

PONTIFICAL CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY OF RIO GRANDE DO SUL
SCHOOL OF HUMANITIES
LETTERS

MARIA EDUARDA PIAN SOHNE

LANGUAGE AND IDENTITY IN THE CLASSROOM: second language learning perspectives in
English-speaking countries and Brazil

Porto Alegre
2023

GRADUAÇÃO



Pontifícia Universidade Católica
do Rio Grande do Sul

MARIA EDUARDA PIAN SOHNE

LANGUAGE AND IDENTITY IN THE CLASSROOM: second language learning
perspectives in English-speaking countries and Brazil

Monograph presented as a partial requirement
for obtaining a Teaching Degree in Language
Arts: English from the Language Arts: English
course at the Pontifical Catholic University of
Rio Grande do Sul.

Adviser: Aline Evers, PhD

Porto Alegre
2023

MARIA EDUARDA PIAN SOHNE

LANGUAGE AND IDENTITY IN THE CLASSROOM: second language acquisition
perspectives in English-speaking countries and Brazil

Monograph presented as a partial requirement
for obtaining a Teaching Degree in Language
Arts: English from the Language Arts: English
course at the Pontifical Catholic University of
Rio Grande do Sul.

Approved on December 5th, 2023.

Board of examiners:

ALINE EVERS – Adviser, PhD

(Pontifícia Universidade Católica do Rio Grande do Sul – PUCRS)

CRISTINA BECKER LOPES PERNA, PhD

(Pontifícia Universidade Católica do Rio Grande do Sul – PUCRS)

BÁRBARA ELISA DE MORAES BARROS DA SILVA, MA

(Pontifícia Universidade Católica do Rio Grande do Sul – PUCRS)

Porto Alegre

2023

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

First, I would like to thank my incredible adviser, Aline Evers, who highly assisted me throughout the whole semester as well as encouraged me to continue writing my final paper in moments where I doubted myself. Thank you, Aline. To my boyfriend, Lucas, who gave me words of wisdom and encouraged me along the way, making me believe in myself. Thank you for putting your trust in me. You are wonderful.

To my work colleagues and friends, who were excited as I was whenever I mentioned to them I was finally going to graduate, kudos to you. To my dear friend Victória, thank you for being my friend since high school years and always making me smile. You are a star in my life, I appreciate it very much.

To Cristina Perna and Bárbara Elisa, who have granted me the honor of being part of my board of examiners, thank you for accepting my invitation. You were a big part in writing this paper. Additionally, I would also like to thank professor Débora Amorim; because of some of her classes throughout university years, I was able to think and plan the topic of my final paper beforehand.

Last but foremost, I would like to thank my parents and my sister, Rosane, Waldyr, and Sofia, who helped me along the way and encouraged me to continue my studies and graduate university. Thank you!

Kdo se učí nový jazyk, získává novou duši.

He who learns a new language, acquires a new soul.

Czech proverb

ABSTRACT

The interconnection between language and identity has been studied for many years. The nuances rooted in language contribute to the crucial tapestry of personal identity. For this research, we explore the crucial interplay between language learning and identity in English-speaking countries and Brazil as students navigate a multilingual world. Moreover, our aims are to discover the implications of cultivating a multilingual identity and how they vary across different sociocultural contexts, specifically in the U.K., the U.S., and, most importantly, in Brazil. In order to answer and analyze these questions, we draw information from authoritative sources such as the *Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills* (Ofsted), British Council, *Base Nacional Comum Curricular* (BNCC), and *Center For Immigration Studies*. The investigation showed that, as many students speak English as their first language in English-speaking countries, they will likely not learn a second or third language for lack of motivation and identification as their language is considered powerful. In Brazil, however, many pupils who frequent public schools do not learn a second language due to a lack of motivation and limited resources. This research provides valuable awareness for language educators, enlightening the complexities faced by Brazilian public schools in providing effective English language programs within the current educational landscape.

Keywords: bilingual; multilingual identity; language diversity, second language learning.

RESUMO

A interconexão entre língua e identidade tem sido estudada por muitos anos. As nuances enraizadas na linguagem contribuem para o complexo tecido da identidade pessoal. Para esta pesquisa, exploramos a interação crucial entre aprendizado de idiomas e identidade em países de língua inglesa e o Brasil, à medida que os alunos navegam por um mundo multilíngue. Além disso, nossos objetivos foram os de descobrir as implicações do cultivo de uma identidade multilíngue e como elas variam em diferentes contextos socioculturais, em específico no Reino Unido, nos Estados Unidos, e mais importante, no Brasil. Para responder e analisar essas questões, buscamos informações de marcos regulatórios, como o *Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills* (Ofsted), o British Council, a Base Nacional Comum Curricular (BNCC) e o *Center For Immigration Studies*. A pesquisa demonstrou que, em países de língua inglesa, onde muitos falam inglês como primeira língua, os alunos provavelmente não aprenderão uma segunda ou terceira língua por falta de motivação e identificação, já que sua língua é considerada de prestígio. No Brasil, muitos alunos que frequentam escolas públicas não aprendem uma segunda língua devido à falta de motivação e recursos limitados em salas de aulas. Esta pesquisa proporciona uma conscientização valiosa para educadores de línguas, iluminando as complexidades enfrentadas pelas escolas públicas brasileiras em oferecer programas eficazes de ensino de inglês dentro do atual cenário educacional.

Palavras-chave: bilíngue; identidade multilíngue; diversidade de línguas; aprendizagem de línguas estrangeiras.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1 INTRODUCTION.....	10
2 LANGUAGE IDENTITY, BILINGUALISM, MULTILINGUALISM.....	13
2.1 SHIFT IN LANGUAGE AND SHIFT IN SOCIAL ROLES.....	14
2.2 BILINGUALISM AND EMOTIONS.....	15
2.3 AGE OF ONSET (AOA) AND ITS REPERCUSSIONS.....	17
3 MULTILINGUALISM AROUND THE WORLD.....	19
3.1 U.K. AND The U.S. (Other languages, additional languages).....	20
3.2 BRAZILIAN CONTEXT.....	22
3.3 BRAZIL (BRITISH COUNCIL).....	23
4 DISCUSSION.....	26
4.1 PERSONAL AND PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE.....	27
4.2 ENGLISH IN BRAZIL: LANGUAGE AND IDENTITY THROUGH THE LENSES OF Base Nacional Comum Curricular (BNCC).....	29
5 FINAL CONSIDERATIONS.....	33
REFERENCES.....	36

1 INTRODUCTION

During more than half of the 20th century, bilingualism was perceived as a negative skill. Scientists and linguists claimed that it hindered oral development, as knowing more than one language could create turmoil and strain the brain, specifically in children. Otto Jespersen, a Danish linguist, wrote that it is difficult for the child to learn two or more languages perfectly and that if the child had learned only one, they would be able to master it quickly without compromising their overall cognitive aptitude (Jespersen, 1922).

