among others. In its elaboration, it employs verbal and non-verbal language, as the booklets are illustrated with woodcuts, designs carved into wood, and then pressed onto paper; the string genre permeates the universe of popular writing and orality, considering that the rhymed stories are oral accounts transcribed into pamphlets.

According to Nobre (2017), in the 19th and 20th centuries in Brazil, the term "*folhetos*" (pamphlets) was used to disseminate these popular literary productions. The author observes that the term "popular literature" or "Northeastern string literature" became widely spread in the country only in the 1970s when scholars advocated for the Iberian origin of the pamphlets themselves.

Given the richness of elements of Northeastern culture present in string literature, we believe that activity proposals based on this literary genre are of great relevance for studying the Portuguese language spoken in Brazil, seeking approaches free from linguistic prejudices and aimed at social inclusion.

The Pernambuco author, Mariane Bigio, reinvents the story of the most famous *Cangaceiros: Lampião*. Considering that "*literatura de cordel*" is a rhymed literary genre originating from oral accounts, the author, in addition to writing the text, has gifted us with a video in which, through the verses of string, we can present to our PLA students a glimpse of the history of this highly representative figure of the region.

Proposal 2 - Stories told and sung

Objectives:

1. Learn to listen, read, comprehend, interpret, and recite verses.
2. Recognize and make use of poetic language resources, such as sound and different meanings.
3. Understand the characteristics of the string literary genre and produce it based on the meanings that permeate these texts.

Level: 2

Time: 2 classes (2 synchronous meetings)

Skills worked on: written and oral comprehension

Development of the proposal:

1. Brainstorming: The teacher presents some string booklets to the PLA students and initiates a brainstorming session about the textual genre. Then, the teacher asks the following questions: Are you familiar with this type of literary production? Is there any textual genre widespread in your country similar to these pamphlets? Is there any personality in the history of your country well known for their heroic deeds or even for disastrous actions, but who became famous for the intensity of these actions and who, due to their popularity, became or could become a character in literature?
 2. Screening of the video with the recitation of the String “*Lampião, lá do Sertão!*” by Mariane Bigio (Available at: <https://youtu.be/ggvjDEpL0eQ>).
 3. Building meaning: Students ask the teacher for the meaning of some terms or expressions not understood during the recitation.
 4. Recitation: The learners recite the string, with each reading a stanza, paying attention to the sound dynamics of the recitation and the articulation of the sounds of the letters in the Portuguese language.
 5. Let's go with verses? Brazilian Portuguese learners will think of the name of a historical personality from their country, just as the writer Mariane Bigio presented the story of *Lampião* in her string. They will produce a string together with a course colleague, which can be presented online in digital format (PowerPoint/Canva), along with the recitation, or produce a video with this recitation and display it during the synchronous course meeting.
- For the development of this proposal, along with the string verses, students should also present a woodcut print that can be either original or selected from the internet according to the story they will tell.

- Students may use the style of string presented in this proposal, alternating between 6 (six) and 7 (seven) verses in each stanza and with the same number of poetic syllables in each line.
- We provide the following website as a reference for guidance throughout the development of the proposal. Students may also consult other sources for better elaboration of the activity.

Text: *Cordel "Lampião, lá do Sertão!"* by Mariane Bigio⁶, our translation

"Right in the middle of the Caantiga⁷
And I'm not talking about the 'stink'!
Because understand that this name
(Your boy, your 'sir')
is given to vegetation
that grows there in the Sertão
where the story 'passed'

*

And it was in Serra Talhada
In a corner of this Sertão⁸
That a cangaceiro⁹ was born
His name: Lampião
For some very wicked
For others a brother

*

He was furious
He had a lot of attitude
Some say, nowadays
That he was Robin Hood
He stole from the rich
Gave to those who only had a bit
Of money and health

*

Or maybe he was a pirate
But he didn't sail
He had only one eye
He was also a Captain
He commanded his bevy
With great satisfaction

*

The guy was so ferocious
That is a little piece got stuck
Of food between his teeth
And it bothered him a lot
He'd grab a machete
And perform an extraction

⁶ Available at: <https://maribigio.com/2014/05/08/lampiao-la-do-sertao/>. Accessed in: 15 apr. 2023.

⁷ Thicket; scrubland.

⁸ The term "*sertão*" is a word of Portuguese origin that refers to arid, semi-arid, or interior regions in Brazil.

⁹ Means: outlaw.

That not even the tooth survived!

*

And this man so feared
Also had feelings!
One day he fell in love
And proposed marriage
To the woman Maria Bonita
Who gave her consent

*

She too was fierce
And rode with his gang
She showed that a woman
Also has strength in fighting
And followed her husband
Throughout the world, walking

*

Between one battle and another
Lampião had fun
He liked a concertina
And danced with Maria
His gang had a party
Until the break of day

*

He danced forró
Xaxado and also baião
He liked the songs
Of the São João nights

*

On a moonlit night
Very tired of running away
From the police who never
Stopped chasing him
Lampião looked at the sky
And sang before sleeping:

*

“Look at the sky, my love
See how beautiful he looks
Look at that multicolored balloon
How in the sky it fades.”***

*

And thus he fell asleep
Next to his Maria
The police found them
Early the next day

*

He sang a song
About the sky of his homeland
As he bid farewell to life
The feared Lampião

Who is part of history
And now lives in the memory
Of those from the region

*

And it's by singing this song
That I end the poetry
Of a story that spoke
Of sadness and joy
Let's continue with the xote¹⁰
I bid farewell with the refrain:
Goodbye, until another day!"

