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Local agency in national language policies: the internationalisation of higher education in a Brazilian institution

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ABSTRACT

This study discusses agency in language policy and planning (LPP) development from the perspective of Brazilian national language policies reflected in the local LPP programme/initiative of a public university in the Southeast region of the country. With that goal, national and local (institutional) documents are analysed and contrasted with the perceptions of local agents - or people with interest in Baldauf's terminology - comprised of students of a Brazilian government-funded programme called Languages without Borders (LwB) at that university. The perceptions of the academic community (students, lecturers and administrative staff) were obtained through an online questionnaire. The results show that top-down national policies had a great impact on the development of local policies, leaving little room for bottom-up local agency. The study concludes that the university lacked a coherent language approach that connected the macro, meso and micro levels and the four categories of agents, namely, people with power, people with expertise, people with influence and people with interest.

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Introduction and initial considerations

Research on language planning and policies (LPP) has shown the emergence and relevance of the notion of 'agency' in relation to language planners, policy makers and other stakeholders, as stated by Ricento (2000), Hornberger and Johnson (2007), Zhao and Baldauf (2012), Johnson and Johnson (2015), Brown (2015) and Fenton-Smith and Gurney (2016), among others.

Nearly a quarter of a century after Kaplan and Baldauf (1997) warned of the dearth of language policy and planning (LPP) in higher education and despite the expansion of the internationalisation of higher education (IHE) ever since, with an increase in international academic mobility and of English-medium instruction (EMI) courses, LPP research remains relatively underdeveloped in higher education. In this scenario, Fenton-Smith and Gurney (2016) suggest that current conceptions of academic language policy and

planning in higher education would benefit from contextualised analyses of actors and agency, a contribution in which the present paper aims to participate.

The growing use of EMI as a strategy to boost internationalisation in higher education institutions (HEIs) has opened room for debate in regard to the monolingual orientation still associated with LPP in that context. Moore and Nikula (2016, p. 211) for example, counteract this orientation by suggesting the adoption of a translanguaging approach in which 'speakers possess a set of skills and competences [...] which they can call upon when adding languages to their repertoire' and that views 'language resources as a holistic construct rather than a collection of separable entities.' In addition to the monolingual orientation that seems to have plagued LPP, other issues related to different levels of policy analysis seem to lack sufficient attention.

Indeed, Brown (2015) reminds us that the role of the learner in LPP is still overlooked. According to him, traditional LPP focuses on macro-level analyses of issues related to status, prestige, corpus and acquisition of languages. The author further explains that the concept of status in LPP is related to the position of a language in relation to other languages; prestige is related to the level of esteem or respect of a given language, corpus is related to formal conventions such as standardisation, whereas acquisition is concerned with language education.

Brown (2015) indicates that placing the focus on these aspects on the macro level can be described as a 'top-down' approach to LPP associated with structuralism and its view of language as being abstracted from its sociohistorical and ideological-cultural contexts something that was also discussed by Ricento (2000). So, in order to expand the view of LPP, more recently, scholars - for example, Baldauf, 2006; Spolsky, 2004 - have called for more 'bottom-up' approaches based on language ecology and on the interactions between any given language and its environment. According to Spolsky (2004, p. 7), language ecology is a 'useful metaphor' through which to study LPP within its complex cultural system, involving linguistic and non-linguistic aspects. From this point of view, in addition to macro-level elements, a wider range of contextual factors such as agentive activity at all levels, including the micro level, would be included in the analysis.

Ahearn (2001, p. 112) defines agency as 'the socioculturally mediated capacity to act'. Another way of analysing agency in university LPP is through the lens of the different people involved in it. Fenton-Smith and Gurney (2016) state that the complexities inherent in LPP can be better understood through the critical lens of agency, something that was also discussed by Zhao and Baldauf (2012, p. 3), when they mention a group (of people) 'who has the power to influence change'. As such, agency refers to the various levels and forms of power and its analysis involves not only the identification of key actors (individual or organisational) but also the extent and nature of their power over LPP, as well as how this power is negotiated among the different actors. Zhao and Baldauf's (2012) critical analysis may be seen as an example of normative LPP in which agency is not present (but should be).

Fenton-Smith and Gurney (2016) analysed LPP in higher education from a local perspective, exploring agency across three strata: macro, meso and micro. Macro-level LPP is formulated by governments taking the form of policies; meso-level LPP is conceived within and by universities; and micro-level LPP refers to the actions and decisions of teachers operating alone or in small groups. Still, according to Fenton-Smith and Gurney (2016), LPP deriving from these three levels may be formal - codified into documents

such as constitutions, resolutions and policies – or informal, such as in discussions and debates

Using a similar design, Amorim and Finardi (2017) analysed the process of internationalisation of a public university in Brazil (the Federal University of Espirito Santo – UFES): the macro level comprised national internationalisation policies and LPP; the meso level included institutional policies for internationalisation and LPP; and the micro level referred to perceptions of the academic community regarding internationalisation in that context. Because that study was carried out at the same institution as the present study was carried out, its context will be described in the methods and the discussion sections of this paper.

Baldauf and his colleagues proposed four broad categories to describe the types of actor in LPP and the nature of their power (i.e. agency): people with power, people with expertise, people with influence and people with interest (Chua & Baldauf, 2011; Zhao, 2011; Zhao & Baldauf, 2012). Other authors, such as Cooper (1989), Ricento and Hornberger (1996), Freeman (1998), Davis (1999), Ricento (2000, 2006), Canagarajah (2002), Pennycook (2003), and Rajagopalan (2013), also discussed the importance of agency and the integration of local knowledge into the formulation and implementation of LPP. Therefore, Baldauf's categories are used in our study's methodological framework, and are further described in what follows.