Recent research have been able to prove that bilingualism is beneficial to children (Grosjean, 2001), and current findings state that bilingual people are likely to understand mathematical concepts, cultivate strong logical skills, focus, recollect, make decisions, and think and learn other languages. Also, since bilinguals can switch languages, their minds become more pliable and nimbler, and they gain more control over their intellectual process, such as thought, memory, and problem-solving.

As a language learner, bilingual individual, and an aspiring educator, I have undertaken a reflective exploration into the dynamic relationship between linguistic transition and shifts in personal comportment. I noticed that whenever I changed languages, my manner of speaking and acting would alter; for instance, when I speak English, I become more reserved and serious whereas when I speak Portuguese, I believe I am as extroverted as I can possibly be and use my body more. On the other hand, when I use Norwegian, I become more sarcastic, especially because the intonation of this particular language can be perceived as humorous for the non-native speakers. This intonation, however, is quintessential to the language.

The observed linguistic shifts in my personal experience has prompted my curiosity and motivated me to explore this phenomenon in greater depth. Existing studies have examined diverse linguistic contexts and linguists and researchers, in recent years, have been conducting studies to find out if and how bilingualism can affect one's personality (Dewaele, 2019).

As Nathan Joel Young from Stockholm University's *Centre for Research on Bilingualism*¹ points out, personal history is related to the notion that speaking different languages causes our personalities to change; it has to do with how you perceive the environment in which the language originated or where you are exposed to it, such as at

¹ Does your personality change when you speak another language? Available at: <https://www.thelocal.se/20221102/hej-hello-hola-does-your-personality-change-when-you-speak-another-language-stockholm-university-tlccu>. Accessed: 11 Oct. 2023.

home, at work, or on television. In my case, I have never traveled abroad; however, I consume entertainment from the countries which I study and speak the language from.

Furthermore, I work in an international environment with preschool children. I have had many kids from different countries, such as Chile, Uruguay, the United States, Italy, and South Korea. Although English is a fundamental language, we believe one shall not erase nor forget the child's first language in a classroom as it is an important factor of their infancy and will, eventually, show it in their growth. In Brazil, as we are going to go into detail below, according to the *Base Nacional Comum Curricular* (BNCC), an important document for Brazilian education in public and private schools, does not mention teaching languages to immigrants nor refugees; however, in 2018, the *Defensoria Pública da União* (DPU) submitted a Recommendation Petition through *Grupo de Trabalho Nacional "Migrações, Apatridia e Refúgio"*, which urged the *Conselho Nacional de Educação* (CNE) to standardize the enrollment process of refugee, migrant, stateless children in the Brazilian public education system due to significant barriers they faced in accessing public education. According to the petition, the right to enrollment shall be accompanied by other factors, such as including the Portuguese language as the language of reception as well as respect for cultural diversity and intercultural values².

Moreover, in regards to the English language teaching according to BNCC,

[...] the study of the English language can provide with access to the linguistic knowledge necessary for engagement and participation, contributing to the critical empowerment of students and the exercise of active citizenship [...] it expands the possibilities for interaction and mobility, opening new paths for the construction of knowledge and continuity in studies (Brasil, 2018)³.

Thus, the study of English is a path to universal access to pivotal linguistic knowledge, which promotes critical consent for active citizenship. It not only expands chances for interaction and mobility but also aligns with a formative, critical, and conscious approach to linguistic education where pedagogy and politics are intertwined. As Isabel Lopes da Silva *et al.* (2016 *apud* Early Years Blog, 2019) mentioned, "Respect for the languages and cultures of

² *Regulamentação da inclusão matrícula de crianças e adolescentes migrantes, refugiados, apátridas e solicitantes de refúgio no sistema público de ensino brasileiro.* Available at: http://portal.mec.gov.br/index.php?option=com_docman&view=download&alias=147031-pceb001-20&category_slug=junho-2020-pdf&Itemid=30192 Accessed: 22 Nov. 2023.

³ *Base Nacional Comum Curricular* (Brasil, 2018). Available at: http://www.lettras.ufmg.br/padroao_cms/documentos/profs/reinildes/BNCC_Ingle%CC%82s.pdf Accessed: 22 Nov. 2023. (Translated by the author).

children is a form of intercultural education, making children feel valued and interacting securely with others”⁴. We believe it is also important to show to the native speakers of one language that the world is not made of one but many languages and that their mother tongue is not less meaningful than any other, especially those considered more important.

Taking all these factors into consideration, the aims of this paper are to present an overview on multilingualism, personality, and identity; discuss second language learning in the United States, England, and Brazil as well as compare the educational system from these countries; and provide meaningful information about English language teaching in Brazilian public and private schools.

As for the research questions, we are going to explore the following questions: (1) What are the implications of cultivating a multilingual identity?; (2) How do these implications vary across different sociocultural contexts (UK-US/BR)? In order to address them, this paper is organized into 5 chapters. In chapter 1, we introduce the term *bilingualism* and its benefits as well as its effects on personality. In chapter 2, we present the *multilingual identity* term and its implications. In addition, we present an overview on studies about shifts in personality when one switches languages and their respective findings. In chapter 3, we mention how bilingualism and multilingualism work are perceived in three different countries: England, The United States, and Brazil, as well as provide information about their educational policies towards second language learning. Finally, in chapter 4, we talk about our personal and professional experience in schools in Brazil. We finish this final paper with the final considerations, followed by the references used as the basis for the present work.

⁴ *Three reasons to value the first languages of all children in the classroom*. Available at: <http://earlyyearsblog.eu/three-reasons-to-value-the-first-languages-of-all-children-in-the-classroom/> Accessed: 19 Nov. 2023.

2 LANGUAGE IDENTITY, BILINGUALISM, MULTILINGUALISM

The term *multilingual identity* is often understood as a construction of the self as well as a projection on the self by others; they emerge and interact within specific sociocultural contexts (British Council, 2013). In other words, the term refers to how one discovers, experiences, and navigates their true selves through the languages they speak.

A multilingual identity is, in most cases, fostered in a classroom as it is in this location where students can learn another language to interact with others, for instance. Nevertheless, although having a multilingual identity is important, research shows that it also has a negative impact (Kaveh; Lenz, 2022).

According to research, students may be more motivated to pick up new languages if they perceive themselves as multilinguals, regardless of their degree of ability (Forbes *et al.*, 2021). This may be because of their sense of identity with and ownership over the languages they speak. Additionally, students who identify themselves as multilingual may also aid in maintaining language diversity since they are more cognizant of the importance of each language they can communicate with.

However, shaping a multilingual identity also has its implications. One clear example is discrimination; in some places such as Britain, the languages deemed ‘important’ are those that are primarily spoken by white western people. Consequently, it can be challenging to be in a school if the language one speaks, and their skin color puts them at danger of being discriminated against. In fact, several multilingual children have expressed embarrassment when using their native tongue for fear of judgment (Kaveh; Lenz, 2022).