*** Intertextuality with the excerpt from the song "*Olha Pro Céu*" by Luiz Gonzaga and José Fernandes

Aligned with the theme, in 2022, during the latest edition of our event titled "Journey of Brazilian Portuguese for Foreigners," linked to the Brazilian Portuguese course for foreigners, we brought the theme: Literature and Society. During the Journey, we explored the universe of Cordel literature from the understanding of this literary genre, its format, main themes, and cordelists.

For the approach and exploration of the theme, we invited the student and cordelist, Raffaella Paiva, from the IFRN's Superior Technology Course in Cultural Production, and, in the end, we had the participation of the cordelist from Mossoró, Antônio Francisco, a poet who currently occupies the seat of *Patativa do Assaré*¹¹ in the Brazilian Academy of Cordel Literature. On that occasion, the poet recited the string "*Escrever é sonhar*"¹²:

"To write is to meditate
Every day, all day long.
To make of the wind a ladder,
Of the moonlight a lantern,
To see the face of God
Behind the mist.
It's to travel without fear
In the boat of Freedom,
On a river made of verses
By creativity,
Looking through the window

¹⁰ Xote is a musical genre and a dance typical of the northeast region of Brazil.

¹¹ "The poet *Patativa do Assaré* is the main reference for what is understood as a genre of *cordel* literature or another poetic genre called '*poesia matuta*,' in which writing uses a language that mimics orally pronouncing words of the rural man (for example, using '*dotô*' instead of '*doutor*', doctor), focusing on the central character of the rural, poor, uneducated man. His poetry was recorded by Luiz Gonzaga and became the subject of studies by the French researcher Raymond Cantell. The poet received an honorary doctorate title from several Brazilian universities" (NASCIMENTO, 2019, p. 118).

¹² Available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?app=desktop&v=cOqKX4nDIAA>. Accessed in: 30 sep. 2023.

Of humanity's eyes.
It's to walk among the stars
Without lifting your feet from the ground.
Have commas and periods for lunch
Rhymes and prayers for dinner
And to walk on the same path
As the steps of the heart
It's to turn the desert
Into a beautiful savannah.
To live seventeen centuries
On a simple weekend.
And to walk along the paths
Of the veins of the human race
It's to walk collecting stories
In the caatingas of the backlands
To step on the stone
Where Lampião stepped
And to see the moon rise
In the palm of your hand.
It's to feel others' pain
Silencing your mouth
To spend the night awake
On the street corners
Drinking the sweat of the night,
Composing verses for the moon.
To be a writer is to tread
Where no one else sets foot.
It's to be Nobody,
Without being a slave to any other
And to live planting dreams,
Longings, desires, and faith.”

Final considerations

As evidenced throughout this work, we consider it fundamental for Portuguese language students to have access to knowledge of Brazilian culture and linguistic diversity. This is due to the fact that the *Camões* Institute, an entity of the Portuguese government, remains the leading promoter of this language internationally, dedicating considerable resources to the production of educational materials and sending teachers to partner foreign academic institutions.

Some actions in Brazil are still timid compared to European language policy initiatives. The Portuguese Language Lectureships offered by Capes and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, as well as the PLA in NETWORK program by Conif, are initiatives that attempt to promote the Portuguese language spoken in Brazil and our culture to foreign students. However, a large part of the materials produced for this purpose focus on linguistic and cultural aspects of the Rio-São Paulo axis or the Southern region of the country, as is the case with the materials from the Languages without Borders program produced by IFSul of Pelotas.

Thus, the two proposals presented in this article are aligned with a language policy aimed at valuing linguistic varieties and Northeastern culture in the context of Portuguese as an additional language instruction. Throughout these over two years of the Brazilian Portuguese for Foreigners FIC course, we have observed the interest and joy of foreign students who discover a different Brazil than what the mainstream media portrays.

The recognition of our culture and linguistic varieties as models for Portuguese language instruction should be an essential language policy action to reduce xenophobia and linguistic prejudice in the academic school environment. In this sense, the valorization of cultural diversity and intercultural learning will be great allies for the teacher who wishes to become intercultural agents in the classroom, as pointed out by Serrani (2005).

Therefore, we hope for greater development of proposals incorporating Northeastern culture into teaching Portuguese as an additional language. These intercultural proposals promote understanding between different cultures and encourage our students to value the cultures of regions away from the major urban centers of their home countries, which are often neglected and underestimated. Interculturality represents an irreversible path toward empathy, tolerance, and mutual respect, both in the culture of the target language and in the culture of the mother tongue.

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CRediT Author Statement

Acknowledgements: We would like to express our gratitude to the Federal Institute of Education, Science, and Technology of Rio Grande do Norte (IFRN) within the scope of the Portuguese as an Additional Language Network (PLA Network), the International Relations Forum (FORINTER) of the National Council of Institutions of the Federal Network of Vocational, Scientific, and Technological Education (CONIF).

Funding: Not applicable.

Conflicts of interest: There are no conflicts of interest.

Ethical approval: The work adhered to ethical standards throughout the research.

Data and material availability: The data and materials used in the work are available for access.

Author's contributions: The author's contribution involved dividing the article into sections, drafting the introduction, abstract, and theoretical framework on PLA, and creating a proposal with co-author 2, as well as formatting the work. The other authors contributed to the writing of the text, with the first co-author writing about Cultural Learning and Linguistic Diversity in PLA Teaching and the creation of a proposal, in addition to drafting the conclusions. Co-author 2 wrote about linguistic diversity and the creation of a proposal with the author, as well as providing linguistic revision of the text.

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