According to Zhao and Baldauf's (2012) categories, people with power have the authority to implement policies and, in the case of HEIs, which are the focus of the present study, these would be the university council and stakeholders. People with influence, as the name suggests, can influence the behaviour of others in relation to their language use, though they lack administrative or legislative power – again in the case of HEIs, these could be local lecturers and researchers. People with expertise lack codified power, but may be deferred to as a result of their expert knowledge of language(s), as is the case of linguists, language teachers and language educators. Finally, people with interest have neither the power nor the prestige, but passively or subconsciously make decisions on language use for themselves; these would be individuals who decide to use a particular language for their professional practice or for academic reasons. This group has also been dubbed the invisible planners (Pakir, 1994), though we will attempt to make them visible in this study, through the analysis of the learners' perceptions referred to here as the people with interest.

In this paper, we adopt the abovementioned framework and apply it to LPP in higher education in a specific context. We build on the results of Amorim and Finardi (2017) by looking at the perspective of the learners (micro level) in relation to language policies at the national (macro) and institutional (meso) levels, as well as from the perspective of *people with interest* and *people with power* (national and institutional stakeholders).

So as to extend the purview of the analysis of LPP in a local context, this paper aims to analyse Brazilian national LPP (macro level) in relation to local agencies and views (micro level) expressed in the learners' perceptions of a government-funded programme called Languages without Borders (LwB). LwB is a programme created by the Brazilian Ministry of Education in 2014 as a practical application for LPP and a response, at least in higher education, to a historical lack of investment in foreign language development in that country.

It could be argued that the micro-level group, represented by learners' perceptions, has not been given due importance in research, despite the fact that this group is perhaps the one that could be most impacted by such policies. This notion, however, may be the result of the lack of systematic research being carried out in this area in Brazil, despite some contributions from authors such as Leffa (1991), Barcelos (2004) and Da Silva (2007), for instance. Conversely, some studies developed outside Brazil show the importance of learner participation (in general), as in Luke and Dooley (2011), Fogle (2012), Fogle and King (2013), King and Fogle (2013) and Phan and Hamid (2017).

In the present study, four important programmes funded by the Brazilian government are discussed in relation to the context investigated. They are briefly presented in this section, in a chronological order. Science without Borders (SwB) was created in 2011 as a mobility programme to offer 100,000 scholarships, mainly for Brazilian undergraduate students of STEM¹ areas. English without Borders (EwB) was created in 2012 for SwB applicants, to promote activities (proficiency tests, online courses and face-to-face classes) for developing proficiency in the English language. Languages without Borders (LwB) was created in 2014, to expand EwB to other languages (German, French, Italian, Spanish, Japanese and Portuguese as a foreign language – PFL). CAPES² PrInt programme was created in 2017, replacing SwB, to promote the internationalisation of graduate programmes in Brazil. These programmes are further described in what follows.

Language policy and planning in Brazil

Globalisation has influenced educational reforms at all levels of education in Brazil, which, in turn, have stirred up hot debate and induced reforms in LPP in the country. Regarding LPP in basic education (primary and secondary levels), the recently approved Law No. 13.415/2017 made English teaching mandatory, which has affected negatively the teaching of other foreign languages and the development of multilingualism in Brazil. In relation to higher education, the forces of globalisation, translated into the process of internationalisation, have strengthened the hegemony of English as the language of internationalisation (Jenkins, 2013) and as the most frequently used language of instruction in HEIs that adopt EMI as an internationalisation strategy (e.g. Taquini, Finardi, & Amorim, 2017).

The Federal University of Espirito Santo (UFES) is a public institution³ and a member of the Languages without Borders (LwB) programme since 2012, having recently adhered to the internationalisation programme CAPES PrInt.⁴ The LwB and the CAPES PrInt can be considered both inductive⁵ and implicit⁶ national policies for languages and internationalisation, respectively. So as to analyse how these policies at the macro level are interpreted in the micro level through the lens of learner agency, the present study will contrast these policies with the perceptions of local agents at UFES.

The discussion on LPP has attracted much attention from scholars all over the world, especially in the context of higher education (e.g. Kaplan & Baldauf, 1997; Ricento, 2006; Shohamy, 2006; Spolsky, 2004; Wright, 2016). In a study carried out in Australia by Kaplan and Baldauf (1997), it was observed that universities in that country operated on an *ad hoc* model characterised by multiple academic literacy programmes operating from different perspectives. What universities lacked, they claimed, was a coherent language, literacy and communication policy approach to tertiary literacy [...] that

would bring together the current disparate programmes to create a strategy that would be more than the sum of its parts' (Kaplan & Baldauf, 1997, p. 258).

A similar trend towards multiple language programmes occurred in Brazil as a result of the Science without Borders (SwB)⁷ programme, the largest Brazilian government-funded academic mobility programme. According to Altenhofen (2013), SwB exposed the need to improve the foreign language proficiency of higher education students, driving many institutions to propose *ad hoc* LPP to train their students and thus secure a share of these scholarships. Finardi and Archanjo (2018) also point out that LPP was implemented *ad hoc* as a reaction to multiple internationalisation policies and programmes, as is the case of the SwB programme and its offspring, the Languages without Borders (LwB) programme, described in more detail later on in this study. Lima and Maranhão (2009) also indicate a trend for *ad hoc* and reactive (passive) attitudes in relation to internationalisation and language policies in Brazil.

In the case of UFES, there has not been a systematic discussion regarding LPP (within this university) prior to the Science without Borders (SwB), the English without Borders (EwB)⁸ and the Languages without Borders (LwB) programmes. Indeed, in order to meet the specific language requirements of the programmes, UFES initially created provisional *ad hoc* strategies and policies – and later, formalised policies – to become eligible to receive the government funding for internationalisation and foreign language development associated with these programmes.