To reiterate, cultivating a multilingual identity is essential in today’s interconnected world as it builds motivation and ownership in students when learning and speaking different languages as well as it helps to preserve linguistic diversity (Forbes *et al.*, 2021). However, just as it is important to have a multilingual identity, there are also implications.

In this field, there are three important researchers who conducted studies over the years to discover if people change their persona when they switch from one language to another. Susan Ervin-Tripp (1927-2018), a psychology professor from Berkeley University, was one of the first people to perform research based on this topic; she provided two studies: one with French American bilinguals (1964), and another with Japanese American women (1964). Another important researcher is Aneta Pavlenko (1963), a Ukrainian-American linguist from Temple University. In her book *Bilingual Minds: Emotional Experience, Expression and Representation* (2006), Pavlenko presented a very interesting study on

arguments about whether bilinguals feel different when they switch languages, how they are perceived by others, and how they behave.

Lastly, Jean-Marc Dewaele, a professor of Applied Linguistics and Multilingualism from the University of Birkbeck, also made remarkable investigations throughout his career. He has written and published numerous articles and books regarding individual divergence in psychological and emotional inconsistency in Second Language Acquisition and Multilingualism. In 2015, he published *Why do so many bi- and multilinguals feel different when switching languages?* with the purpose of discovering if the Age of Onset⁵ (AoA) and a lower level of proficiency in a different language (LX) is related to the sensation of dissimilarity felt by several bilinguals and multilingual people.

In the following sections, we report on the complexities of multilingual identity. We will examine and shed light on the contributions of key researchers such as Susan Ervin-Tripp, Aneta Pavlenko, and Jean-Marc Dewaele, who have explored the phenomenon of shifting personas in multilingual contexts, providing data in this field of study.

2.1 SHIFT IN LANGUAGE AND SHIFT IN SOCIAL ROLES

Susan Ervin-Tripp performed a Thematic Apperception Test (TAT), also known as Picture Interpretation Technique, with sixty-four French American bilinguals who had lived in the United States for more than four years and had learned English from Americans (Ervin-Tripp, 1964). Forty of them were or had been married to Americans. The research was divided into two sessions; in the first, English was the language spoken, and, in the second, which occurred six weeks later, only French was spoken. Ervin constructed a tape-recorded word-association test, in which the language of the evoked words interchanged indiscriminately in a rundown of terms in different semantic spaces, with recurrence of the words in the separate languages matched. Then, she showed the participants a sequence of pictures and asked them to create a coordinating story for each illustration in three minutes.

The results of the test showed that the participants altered the concept of their stories based on the language they used. For instance, a Frenchwoman who spoke English for the most part of her life because of work and who was married to an American painted two different perceptions of an illustration in French and English. In the French session, she mentioned, “She seems to beg him, to plead with him. I don't know if he wants to leave her

⁵ the age at which learners start to learn a language.

for another woman or what, or if it's her who has... but she seems to press against him [...]” (Ervin-Tripp, 1964, p. 504); in the English session, she said,

In the past, well I think it was a married couple, average, and he got out of the Army and got himself a job or something like that or has decided he would go to college. He's decided to get a good education and maybe after he would have a better job and be able to support his wife much better, and everything would come out for the best [...] (Ervin-Tripp, 1964, p. 504).

Therefore, it is noticeable that in French the themes evoked were belligerence and seeking for autonomy, whereas, in English, the woman supports her husband in his achievement strivings.

Ervin-Tripp concluded her study by stating the possibility of a connection between a shift in language and a shift in social roles and emotional attitudes due to the fact that languages are learned and employed with different people in different circumstances. Thus, the use of every language may come to be related to a shift in an enormous range of conduct. She also believed that her findings meant that the participants had two personalities; however, she did not know if the differences she found could be a case of biculturalism, or if bilinguals could protect alternative conduct more prevalently than contrasts in behavior for different collective consequences or audiences.

In another research made in the same year, Ervin-Tripp examined Japanese-American bilingual women in two sessions: one in English, and the other in Japanese. She used verbal materials, such as word associations, problem stories, semantic differentials, sentence completions, and the TAT. She asked the participants to conclude sentences in each language, i.e., the subject heard and read the first part of the sentence and had to complete the rest. For instance, the same woman answered the sentence “When my wishes conflict with my family, [...] it is a time of great unhappiness” (Japanese) and “I do what I want” (English). In the second sentence, which was “I will probably become...”, she responded “a housewife” (Japanese) and “a teacher” (English) (Ervin-Tripp, 1964, p. 96).

From this, Ervin-Tripp discovered that the women interviewed finished the sentences dissimilarly based on the language in which the questions were asked. Thus, the author concluded that human thinking and feelings occur within linguistic thinking, and bilingual people have different ways of thinking in different languages.

2.2 BILINGUALISM AND EMOTIONS

Aneta Pavlenko conducted a research based on the following question:

One can also legitimately ask whether the perception of a linguistic and psychological split is unique to translingual writers for whom the relationship with their multiple languages is by definition a challenge or whether individuals from other walks of life also feel that they have multiple selves? (Pavlenko, 2006, p. 5).

Her main objective was to broaden the range of inquiry from experiences of immigrants and expatriates who learned their second language later in life (Ervin-Tripp, 1954; 1964; 1967) to multilingual speakers with diverse learning trajectories' emphasizing those who acquired two or more languages from infancy (Pavlenko, 2006).

To develop her study, she collected information through a web questionnaire entitled *Bilingualism and emotions*, which was created by Jean-Marc Dewaele and Aneta Pavlenko herself (Dewaele; Pavlenko, 2001-2003). In this questionnaire, there were thirty-four closed and open-ended questions, and it contained socio biographical information such as gender, age, education level, ethnic group, occupation, languages known, dominant language(s), chronological order of language acquisition, the context of the acquisition, age of onset, frequency of use, and self-rated proficiency. Pavlenko would examine the answers to the following open-ended question: "Do you feel like a different person sometimes when you use different languages?" (Pavlenko, 2006, p. 6). She had the contribution of 1039 biculturals and multicultural people to the research, in which 731 were females and 308 were males, and the ages differed between sixteen to seventy years old.

While analyzing the answers of the number of languages known, her database showed that 14% were bilinguals, 26% were trilinguals, 28% were speakers of four languages, 32% were speakers of five or more languages, with 157 bilinguals and 19 trilinguals from birth. Also, more than half of the participants affirmed to have dominance in their first language (L1), while a smaller amount declared to be dominant in two or more languages including the first language, and 10% confirmed to be dominant in a language or languages besides their L1. She then acknowledged the fact that the participants "are not representative of the general bi- and multilingual population" (Pavlenko, 2006, p. 7) because the majority were professionals who had time to search for information about bilingualism. She explained that this was due to the advertising procedure, which was informal contacts with other PhDs.