Overview of language policies in Brazil

LPP history in Brazil dates back to its colonial period, when multilingualism was repressed by the imposition of one language (Portuguese) over others (indigenous languages), as stated by Bagno and Carvalho (2015) and Souza (2014). In the eighteenth century, the 'general language' taught by Jesuits (based on indigenous languages) was banned to favour Portuguese. For decades, the variety of Portuguese taught and learned in Brazil was based on a Portuguese standard variety from the nineteenth century. During the World War II, varieties of Italian and German spoken in various immigrant colonies in Brazil were banned for political reasons. After the Second World War, the USA became a military, political and economic power, and there was a rapid growth in the number of private English language schools in Brazil (Day, 2012). At the same time, the cultural and economic influence of countries like France and Germany decreased in Brazil, along with the number of students of French and German as foreign languages in the country.

Considering the different stances on cultural and linguistic diversity in Brazil, it is natural that LPP has gone through various changes and challenges during the colonial and post-colonial periods, due to different interpretations of the value of multilingualism. Studies like those developed by Massini-Cagliari (2004, 2006), Naro and Scherre (2007) and Moita Lopes (2013) show the complexity of the linguistic panorama in Brazil, including issues related to apparent monolingualism, linguistic prejudice and national language policies.

In addition, the myth of Brazil as a monolingual country still exists and is reinforced by the Federal Constitution of 1988 (article 13),⁹ where Portuguese is established as the official language (Finardi, 2016). The cultural and linguistic plurality that characterises

the composition of the Brazilian population is not recognised in LPP, although there are a few exceptions, such as the National Inventory of Linguistic Diversity (INDL, in Portuguese)¹⁰ initiative, created in 2010 by the National Institute for Historical and Artistic Heritage (IPHAN, in Portuguese).

INDL recognises the existence of more than 250 languages in Brazil, including indigenous languages (such as Tupi-Guarani), immigration/heritage languages (such as Pomeranian and Talian, a dialect of the Venetian language), sign languages (such as LIBRAS) and African-Brazilian languages. Taking up Brown's (2015) proposal to analyse LPP in terms of status, prestige, corpus and acquisition of languages, we can see that, although Brazil presents a robust diversity of languages, only one (Portuguese) has the status of official language. Moreover, most of the more than 250 languages spoken in the country are seriously endangered, partly as a result of their lack of prestige and recognition in Brazilian LPP.

Language acquisition, in regards to language teaching/learning in Brazil, has been regulated by policies such as the National Law of Guidelines for Education (LDB, in Portuguese). LDB was first established between the 1940s and 1960s, and its previous versions allowed for the choice of the foreign language (L2) to be taught in elementary education from the 6th year on, depending on the local needs of communities. Thus, schools near the border of Spanish-speaking countries had the opportunity to choose this L2 to be taught as a foreign language. In addition to this general language policy for basic education, Law No. 11.161/2005 suggested Spanish as the language to be offered in secondary schools, taking into account the geographical situation of Brazil.

Educational reforms, triggered by the transitional government of President Michel Temer as a reaction to the Labour Party (PT, in Portuguese) ruling over a decade in the country, approved Law No. 13.415/2017, which defined new policies for L2 instruction in basic education. English became the mandatory language both in elementary schools (from the 6th year on) and in secondary schools. Considering that the public school curricula have few mandatory hours dedicated to the teaching of foreign languages, it is possible that Spanish (or any other foreign language apart from English) will cease to be offered in public schools, which would affect multilingualism in Brazil negatively. Another consequence of this reform is the creation of a social gap, between those who can and those who cannot afford to learn foreign languages in private language schools.

Nowadays, there is no regulation regarding bilingual education in the first stages of elementary education. This gap in legislation allows for private language institutes to offer their own bilingual programmes; there are high levels of variation associated with these programmes and they can be offered without any quality guarantees or control, despite the high prices charged for them, as is described by Liberali and Megale (2016) and Cavalcanti (1999).

With regard to higher education, Brazil has no national language policy and universities have the autonomy to dictate their own LPP. However, in recent years, the process of internationalisation has sparked discussions around LPP for higher education. Finardi and Archanjo (2018) claim that the LPP debate in Brazil is a washback effect¹¹ of the SwB programme. In the first calls of the SwB programme, most candidates chose Portugal or Spain as a destination for exchange programmes, due to the linguistic proximity of the languages spoken in these countries to Brazilian Portuguese. This choice, motivated by the low levels of proficiency in foreign languages in general, and in English in particular, of Brazilian university students, helped to raise awareness among stakeholders, language experts and laypersons of the linguistic deficit of Brazilian university students in terms of foreign language proficiency. At the time, the low level of proficiency in English was also reported in newspapers¹² pointing out that only 5% of the Brazilian population could speak English.

As a first response to this problem, the Ministry of Education (MEC) and the Ministry of Science, Technology and Innovation (MCTI) - the managers of SwB at that time - had to create strategies to encourage the Brazilian students applying to the programme to choose alternative destination countries where many SwB scholarships were still vacant, such as the USA, the UK and Australia. One of these strategies consisted of financing language courses abroad for Brazilian students to attend prior to the beginning of the classes with academic content that were part of SwB. This move was strongly criticised due to its ad hoc nature and the high costs associated with it. Some experts even supported the end of the SwB programme altogether, as reported in the mass media.¹³

Another strategy, created as a result of the first response, was the creation of the English without Borders (EwB) programme in 2012, in order to offer free (government-funded) online courses, face-to-face classes and proficiency exams for SwB applicants. In 2014, EwB was rebranded as Languages without Borders (LwB) in order to include other foreign languages: English, German, French, Italian, Spanish, Japanese and Portuguese as a Foreign Language (PFL).

In 2017 the LwB programme launched a public national call to re-accredit member institutions (mostly higher education institutions - HEIs) to receive funding. Thus, the HEIs that participated in LwB had to prepare a local language policy (LP) proposal/ plan and submit it for the approval of local committees, councils and boards, before sending the document containing the LP to the Ministry of Education, which manages the LwB programme.