To analyze the answers to the questionnaire, Pavlenko organized a descriptive quantitative analysis of the percentage of positive, negative, and equivocal responses. Later,

she inspected the detailed answers and singled out responses containing attributions, which were classified into thematic categories, and two types of analysis were made within each of them. In the first category, she chose a Bakhtinian approach (situating utterances in which speakers, in dialogue with others, struggled to create meanings) to investigate the discourses in the answers of the participants; in the second, she divided the introspective answers with the information from “empirical, clinical, and textual studies to understand the linguistic, psychological, and physiological processes that may inform bi- and multilinguals” (Pavlenko, 2006, p. 8) perceptions.

The results showed many emotional answers between the participants; they demonstrated positive feelings through lexical choices, capital letters, and punctuation marks, while others manifested their agreement explicitly. This proposed that the question as to whether we change personalities when we speak different languages is pertinent to bilingual and multilingual people, and they might see the world in a different way and change outlooks when they switch languages.

2.3 AGE OF ONSET (AOA) AND ITS REPERCUSSIONS

Jean-Marc Dewaele provided research entitled *Why do so many bi- and multilinguals feel different when switching languages?* (2015) to investigate whether the Age of Onset (AoA) had repercussions in feeling different. In order to answer this question, he collected the statistics used in the Bilingualism and Emotion Questionnaire (BEQ) (Dewaele; Pavlenko, 2001-2003), which produced large information based upon input from closed and open questions on self-detailed language decisions for cognitive performances, emotional correspondence, the experience of nervousness, and reports on sensations of contrast when speaking different languages from grown-up multilingual people around the world.

The first part of the BEQ was composed of questions related to participants' gender, age, education level, ethnicity, occupation, languages known, dominant language(s), chronological order of language acquisition, acquisition context, age of onset, frequency of use, typical speakers, self-assessment scores for speaking, comprehension, reading and writing in the relevant language. The second part of the questionnaire included thirteen Likert-type questions⁶, which involved language choices to express several feelings with

⁶ Used to assess the level of agreement or disagreement with a statement or to rate the intensity of a particular feeling or perception. Likert-type questions typically present respondents with a set of statements or questions and ask them to express their level of agreement or disagreement by selecting from a range of response options, typically arranged in a scale format. The Likert scale usually consists of a series of statements or items followed by response options, such as: 1. Strongly Disagree; 2. Disagree 3. Neutral; 4. Agree; 5. Strongly Agree.

different speakers, code-changing behaviors in an inner and clear language, the use and perception of swear words, the attitudes towards different languages, and the communicative anxiety in different languages and anxiety about foreign languages. Finally, the last part of the BEQ had nine open-ended questions, one of which asked the participants how they felt using different languages. Based on the order of language acquisition, the languages were labeled as L1, L2, L3, L4, and L5.

In Dewaele's study, a total of 1005 participants answered the question about feeling different and most of the other related variables were chosen, of which 710 were females, 295 were males, and 107 had a high school diploma, 265 had a bachelor's degree, 300 had a master's degree, and 329 doctorates. His research included 133 self-reported bilinguals, 255 trilinguals, 272 quadrilingual people, and 345 with five or more languages. Additionally, most of the participants affirmed to be dominant in their L1, while a few affirmed to be dominant in two languages, including their L1, and the rest declared dominance in a language besides their L1.

Like Aneta Pavlenko, Dewaele also acknowledged that considering the high proportion of women and exceptionally instructed participants, his sample did not constitute the general population, as he gathered information through an "online web questionnaire on language issues" (Dewaele, 2010, p. 97); however, the pivotal aspect was to incentive the participants to complete the questionnaire since it required a considerable amount of metalanguage and metapragmatic skills.

In relation to the results, the researcher claimed that the majority of the participants answered affirmatively to the question of whether they felt different when using different languages, whereas the answers given by ten percent of the participants were rated as "yes". For instance, a subject proposed she may feel different every so often by stating, "Yes. Sometimes when dealing in Finnish with Finns I find myself becoming much more taciturn than I would be in the same situation dealing in English with either an American or a Brit" (Dewaele, 2010, p. 99).

Additionally, less than ten percent of participants said that they were not sure of the difference when switching languages. For instance, one of them answered it negatively, but that her friends have noticed her personality changing when switching languages, as she said,

No, but I am told by my friends that my personality seems to change. This observation is made by Anglophones especially when they see me speak French and adopt the body language that goes with it. I think the Anglophones make this observation – unlike the Germans or Swedes – because they are unused to other languages and feel threatened by them (Dewaele, 2010, p. 100).

On the other hand, the same percentage of participants were more inclined to negative answers, as forty-seven subjects declared that lack of confidence was a problem whenever they switched languages. Also, one participant clarified that she might feel different when speaking different languages, but that this did not influence her personality. Finally, more than a quarter of participants chose the last category, which was a clear “no”. For instance, a subject responded that switching a language did not influence his persona.

The researcher then stated that the answers were plentiful and diverse, and it demonstrated how self-perceptions can change gradually and can be the outcome of conscious or unconscious conduct. As for the aim of his study, there was not a conclusive response, as no participant answered that age of onset was a possible reason for feeling different when speaking a different language. He also mentioned that his questionnaire research should be supplemented by in-depth interviews with multiple subjects. Notwithstanding, Dewaele explained that the administering of the responses to the question about different emotions revealed a U-shaped pattern, as more than half of the participants agreed or disagreed, while the opinions of a few of them were more subtle. By looking at the qualitative data, it increased methodological problems, for instance, the precise classification of equivocal statements by subjects and personal clarification of the problem.

As for the interrogative title, he concluded that bilinguals and multilingual people do not always know the reason why they feel different when switching languages. Although numerous subjects offered their distinctive explanations, many said these emotions are dynamic in nature.

In the next chapter, we will delve into multilingualism in the United Kingdom (U.K.), the United States (U.S.), and Brazil, and how multilingualism manifests in different contexts in these countries.

3 MULTILINGUALISM AROUND THE WORLD

In the upcoming chapter, we explore multilingualism in the United Kingdom (U.K.), the United States (U.S.), and the linguistic landscape of Brazil. These diverse nations were selected to examine how multilingualism manifests in different contexts. We will delve into the U.K. and U.S., where multilingualism is influenced by immigration, colonial history, and cultural diversity, shaping the dynamics of language use and identity. By contrasting these experiences with Brazil, it is possible to observe that the issues regarding bilingualism and multilingualism in these countries have a major political influence.

3.1 U.K. AND THE U.S. (OTHER LANGUAGES, ADDITIONAL LANGUAGES)

According to research, as discussed before, students may be more motivated to pick up new languages if they perceive themselves as multilinguals, regardless of their degree of ability (Forbes *et al.*, 2021). This may be as a result of their sense of identity with and ownership over the languages they speak. Additionally, students who identify themselves as multilingual may also aid in maintaining language diversity owing to the fact that they are more cognizant of the importance of each language they can communicate with.