Language policies at UFES

A member of the EwB/LwB programme since 2012, UFES has had to develop several strategies and documents to receive funding from the federal government in order to keep the activities associated with these programmes running (as well as other internationalisation actions), including its own Internationalisation Plan (IP)¹⁴ and Language Policy for Internationalisation (LPI). 15 Currently, LwB is undergoing various reforms, the main one being the change in the type of funding for LwB teachers, who no longer receive scholarships directly from the Ministry of Education (MEC). Now, LwB member institutions are expected to manage their own resources to finance these teachers, and this represents a great challenge for the programme at the local level, since universities are having a hard time to manage resources received from federal sources, due to budget cuts imposed by MEC.

For the creation and discussion of the LPI at UFES, a mixed commission was created which included members of the Department of Languages and Literature (DLL), the Language Centre (LC) and members of (administrative) Senior Offices, such as Student Affairs and Citizenship (Proaeci), Outreach (Proex), Human Resources (Progep), Undergraduate Courses (Prograd), Graduate Programmes and Research (PRPPG) and Institutional Planning (Proplan). This decision was an attempt to bring together various stakeholders to represent the needs of the different sectors involved in LPI from the viewpoint of UFES management.

The initial proposal of the commission was to design a comprehensive language policy for general purposes at UFES - not only for academic purposes. However, due to time constraints - as a result of the impending deadline for government funding - and criticism from the Department of Languages and Literature (DLL), the final version of the LP document focused on internationalisation only and was hastily approved (under fierce attack) by a small majority in the UFES Council of Teaching, Research and Outreach (CEPE). The Language Policy for Internationalisation (LPI) resolution was approved in a top-down fashion with the will of the Central Administration prevailing and excluding various items of the original proposal, such as the role of heritage languages (e.g. Pomeranian), indigenous languages (e.g. Tupi-Guarani) and the Brazilian Sign Language (LIBRAS)¹⁶ in the context of higher education. Therefore, the academic community at UFES missed a great opportunity to discuss and implement a comprehensive language policy for that university, because the Central Administration (motivated by economic concerns only) decided to focus the LPP on aspects related to internationalisation only (in a top-down fashion), in order to get funding from the federal government.

Languages at UFES, agents and stakeholders

UFES currently offers English, Italian and Portuguese as a Foreign Language (PFL) courses through the LwB programme, although the activities offered in each language may vary, depending on the resources available. For the English language, online courses, face-toface classes and proficiency exams are offered. For the Italian language, only face-toface classes and workshops are available. For PFL, there are face-to-face classes and the opportunity to take Celpe-Bras, ¹⁷ the only Brazilian Portuguese proficiency exam accepted nationwide. In relation to the geographical distribution of courses, English, Italian and PFL are offered in Vitoria, the capital, with only some English classes offered in Alegre (south of the state) and São Mateus (north of the state) due to limitations in personnel, transportation and accommodation.

UFES also has a Language Centre (LC), which offers language courses (for general purposes) for the academic community as well as for the external community, with a total of 7,000 language learners. Six foreign languages are available: English, German, French, Italian, Spanish and PFL. In addition, the LC offers proficiency exams such as Celpe-Bras and language tests for admission to graduate programmes at UFES.

In the case of UFES, we can name the following stakeholders and agents in LPP:

- National level (macro): Representatives of the Ministry of Education (MEC), the Ministry of Economy (ME), CAPES and the Languages without Borders (LwB) programme.
- Institutional level (meso): Senior offices including (but not limited to) the International Affairs Office (IAO), Student Affairs and Citizenship (Proaeci), Outreach (Proex), Human Resources (Progep), Undergraduate Courses (Prograd), Graduate Programmes and Research (PRPPG) and Institutional Planning (Proplan) - Language Centre (LC) and the Department of Languages and Literature (DLL).
- Community level (micro): Lecturers, students and members of the administrative staff.

Concerning the agency of groups/individuals involved in the process of LPP development at UFES, various agents were called to contribute their views, including divisions of the central administration (the senior offices described above) and members of the Department of Languages and Literature (DLL). Some lecturers in language education were also called to provide opinions on this subject, although many of their contributions were rejected in the final version of the document. It is important to note that student representatives were not invited to the discussion, and this represents a relevant flaw in LPP development, since students (around 25,000 people) are the most sizable part of the academic community and those who use the language services offered at UFES the most.

In relation to the measures to facilitate/constrain agency in LPP development, public calls and national programmes such as those reviewed in this study, namely, the SwB, the EwB, the LwB and the CAPES PrInt call, act as a double-edged sword for they can both facilitate and constrain agency in LPP development, depending on how institutions approach them.

As an example of how these calls and programmes can facilitate LPP, and considering that the national language policies for higher education are not yet defined in Brazil, one can say that the public calls for accreditation in the LwB programme and CAPES PrInt worked in an inductive way, as propellers/catalysts for LPP. In this way, Brazilian HEIs had to leave their comfort zone in order to convene meetings with various stakeholders/agents and departments to discuss their own language – overt or covert – policies, ideologies and practices.

Indeed, this happened in the context analysed. These calls/programmes forced Brazilian institutions (including UFES) to discuss their beliefs and practices concerning languages, making efforts to create an institutional document, summarising and making such beliefs and practices official. In the case of UFES, its language policy was approved without much discussion with institutional representatives, and no discussion (at all) with students. The internationalisation plan (IP) and language policy (LP) at UFES were only approved as a way to meet the requirements to participate in the CAPES PrInt call and the re-accreditation call of the LwB programme, respectively, to get funding from those programmes.

Conversely, one way in which these programmes and calls constrained agency in LPP development is related to the deadline to participate in those programmes/calls (so as to guarantee funding), which forced some institutions to approve their IP and LP without much discussion within the academic community. Again, this was exactly what happened at UFES resulting in a policy focused on internationalisation only excluding indigenous, heritage and sign languages in higher education, as stated earlier in this study. The tight deadlines hindered further discussions on how to use language potential to develop a more active, critical, diverse and inclusive internationalisation process that promotes multilingualism – since LPs from earlier levels of education tend to favour English, as previously discussed in this paper.

Concerning the interactions between various agents in LPP development, the discussions between the members of the commission that developed the LP for UFES were heated, since the views from language experts and managers of the institution usually diverged. Language experts tended to defend a more holistic view of languages (and LPP), including aspects such as inclusion, multilingualism and diversity. Managers tended to be more pragmatic, limiting the choices of the issues to be addressed in the



LP (defined in instructions from the LwB programme) and the languages that, in their view, were relevant to internationalisation.

In relation to the effects of stakeholders and agents in LPP development, the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Economy, for example, played a key role in the development of policies, since they created the guidelines for the institutions to follow in order to get funding from the federal government. Once again, it seems that economic interests took precedence over other aspects such as the importance of discussing diversity, agency and inclusion in LPP development.

Context, methods and materials

Context

This study was developed at the Federal University of Espirito Santo (UFES), founded in 1954 and located in the Southeast region of Brazil. UFES is a public university and has four campuses spread across the state of Espirito Santo, two of them - Goiabeiras and Maruipe - located in the capital city, Vitoria, one in Alegre - CCAE-CCENS - and one in São Mateus - CEUNES. The university has around 22,000 undergraduate students, 3,000 graduate students, 1,500 lecturers and 2,000 members of the administrative staff; it is a medium-sized university, considering Brazilian standards.

Methods

The study by Amorim and Finardi (2017) offered a starting point for the methodology of this paper. Using a case study design, these authors analysed the process of internationalisation at UFES on three levels: macro (national level), meso (institutional level) and micro (local academic community) levels. They found that foreign languages – in particular, English - played a key role in the development of the internationalisation process, and that language and internationalisation policies should be aligned, so that the local community can benefit more (such as from the development of language proficiency) and engage more in internationalisation actions (such as student mobility) which, in turn, depend on the development of foreign language proficiency.

Based on that starting point (and its methodology) the questionnaire used in that study was improved to collect the perceptions of LwB learners (micro level) for the present study. In addition, national and institutional documents were analysed and contrasted with such perceptions. Documents included the national legislation in the area of Education, language policies, internationalisation plans, websites of government-funded programmes and the databases available in these websites. In the process of analysis, the authors sought to identify textual elements that made reference to the foreign languages chosen for teaching/learning, as well as references to agents who participated in the formulation and implementation of policies. This analysis is discussed again in the results section.

The research questions that motivated this study were the following: (A) how are government-funded national programmes related with internationalisation plans and language policies in a higher education institution in Brazil? (B) what are the perceptions of participants of one of these programmes, in relation to the programmes themselves and



their connections with internationalisation and foreign languages? (C) which are the local agents involved in the formulation of policies?

Materials

In order to develop the present study, several documents were analysed to identify keywords and topics related to the subject of this study, especially those related to national language¹⁸ and educational policies (such as the National Law of Guidelines for Education, LDB¹⁹), as well as institutional documents from UFES, such as its Internationalisation Plan²⁰ and Language Policy for Internationalisation.²¹ These documents were collected online in the official websites and databases of the Brazilian Ministry of Education (MEC), the Federal Register of Legislation (full text of individual laws and the relationship between them), the Federal University of Espirito Santo (UFES), and websites of programmes such as SwB, LwB and CAPES PrInt. Links for these websites can be found in this study in footnotes. In addition, a questionnaire²² was developed to collect the perceptions of learners within the LwB programme at UFES. Ethical clearance was obtained from the institution and from the LwB coordinators and all of the participants provided informed consent.

Concerning the questionnaire sample, it comprised 2,738 people, with ages ranging from 16 to over 34 years old, both male and female, mainly from Brazil and with Portuguese as their first language (L1). Their contact information was available on the LwB database and the sample included language learners who attended classes in the LwB programme at UFES mainly between 2015 and 2019. Respondents included undergraduate and graduate students, as well as lecturers and members of the administrative staff, from the four campuses. Data from questionnaires was processed using a spreadsheet software.

The study used convenience/opportunity sampling, because members of the target population met certain criteria. In this case, being a member of the UFES community, being a language learner on the LwB programme and being accessible through the LwB database were key conditions to participate in this study.

Results

In order to arrive at the results of this study, the authors expanded on an existing study published in 2017 (as previously mentioned here), by consulting documents and the literature related to language policy (LP) and education in Brazil to find relevant topics to develop a new questionnaire. The documents analysed in this study, related to LP and education in Brazil, include the National Law of Guidelines for Education (LDB) and its subsequent versions, as well as UFES' Internationalisation Plan and Language Policy.

The authors also reviewed various documents from the Languages without Borders (LwB)²³ and CAPES PrInt²⁴ programme websites, such as public calls (to offer online courses, face-to-face classes and proficiency tests), as well as regulations, reports and guidelines for the implementation and re-accreditation of the LwB programme at Brazilian universities, as well as agreements between LwB and foreign partner institutions, such as Languages Canada, the Japan Foundation, the Embassy of France, the Embassy of Italy, and the German Service of Academic Exchange (DAAD). The literature reviewed,



related to LP, included - mainly - the works of: Spolsky (2004), Ricento (2006), Shohamy (2006), Baldauf (2006), Chua and Baldauf (2011) and Wright (2016).

Finally, the questionnaire of the previous study (Amorim & Finardi, 2017) was improved to collect the impressions and opinions of the LwB language programme participants at UFES. The procedures and results of this questionnaire are briefly presented in this section, focusing on the points/ideas that showed greater relevance to this study.

The participants in the questionnaire were contacted by e-mail and through a messaging system available for internal communication at UFES, between January and March 2019. The questionnaire contained 19 questions in Portuguese – an English version is provided as an Appendix to this study –, divided into two sections: one with *factual* questions to gather information about the respondents; and one with behavioural and attitudinal²⁵ questions, to ascertain the respondents' behaviours and beliefs. Such questions included closed-ended items, Likert scales, multiple-choice items, open-ended and short-answer questions. Piloting was conducted with the help of LwB teachers and learners. Respondents were expected to finish the questionnaire in 15 minutes. The data from the questionnaire, considered most relevant for the purpose of this study, are presented as follows.