England is at a crossroads, challenged to provide high-quality, comprehensive language education in comparison to that provided by most developed nations. In a global landscape where the English language holds a position of dominance, the significance of learning additional languages might not always be apparent to students, parents, or school administrators. Moreover, in a recent study about the need for a pedagogical intervention in the languages classroom⁷, the authors mentioned that less than half of the students continue studying foreign languages beyond compulsory levels.

Traditional monolingual communities struggle to see the personal relevance of language learning, while multilingual communities may lack awareness of the benefits of their linguistic skills. In addition, the authors also mention that “the current national curriculum for languages in England predominantly centres on developing skills in the particular target language (e.g. in grammar, vocabulary and linguistic competence) and fails to acknowledge the potential for drawing on and developing students’ wider multilingual repertoires (Department for Education, 2014)” (Karen Forbes *et al.*, 2021).

⁷ Developing a multilingual identity in the languages classroom: the influence of an identity-based pedagogical intervention on the footer section. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1080/09571736.2021.1906733> Accessed: 15 Oct. 2023.

Moreover, the Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted), the official body for inspecting schools in England, has identified key challenges in language education. These include

[...] ensuring more pupils continue to study languages after they become optional; implementing languages in primary schools; ensuring pupils of all abilities can develop their language knowledge; and encouraging the study of other languages in the face of the dominance of English as a second language (Louise Shepperd, 2021)⁸.

Furthermore, one significant hurdle is the decline in language learning, which is linked to motivational factors and “self-efficacy”, of belief in one’s ability to succeed. In this scenario, students may feel demotivated when comparing their language skills with people abroad, who commonly start learning and begin their English journey earlier and continue studying it extensively. Therefore, Ofsted emphasizes the importance of students feeling successful in their learning and understanding how to progress, as self-efficacy significantly influences academic achievement. Other factors affecting language education in England include “poorly designed curriculums; low expectations among teachers and school leaders; and a lack of curriculum continuity, where secondary pupils often start from scratch” (Louise Shepperd, 2021).

In comparison, in the United States, according to the *Center For Immigration Studies* (2019)⁹, approximately twenty percent of Americans can speak two or more languages, lagging behind many other countries that prioritize English education. However, North-Americans often underestimate the importance of learning a second language due to the prevalence of English. More often than not, American public education treats language learning as an inconsequential requirement, with colleges oftentimes requiring a maximum of two years of language study for admission.

There is an issue, however: 23 states in the United States do not mandate two years of foreign language study. This issue may mislead students into thinking it is not necessary to study a foreign language to apply to universities.

In the United States, racial preconceptions and political rhetoric, particularly concerning Latino immigrants, contribute to an unfavorable attitude toward bilingualism. Although not a novelty, it is an issue that the US government has aggravated throughout the

⁸ *Foreign languages: primary and secondary schools*. Available at: <https://lordslibrary.parliament.uk/foreign-languages-primary-and-secondary-schools/> Accessed: 15 Oct. 2023.

⁹ *67.3 Million in the United States Spoke a Foreign Language at Home in 2018*. Available at: <https://cis.org/Report/673-Million-United-States-Spoke-Foreign-Language-Home-2018> Accessed: 18 Nov. 2023.

years. Furthermore, pro-English sentiments are founded in a historical pattern of imposing control over language minorities.¹⁰

As for the immigrants and bilingual children and parents residing in the States, the English language is viewed as a means to address inequality as language is recognized as a significant factor in determining one's social position in society.¹¹

3.2 BRAZILIAN CONTEXT

Differently from the US and England, the Brazilian government provides a standard education document entitled *Base Nacional Comum Curricular* (BNCC), which outlines the essential learning objectives for students in Brazilian schools from early childhood to high school education. Moreover, its main goal is to ensure every student's right to education and holistic development (Instituto Ayrton Senna, 2022). More in-depth explanation and exploration of BNCC is available in chapter 4.

In accordance with BNCC, the concept of multiliteracy is crucial in the context of English teaching in Brazil. It implies that teachers understand the reality of many students, considering not only traditional materials but also other tools, in particular technological. Nevertheless, it is vital to recognize that access to technology is still limited for many Brazilian students, which creates discrepancies in the learning process.

Moreover, the concept of acquiring a "perfect" English is being questioned. Instead of focusing on native-like pronunciation, the major objective is to allow global communication, i.e., the emphasis is on the capacity to deliver messages clearly and effectively, prioritizing understanding and expressions in real communication scenarios.

Hence, English teaching in Brazil is becoming increasingly contextualized, taking into account existing technologies and modifying instructional approaches to match the individual needs of students. Understanding the diversity of students' circumstances and encouraging effective communicative skills are becoming increasingly important in the country's English education.

However, in the public school scenario, students face significant obstacles despite efforts in public policies to promote language learning. Obstacles such as undervaluation of

¹⁰ *OPINION: What's so un-American about being bilingual?* (2018). Available at: <https://www.greenvilleonline.com/story/opinion/2018/06/07/opinion-whats-so-un-american-being-bilingual/673858002/>. Accessed: 15 Oct. 2023.

¹¹ Orellana, M. F. *et al.* Bilingual education in an immigrant community: Proposition 227 in California. *International Journal of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism*, 2(2), 114–130, 1999. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1080/13670059908667683>. Accessed: 15 Oct. 2023.

language education, limitations in teaching methods focusing excessively on basic topics as well as lack of teaching resources, insufficient teacher training, and inadequate classroom conditions as many classes are overcrowded. These difficulties cause an emphasis on grades rather than true language comprehension, which hinder meaningful learning experiences.

As mentioned above, one major issue is class proportions and the limited hours dedicated to foreign language education. The focus on communication in language teaching becomes challenging as classrooms oftentimes accommodate approximately thirty students, which raises concerns among educators since many believe that increased class hours for language classes could lead to better comprehension and communication skills (Cruz, 2018).¹²

3.3 BRAZIL (BRITISH COUNCIL)

According to the book entitled *O Ensino de Inglês na Educação Brasileira* (2015) provided by the *British Council*, the Brazilian states and municipalities are granted the autonomy to make decisions in regards to the provision of Basic Education, especially the teaching of foreign languages. Although Brazilian schools predominantly teach English as a foreign language (EFL), it also makes room for a diverse range of choices, which permits educational authorities to customize language offerings to regional and local needs. For instance, Vale do Itajaí, located in the state of Santa Catarina, Brazil¹³, is a place predominantly influenced by Germans and Italians, as many migrated to this region in 1836 (Seyferth, 1981; 1875 *apud* Fritzen; De Souza Nazaro, 2018), respectively.

In 2002, the Language Policy Project of the Municipality of Blumenau was established to valorize the German language as a part of the local identity. Under this initiative, plans were made to implement Bilingual Schools, where German would be taught alongside Portuguese in rural areas where the German language was still spoken orally. However, due to changes in the municipal administration in 2005, the project was suspended. Only two mandatory German classes remained in the curriculum of rural schools.