A total of 250 people answered the questionnaire, representing a response rate of 9.13%, a rate which is considered acceptable in the survey research literature (Dörnyei & Taguchi, 2010). Answers show that 50.8% of respondents were undergraduate students, followed by graduate students (37.2%), lecturers (7.6%) and members of the administrative staff (4.4%). This result indicated that the LwB programme was still seen at UFES as a programme for students. Another explanation for this result is that lecturers and administrative staff either lack interest/time to enrol in the LwB classes or were not fully aware of the activities offered to them by the LwB for free.

Concerning the campus of origin, most respondents came from Goiabeiras (76.8%), followed by Maruipe (12.0%), Alegre (6.8%) and São Mateus (4.4%). Based on these results, we recommend increasing activity related to the LwB programme at the campuses located in the countryside to respond to the increasing demand for LwB opportunities/activities in Alegre and São Mateus, for instance.

In relation to the most sought after skill to be improved through LwB, most respondents indicated speaking (45.2%), followed by listening (26.8%), writing (13.2%) and reading (10.8%). 'Other' skills (4.0%) included developing 'grammar skills' and combinations of skills such as speaking and writing. These results were in line with Tilio (2014), who stated that language education in Brazilian schools favours reading because of the high number of students per class, the limitations of access to audio/video equipment and the low number of hours/lessons per week. At university level, students are expected to read academic texts in English, although they do not have to produce texts in other languages. This trend mirrors what happens in language education in public elementary schools, as reported by Tilio (2014).

Concerning the reasons why people decided to participate in LwB classes, the results are shown in Figure 1. 'Other' answers included improving speaking skills and vocabulary. One can see that LwB learners were aware that the main goal of the programme is to study languages for specific (academic) purposes, although many of them were also using LwB classes to develop general language skills (e.g. for travelling/tourism), as shown in 'both' answers (54.4%).

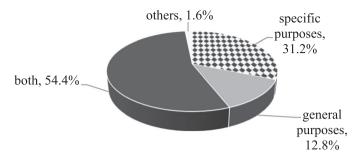


Figure 1. Reasons for choosing LwB at UFES.

When asked about the role of their first language (L1) in learning a foreign language (L2), most respondents stated that L1 helps to acquire L2 (43.2%), followed by those who stated that L1 does not influence L2 (27.6%). 16% preferred not to answer this question, followed by the ones who claimed that L1 hinders L2 learning (13.2%). In contrast to the belief in early approaches to second language acquisition, which discouraged teachers from using L1 and translation in the L2 classroom (e.g. Finardi & Porcino, 2014), it seems that nowadays learners see L1 as a helpful tool in learning L2.

In relation to the opinion of respondents regarding the LwB materials, most of them considered the materials good (44%), followed by very good (25.2%), fair (20%), excellent (8.8%) and poor (2%). Although some learners may lack expert knowledge about the design and quality of course materials, we argue that they may be able to assess the quality of the teaching materials by comparison to those available in previous learning experiences. Taken together, good, very good and excellent answers represent almost 80% of the opinions.

Also with respect to materials, 61.6% of participants knew that these materials were designed by the LwB teachers, while 38.4% did not. It is important to highlight that one of the objectives of LwB was to train teachers, so that part of the time teachers dedicated to the programme went into the design of materials, supervised by LwB coordinators who are also language and teacher educators at UFES.

Concerning the methodology used in the LwB classroom, the respondents' opinions are indicated in Figure 2. These results suggest that LwB learners are satisfied with the

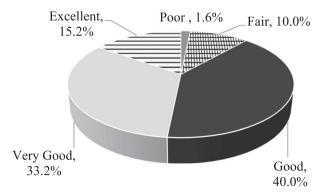


Figure 2. Participants' opinions on LwB methodology in the classroom.

methodology. Once again, if taken together, the good, very good and excellent categories represent a very high proportion, almost 90%, of the answers.

In relation to the general level of satisfaction regarding LwB, the majority of the respondents considered LwB to be very good (60.8%), followed by excellent (22%), good (8.4%), fair (7.2%) and poor (1.6%). If taken together, the very good and excellent categories represented more than 80% of the answers, suggesting that LwB was appreciated by the UFES community.

When asked if LwB was a language or an internationalisation programme, there were similar percentages of opinions for those who considered it a language programme only (42.8%) and both an internationalisation and a language programme (42.8%). Fewer people (14.4%) considered LwB an internationalisation programme only. These results might suggest that respondents considered languages an essential part of the internationalisation process.

Concerning the languages chosen by LwB learners, the vast majority of them chose English (88.9%), followed by Italian (5.6%), French (4.4%) and Portuguese as a foreign language - PFL (1.1%). This may be due to the fact that the central management of LwB (located in Brasilia) offered scholarships directly to LwB English teachers through the Ministry of Education, while other languages depended on local/institutional financing. As a result of local financial constraints, few scholarships were offered for Italian, French and Portuguese LwB teachers, and few classes for these languages were offered to the UFES community. The low number of PFL learners indicated that some actions must be taken in order to promote the study of Portuguese among international students, this being the main language of instruction at UFES.

When asked what internationalisation means for them, respondents answered as described in Table 1. 'Other' answers included: globalisation; language and content integration; learning about other cultures; and connecting researchers from different countries. For most of them (18.1%) internationalisation was still associated with academic mobility, when they chose the item 'studying abroad/exchange programmes'. This was in line with the misconceptions²⁶ related to internationalisation, described by De Wit (2011).