On the other hand, in the neighboring municipality of Pomerode, situated close to Blumenau, the German language is incorporated into the municipal curriculum starting from the first year of elementary education. Moreover, since 2008, two schools have been offering bilingual education from the very first year (Spiess, 2014 *apud* Fritzen; De Souza Nazaro,

¹² *Perspectivas de uma professora de inglês acerca do ensino-aprendizagem em escola pública municipal*. Available at: <https://www.nucleodoconhecimento.com.br/educacao/perspectivas> Accessed: 15 Nov. 2023.

¹³ As there was no written research about language offerings in Rio Grande do Sul, we focused on Santa Catarina.

2018). As for Italian, another immigrant language in Brazil that is still prevalent in the region, it was already a part of the education system in the city of Rodeio since 2001. However, it was removed from the curriculum of state-run schools in 2014 and now remains exclusively in municipal schools (Lorenzi, 2014 *apud* Fritzen; De Souza Nazaro, 2018).

According to a questionnaire addressed to the municipal departments and Regional Education Management (GERED) offices concerning data related to the number of schools, languages offered in the curriculum, workload, and other aspects, the majority of schools offer only one additional language, while the minority offer two additional languages. Among these additional languages, English, Spanish, German, Italian, and Guarani are included. In all GERED offices and Departments of Education, English is offered either as the sole additional language or alongside another language. Among the additional languages related to immigrant languages, German is part of the curriculum in 34 schools in the Blumenau Microregion while Italian is included in the curriculum of nine schools. Spanish, as an additional language, is offered in 26 schools in the Microregion. Additionally, there are two schools in the GERED of Brusque that include an indigenous language, Guarani.

Moreover, in accordance with the British Council document (2015), due to the autonomy states and municipalities have, the class hours dedicated to foreign language education vary unlike core subjects such as mathematics and Portuguese language. As a result, they may receive fewer hours of teaching, which may lead to inconsistency in language proficiency among students. Thus, some receive comprehensive language education and others have a limited exposure to the chosen foreign language.

In relation to relevancy, the foreign language education in Brazilian public schools is perceived as complementary rather than integral; therefore, it may have a marginal role in the overall curriculum. Incidentally, the perception of this phenomenon is reflected in the lower number of class hours dedicated to foreign language education when compared to other subjects in the syllabus. Inevitably, students may not prioritize language learning, potentially hindering their language proficiency and communication skills.

In relation to the challenges with English proficiency, 69% of teachers acknowledge encountering difficulties and limitations with the language (British Council, 2015). Some of the reasons include lack of opportunities to practice speaking abilities and challenges with the spoken language as well. These complications highlight how crucial it is to give instructors opportunities to develop their language abilities to increase their efficiency in the classroom with their students.

One of the main issues appointed by the *British Council*, which is pertinent to this research, is the lack of consensus among teachers in regards to the role of the English language in students' lives since some educators view the language primarily as a tool for employment and university application exams while others see it as a way to become global citizens and expand general knowledge. Therefore, as there is no common understanding, there is a necessity for a more complete and comprehensive discussion on the value of English in Brazilian basic education.

In order to motivate and influence the students who are learning English as a Foreign Language (EFL) in public schools, Luana Paula Maldaner, a college graduate, and Andrea Monzón, a doctorate in *Letras*, proposed a teaching method-project utilizing the book *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone* as a means to bring relevant content to the students involved so that they can develop a connection with the language.¹

Before they started the study, they did an interview with the English teacher from the school in order to get to know the class beforehand and understand how the educator feels towards the English curriculum and the time allotted. This interview provided a deeper understanding of the classes and their linguistic and pedagogical needs from the teacher's perspective. According to the educator, students lack interest in the subject as they fail to see its relevance, often completing assignments solely for grades. The teacher also expressed concerns about the adequacy of the weekly class duration as the time allotted is very limited.

After the interview, the researchers began conducting their study. They proposed two projects, each structured into several lessons with specific activities to engage students and promote learning English in a contextualized and interactive manner. The first project, which was designed for the 8th graders, included activities related to reflections on the learning process, interactions between students and teachers, analysis of plural nouns, exploration of excerpts from the book and movie, and even a recreation of the sorting ceremony and an imaginary party in the Hogwarts houses.

In the second project, designed for 9th graders, the aim was also to motivate the students and immerse them in the world of Harry Potter. The researchers used a motivation song to encourage students to learn without having fear of mistakes. They engaged in activities in the courtyard, such as balloon dynamics, and were introduced to the Harry Potter universe.

The students also had classes about possessive adjectives and pronouns and had to analyze specific excerpts from the book and movie so that they could create posters and conduct activities to apply the concepts they had learned. As well as the 8th graders, the 9th

graders had a simulation of the Sorting Ceremony and had to film scenes from the novel as part of an evaluative activity.

As a result, the study demonstrated that by using dynamic strategies as a teaching tool, the students managed to reduce emotional barriers related to English learning, establishing a deeper connection with the language and the subject itself. Nonetheless, challenges remain, including the limited time allocated for English education, inadequate teacher training, and student disengagement.

To summarize, the study highlighted the importance of bridging educational theory with practical application, offering insights into effective teaching methods within the constraints of the educational system.

In the next chapter, we will mention our personal and professional experience in Brazilian schools through teaching different levels, and what is expected.

4 DISCUSSION

In this chapter, we will focus on our personal and professional experience with the teaching of English in the schools we have been in and the schools themselves. First, we will talk about the schools where we did our practicum for university; what we could notice during the teaching about the classroom, the students, and the whole infrastructure as well. Then, we will talk about the school where we currently work; how the parents and guardians place a huge expectation on the education of their children as well as the infrastructure. Finally, we will close the chapter talking about how bilingual and international schools are in demand in Brazil and the reason for this growth.

4.1 PERSONAL AND PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

During my undergraduate studies in the university, an important part of the English course is to teach English in public schools; first, Elementary, then, High School. Throughout the practicum, I could notice that the English discipline is a challenging subject to teach as students only begin their English language journey in 6th grade and the teaching remains the same throughout the years with verb *to be* being the focus of the language. Also, the schools where I frequented were not fully equipped to teach the students; some classrooms I have been in had water leaks whenever it would rain, and they did not have computers nor projectors. The teachers had to schedule a time to use the projector room, and even then, they depended on good internet service to use it.

I could also notice how students do not appear to engage in such classes as some do not like the language itself or feel unmotivated to continue as their level of English is low. Also, the students are not challenged enough to practice English outside of school as there are very few, if any, conversation activities in the classroom. In addition, the content, most times, does not provide a talking-based exercise as the content itself is truly basic for them to engage in an actual conversation. Thus, as mentioned before, they do not feel confident to speak. As stated in chapter 2, if students perceive themselves as bilinguals or multilinguals, they will feel motivated to study more languages (Forbes *et al.*, 2021); however, in this case, they lack stimulation to practice English, therefore, most students have a hard time with the subject.