When asked what UFES could do to promote internationalisation, participants indicated the items described in Table 2. More exchange programmes abroad (23.5%) was still the main suggestion from the respondents in order to promote internationalisation. In addition, an awareness of the importance of languages was reflected in the 'foreign language classes with vocabulary related to my field of study' (19.8%) and 'foreign language classes for general purposes' (16.9%) choices.

Table 1. Meanings of internationalisation indicated by the respondents.

Item	Percentage
Publications in international journals	12.6%
Foreign lecturers/students on campus	14.4%
Studying abroad/exchange programmes	18.1%
Learning a foreign language	15.7%
Language proficiency exams	11.0%
Agreements with foreign institutions	15.4%
Education in the English language	12.1%
Other	0.8%

Table 2. Actions for internationalisation sugge	iested by respond	dents.
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Item	Percentage
Foreign language classes with vocabulary related to my field of study	19.8%
More exchange programmes abroad	23.5%
More support for international research/publications	16.9%
Portuguese classes for international students	10.4%
Foreign language classes for general purposes	16.9%
Training for foreign language teachers	10.8%
Other	1.7%

'Other' answers for this question included: offering language classes specifically for graduate students; keeping LwB classes going; offering more courses outside the main campus; attracting more foreign lecturers to UFES; integrating LwB classes as optional subjects in the curricula of all courses; encouraging lecturers to develop their language skills so as to make international students feel welcome and offering classes in other languages; offering the possibility to change the language being studied through LwB; offering at least one mandatory subject in a foreign language in every course at UFES; and, finally, further developing cooperation with foreign institutions in various areas.

Discussion

Considering the data obtained from the questionnaires and the national and institutional documents analysed in this study, we argue that more strategies are necessary to support agency in the development of local LP, since not all members of the academic community and stakeholders are included (or have their voices heard) in the process of LP discussion and implementation. The analysis of documents indicated the promotion of certain languages (mainly English) over others and few space for the participation of some agents (especially at the local level) in the formulation and implementation of policies.

Considering the level of education of the participants in the questionnaire, it seems that some actions at UFES are necessary to boost opportunities within the LwB programme to benefit other target groups, such as teaching staff and administrative staff, and promote their participation, because the programme was launched to serve all members of the local academic community. The participation of teaching and administrative staff could promote activities related to Internationalisation at Home (IaH), which is discussed later.

Offering opportunities for members of other campuses is also something that needs to be accomplished at UFES. Strategies to develop certain skills are also necessary in order to change the panorama of language learning/teaching in Brazil, which favours reading skills mostly, as suggested by Tilio (2014).

In relation to the role of L1, LwB teachers could benefit from the input of learners' opinions and develop strategies to integrate L1 into L2 classes. Concerning LwB learning materials and teacher methodology, more guidance and feedback should be given consistently to LwB teachers for the development of these aspects, since LwB students gave great importance to materials and methodology.

Special attention needs to be paid to the respondents' association between internationalisation and 'studying abroad/exchange programmes' since public – and private – funding for these activities has been dwindling in Brazil in recent years, especially after the termination of the SwB programme. Activities related to the promotion of 'learning

a foreign language' may enable students to take part in internationalisation activities other than academic mobility, for example, those related to Internationalisation at Home (IaH).

IaH activities may include a foreign language as a medium of instruction in local institutions and other actions, such as discussed by Jones and Reiffenrath (2018): (a) offering global perspectives within local programmes, whether or not students spend time abroad; (b) using cultural diversity in the classroom for inclusive learning, teaching and assessment; (c) creating opportunities for engagement with 'cultural others' in local societies; (d) including virtual mobility with foreign partner universities; and (e) promoting purposeful engagement with foreign students. All these activities require (somehow) foreign language use, and language policies in higher education could be used to promote IaH.

The suggestions for internationalisation actions are still focused on 'more exchange programmes abroad', but the second and third items in the list of suggestions, which are 'foreign language classes with vocabulary related to my field of study' and 'foreign language classes for general purposes', indicate an increasing interest in learning foreign languages. Local language policy makers and language teachers could take notice of/follow up on these suggestions and propose new courses - with the appropriate funding - designed specifically for these audiences, that is, for people who want to learn languages both for specific and for general (non-academic) purposes at university level.

Conclusions

The results and discussions in this study suggest that, although government-funded programmes like LwB can promote – and improve – discussions around internationalisation, language policies and their implementation in higher education, further attention needs to be paid to increasing the participation of various stakeholders/agents in the formulation and implementation of such policies, so that LP can reflect their needs and situation, especially in Brazil, which is in the early stages of internationalisation in higher education and the development of LPP.

Concerning the results of the questionnaire, the opinions and level of satisfaction indicated by participants (mainly undergraduate students) – in relation to LwB methodology and materials, for instance – suggest that programmes like LwB represent a relevant action and support for the development of language proficiency, internationalisation and LPP at the institutional level.

The authors of this study (who participated actively in the development of the language policy and internationalisation plan of UFES) did not recall a single instance, during the development of those documents, where the university managers attempted to form a centralised decision-making body to bring together people with power and people with interest to keep pace with macro (national), meso (institutional) and micro (learners) responses to specific implementation measures. In our view, such coordinated processes represent the way forward for successful LPP, and this is not so much dependent on a choice between a top-down or a bottom-up approach, but rather on paying attention to the mechanisms by which the policy is coordinated while respecting the agency of the actors involved in LPP.