I had the opportunity to have a casual conversation with some students who had a higher level of the language and most of them, if not all, learned with music or through movies and TV series or video games, with the exception of one student who frequents an

English language course. They also mentioned that they are well aware that the English teaching lacks quality due to many reasons; thus, those who are interested in the language, have to mainly study on their own.

Another issue I could observe is that the term *verb to be* has become a *meme* between the students. They already have knowledge that they are going to view and review every *verb to be* throughout their school life, thus they make fun of it. Also, since the teachings I had the opportunity to observe surrounding this topic were traditional-like classes, they tend to feel nonchalant about it.

On the other hand, where I currently work, in an international school, the scenario is different. Many parents demand that their children learn different subjects in the English language with the aim to receive a double certificate of High School conclusion: one in Portuguese and one in English so that the children can, eventually, study in a university abroad. In this scenario, there is a greater competition to develop students and prepare them for the international job market. Therefore, there is a great expectation for teachers to know how to deal with such challenges in these schools. In addition, the school is fully equipped to teach and engage students in learning. They prioritize good teaching quality as well as staff and students' quality of life.

Incidentally, in the recurrent years, the number of bilingual and international schools has been growing due to a high demand. A study provided by the Brazilian Bilingual Education Association (ABEBI)¹⁴ divulged that in the years between 2014 to 2019 the bilingual education market in Brazil has grown by 10 percent. This increase suggests a significant proliferation in the demand for bilingual education, which reflects the growing importance that parents or guardians place on providing their children with a bilingual learning experience. It may be driven by the recognition that proficiency in more than one language is a necessary skill so that students can be prepared for future academic and professional challenges as previously mentioned, being multilingual can build motivation and ownership in students (Forbes *et al.*, 2021). In addition, students who participate in bilingual education programs not only strengthen their communication and literacy skills greatly but it can also have a remarkable influence on their cultural and social evolution.¹⁵

¹⁴ Available at: <https://abebi.com.br/>. Accessed: 15 Nov. 2023.

¹⁵ *The Benefits of Bilingual Education and Its Impact on Student Learning Growth*. Available at: <https://soeonline.american.edu/blog/benefits-of-bilingual-education/#:~:text=Those%20who%20learn%20a%20second,additional%20languages%20in%20the%20future>. Accessed: 15 Nov. 2023.

4.2 ENGLISH IN BRAZIL: LANGUAGE AND IDENTITY THROUGH THE LENSES OF *BASE NACIONAL COMUM CURRICULAR* (BNCC)

In this section, we will dive into *Base Nacional Comum Curricular* (BNCC) with more depth, mentioning how it works and its expectations towards education in Brazil. We will also explore deeper how we can see language identity in BNCC, in order to find guidelines to make students reduce emotional barriers related to English learning, establishing a deeper connection with the language and the subject itself.

As previously mentioned, *Base Nacional Comum Curricular* (BNCC) is a normative document which outlines the essential set of learning goals for every student throughout the stages and modalities of Basic Education. Unlike previous national curricular documents, the implementation of BNCC has the goal to ensure that every student has equal opportunities for everyone to enter, stay, and learn in school, through the establishment of a common learning and development standard that everyone is entitled to. Thus, by precisely specifying the competencies all students should develop and the essential skills for their growth, educational institutions can adjust their curricula using BNCC as a reference, considering the needs, identities, and possibilities of their students.

In addition, schools and educators gain clarity on what students should learn and what they should be able to do with that knowledge, which allows them to plan their annual work, routines, and everyday school events considering the distinctive attributes of their students. In sum, BNCC should help promote the quality of education while ensuring equality and equity for everyone.¹⁶

Furthermore, according to BNCC, the teaching of the English language works towards enabling students to engage in a range of diverse language practices, which allows them to enhance their expressive abilities in artistic, physical, and linguistic manifestations. Moreover, another objective is to develop an aesthetic sense in students, which enables the students not only to recognize but also appreciate and respect several artistic and cultural expressions, from local to global, including those belonging to the cultural heritage of humanity. Over and above that, pupils are motivated to engage in diverse individual and collaborative artistic and cultural practices while respecting the diversification of knowledge, identities, and cultures.

¹⁶ *O que é a BNCC?* Available at: <http://basenacionalcomum.mec.gov.br/a-base> Accessed: 19 Nov. 2023.

Therefore, the expectation for *Base Nacional Comum Curricular* in regards to the English language teaching is primarily to engage students in learning in diversified manners, always demonstrating attentiveness and recognition towards other identities and cultures. By doing so, students are able to understand that there are many varieties of English around the globe. In addition, the document introduces the concept of *lingua franca*, which is

[...] the English language is no longer that of the ‘foreigner’ originating from hegemonic countries, whose speakers serve as a model to be followed. It is also not a variant of the English language. In this perspective, the uses of English by speakers worldwide with different linguistic and cultural repertoires are embraced and legitimized. This approach allows, for instance, questioning the notion that the only ‘correct’ English to be taught is the one spoken by Americans or British people (Brasil, 2018, p. 239).¹⁷

Furthermore, this formative process places the learning of English within the linguistic education framework, where political and pedagogical dimensions are inherently intertwined. Thus, considering English as a *lingua franca* disconnects it from the notion of belonging to a specific territory and, consequently, to cultures typical of specific communities, which allows the use of English in its local contexts. Incidentally, this comprehension supports linguistic education oriented towards interculturality, and, by doing so, it highlights the recognition and respect for differences as well as how they happen in many social language practices. Therefore, this process facilitates the act of critical reflection on various ways of seeing and analyzing the world, others, and oneself.

In addition to that, the BNCC document also proposes axes for the English language component: Oral Communication Axis, Reading Axis, Linguistic Knowledge Axis, And Intercultural Dimension Axis. The first axis involves language practices in situations of oral use of the English language, with a focus on listening comprehension and oral production. It emphasizes negotiation in the construction of shared meanings between interlocutors and/or participants, whether in face-to-face or non-face-to-face interactions. The second axis, reading axis, addresses language practices arising from the interaction of the reader with written text, particularly focusing on the construction of meaning through comprehension and interpretation of written genres in the English language.

Moreover, the third axis is integrated through practices of language use, analysis, and reflection, always in a contextualized and articulated manner, serving the practices of oral communication, reading and writing. The last axis, the intercultural dimension, which is

¹⁷ *Base Nacional Comum Curricular* (Brasil, 2018). Available at: http://www.lettras.ufmg.br/padrao_cms/documentos/profs/reinildes/BNCC_Ingle%CC%82s.pdf Accessed: 22 Nov. 2023. (Translated by the author).

critical for this research, arises from the understanding that cultures, more specifically in contemporary society, are in a continuous process of interaction and reconstruction. Thus, different groups of people with diverse linguistic and cultural interests, in their interactions, form open and plural identities. As mentioned before, learning English in this context involves questioning the various roles of the language in the world, and its effects on relationships among different individuals and nations, both in contemporary society and from a historical perspective. Therefore, English as a *lingua franca* creates challenges and new priorities for teaching, which include more in-depth reflections on the relationships between language, identity, and culture as well as the development of intercultural competence.