Notes

1. STEM: Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics.



- 2. CAPES is the Coordination for the Development of Higher Education Personnel, a foundation connected to the Brazilian Ministry of Education (MEC).
- 3. That means that students do not have to pay any fees to study there.
- 4. PrInt is an internationalisation programme launched by CAPES to provide funding for Brazilian graduate programmes.
- 5. In the sense of 'preparatory' national policies which influenced the formulation of further policies in local institutions.
- 6. In the sense of 'implied' or 'tacit' national policies created for purposes not directly related to language policies.
- 7. SwB was an exchange programme established in 2011 by the Brazilian federal government which offered scholarships for studies abroad. It also aimed to attract foreign scholars to develop their research in Brazil, in order to promote innovation in the fields of Science and Technology in the country.
- 8. EwB was a programme created by the Brazilian Ministry of Education in 2012 in order to promote the teaching and learning of English. It was initially created to support the SwB programme due to the low level of proficiency in English of SwB applicants, and transformed into LwB in 2014.
- 9. More information at: http://www.planalto.gov.br/ccivil_03/constituicao/constituicaocompila do.htm
- 10. More information at: http://portal.iphan.gov.br/indl.
- 11. In the sense of: the design of language planning today in Brazil is still oriented towards achieving the necessary requirements in order to be eligible for government funding.
- 12. More information at: https://oglobo.globo.com/economia/emprego/brasileiros-nao-sabem-falar-ingles-apenas-5-dominam-idioma-6239142.
- 13. More information at: https://oglobo.globo.com/sociedade/educacao/especialistas-concor dam-com-fim-do-programa-ciencia-sem-fronteiras-21149172.
- 14. More information at: http://www.daocs.ufes.br/sites/daocs.ufes.br/files/filed/anexo/resoluca o_no_15.2018_-_sri_-_politica_institucional_de_internacionalizacao.pdf#overlay-context=r esolu%25C3%25A7%25C3%25B5es-de-2018-cepe.
- 15. More information at: http://www.daocs.ufes.br/sites/daocs.ufes.br/files/filed/anexo/ilovepdf_merged_0.pdf#overlay-context=resolu%25C3%25A7%25C3%25B5es-de-2018-cepe.
- UFES offers undergraduate courses for educating teachers to work with indigenous students and deaf students.
- 17. More information at: http://celpebras.inep.gov.br/celpebras/#!/index.
- 18. More information at: http://www.planalto.gov.br/ccivil 03/constituicao/constituicao.htm.
- 19. More information at: http://www.planalto.gov.br/ccivil_03/leis/l9394.htm.
- 20. More information at: http://www.daocs.ufes.br/sites/daocs.ufes.br/files/field/anexo/resoluc ao_no_15.2018_-_sri_-_politica_institucional_de_internacionalizacao.pdf#overlay-contex t=resolu%25C3%25A7%25C3%25B5es-de-2018-cepe.
- 21. More information at: http://www.daocs.ufes.br/sites/daocs.ufes.br/files/field/anexo/ilovepdf_merged_0.pdf#overlay-context=resolu%25C3%25A7%25C3%25B5es-de-2018-cepe.
- 22. The data set associated with this study can be obtained through a request by e-mail to the authors of this article.
- 23. More information at: http://isf.mec.gov.br/documentos.
- 24. More information at: https://capes.gov.br/cooperacao-internacional/multinacional/progra ma-institucional-de-internacionalizacao-capes-print.
- 25. Terminology used by Dörnyei and Taguchi (2010).
- 26. De Wit (2011) indicates that internationalisation takes an increasingly central role in higher education. Still, there is a predominantly activity-oriented approach toward internationalisation which leads to misconceptions about the nature of this process, whereby internationalisation is regarded as synonymous with a specific institutional strategy in other words, where the means seem to have become the goal.



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Appendix

2012

2013

2014

2015

2016

2017

2018

2019

Questionnaire sent to learners of the Languages without Borders (LwB) Programme at UFES [Adapted from the original form in Portuguese].

The information in this questionnaire will be used only for research purposes and in ways that will not reveal who you are. You will not be identified in any publication derived from this study, unless you authorise to do so.

Estimated time for completion: 15 minutes.

Contact: pesquisacsf.ufes@gmail.com

Thank you for taking part in this survey.

(1) Name						
(1) E-mail						
(1) Gender						
Male	Female		Other		Prefer no	t to answer
(1) Age						
16–18	19–21 22–2	4 25–2	27	28–30	31–33	34+
	nultiple answers)					
Undergraduate (1) Campus	Gradu	ate	Lectur	er	Adminis	trative Staff
Goiabeiras	Marui	pe	Al	legre	:	São Mateus
(1) What is the	main skill you war	nt to improve w	ith the Lw	B programme	e?	
Reading	Listening	Writing	Spo	eaking	Other (ple	ase specify)
(1) When have	you attended LwB	classes?				
2012 201	2014	2015	2016	2017	2010	2010

(1) How did you first learn about the LwB programme?

E-mail	UFES homepag	ge Social Media	Friends or colleagues	Ads on campus	Other (please specify)
(1) V	When you enroll	ed in LwB, you pl	anned to learn langua	ages for:	
Acader	mic purposes		General purpose	S	Both
	What is your opi anguage (L2)?	nion on the role of	your first language (L	1) in the process o	of learning a foreign
It help	s my L2 learning	It hinders my L2 lear	ning It does not influe	ence my L2 learning	Prefer not to answer
	•	the LwB learning			
Poor		Fair	Good	Very Good	Excellent
Yes (1) H	How do you like	the methodology	used by the LwB teac	hers in the classr	No
Poor		Fair	Good	Very Good	Excellent
(1) V	What is your ove	erall rate of satisfac	ction with LwB?		
Poor		Fair	Good	Very Good	Excellent
	n your opinion,		Good	Very Good	Excellent
		LwB is:		Very Good	Excellent
(1) I	n your opinion,	LwB is:		internationalisation	



(1) What does internationalisation mean to you? (multiple answers)

Publications in international journals Foreign lecturers/students on campus Studying abroad/exchange programmes Learning a foreign language Language proficiency exams Agreements with foreign institutions Education in the English language Other (please specify)

(1) What kind of support should UFES provide its academic community with to boost its internationalisation process? (multiple answers)

Foreign language classes with vocabulary related to my field of study More exchange programmes abroad More support for international research/publications

Portuguese classes for international students Foreign language classes for general purposes Training for foreign language teachers Other (please specify)