As previously mentioned in chapter 2, Aneta Pavlenko conducted research questioning whether the perception of a linguistic and psychological split, which is often observed in translingual writers who navigate multiple languages, is exclusive to them or if individuals from various backgrounds experience a sense of having multiple selves as well. This study explored this phenomenon through a web questionnaire, which analyzed linguistic profiles, emotional responses, and the impact of language use on individuals' notions of self. The results suggested that the question of changing personalities through language use is relevant not only to translingual writers but also to a broader spectrum of individuals, revealing the nuanced relationship between language, identity, and self-perception.

On the other hand, Jean-Marc Dewaele's study aimed to explore why bilingual and multilingual people feel different when they switch languages, particularly investigating the potential impact of the Age of Onset (AoA). He collected answers using the Bilingualism and Emotion Questionnaire (BEQ). Although acknowledging a few limitations, the results showed that a majority of people felt different when switching languages, with varied explanations as it highlighted the dynamic and evolving nature of emotional experiences when switching languages.

Finally, Susan Ervin-Tripp conducted research using the Thematic Apperception Test (TAT) on French-American bilinguals to investigate how language shifts influenced their interpretations of images and narratives. The results showed distinct story themes depending on the language used, which suggests a connection between language shifts, social roles, and emotional attitudes. Ervin-Tripp concluded that people may exhibit different personalities or behaviors in each language due to several learning and social contexts. In a similar study with Japanese-American bilingual women, she discovered that sentence completions were different based on the language in which questions were asked, leading to a conclusion that bilinguals have different ways of thinking and feeling in each language, influencing social roles.

The common theme across these studies lies in their investigation of the complex relationship between language, identity, and culture. The prominence of the intercultural dimension in language education, as stated in BNCC, sets the stage for comprehending how individuals from various linguistic and cultural contexts form open and plural identities in their communication. Pavlenko's research explores this theme, which delves into the perception of a linguistic and psychological split in individuals who navigate multiple languages. The results suggest that the question of changing personalities through the use of language goes beyond translingual writers to a broader spectrum of people, emphasizing the nuanced connection between language, identity, and self-perception, as mentioned before.

In addition, Dewaele's work complements this narrative by providing insights into the emotional experiences connected with language shifts. Despite the research's limitations, the results highlight the dynamic and evolving nature of these emotional experiences, which reinforces the idea that the use of language impacts individuals' feelings and perceptions. On top of that, Ervin-Tripp's research explores deeper the influence of language on cognition and behavior. Her work reveals that language shifts impact interpretations, emotional attitudes, and even the completion of sentences, which indicates a connection between language changes and shifts in social roles.

To sum, all of these studies collectively emphasize the crucial interplay between language, identity, and culture. Whether it is through the lens of language education, the perception of a linguistic split, emotional experiences of language switches, or the influence on cognitive processes, the research throws light on the intricate ways in which language shapes individual and collective identities in a globalized and diversified world.

In the final chapter, we will talk about the reason why we decided to take part in investigating this topic, and we share our conclusions regarding the research questions presented in the beginning of the paper as well as future projects.

5 FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

The reason why we decided to investigate multilingual identity was partly because we were intrigued as to why many students from England and the U.S. do not further their language studies in the schools past the mandatory phase. With that intent, we also decided to connect this investigation with the English language situation in public schools in Brazil as we had the opportunity to experience it during practicum, as stated in chapter 3.

As for the research question ‘What are the implications of cultivating a multilingual identity’, discrimination is one of the many implications as in Britain, for instance, the languages considered important are mainly from the western part of the globe (Kaveh; Lenz, 2022). According with a study provided by Orellana *et al.* (1999)¹⁸, in the U.S., where the dominance of English is heartily present, many bilingual children and their parents view English as a means to address inequality as language is recognized as a significant factor in determining one’s social position in society. Therefore, this observation of English as a device to overcome social disparities indicates the awareness of the role language plays in navigation and influencing social dynamics in the broader context.

The second and final research question ‘How do these implications vary across different sociocultural contexts (UK-US/BR)?’ is answered throughout chapter 3. In the U.S., second language learning is not a reality in many schools as English prevails and is considered to be a *lingua franca* although it is not identified as the official language in the U.S. at a federal level. As mentioned earlier, most colleges require a maximum of two years of second language learning for admittance, even though most states do not make it a priority; thus, it is seen as something of lack of importance which makes students believe second language learning is not necessary nor important for future plans. In fact, after being admitted, it is more likely that the students do not continue their language learning studies.

In England, students usually do not take languages after its compulsory phase as English itself holds the position of power; therefore, most pupils do not feel the necessity to study another language other than their own. Also, according to Karen Forbes *et al.* (2021), people from traditional monolingual communities may find it difficult to perceive the personal relevance of language learning. Conversely, there can be a lack of awareness in regards to the benefits of their linguistic abilities. Moreover, England’s national curriculum for language learning focuses on specific language abilities, thus, neglecting the potential of

¹⁸ Orellana, M. F. *et al.* A. Bilingual education in an immigrant community: Proposition 227 in California. *International Journal of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism*, 2(2), 114–130, 1999. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1080/13670059908667683> Accessed: 15 Oct. 2023.

students' broader multilingual skills. According to Louise Shepperd (2021), The Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted) is attempting to guarantee that students further their language learning studies after the mandatory phase as well as introduce languages in primary school, promote inclusive language education for all students, and encourage the study of languages beyond English. Ofsted also states that language education in schools has poorly designed curriculums, low expectations not only among teachers but also among school leaders, and a lack of curriculum continuity.

In Brazil, on the other hand, there is a document provided by the government entitled *Base Nacional Comum Curricular* (BNCC) which is essential to meet learning goals for all students in the country. It ensures equal opportunities for pupils through establishing a common standard for learning and development, as mentioned in chapters 3 and 4. However, as previously discussed in chapter 3, subsection 3.2, the British Council document (2015) pinpoints that there is a variation in class hours dedicated to foreign language learning in Brazilian public schools due to the autonomy of states and municipalities, which may result in inconsistent language proficiency among pupils. Additionally, foreign language learning is perceived as complementary rather than integral in the curriculum as core subjects have more class hours, which can lead students to prioritize other subjects.

Another issue we face is that, according to the British Council (2015), approximately 69% of educators face challenges with English proficiency, including limited opportunities for practice, especially with spoken language. Moreover, public school students only have contact with English from 6th grade onwards. Therefore, we believe that the English language should be prioritized in the curriculum as it is considered by many individuals the language of power as well as it should start in the primary years of school, not middle school years.

We believe this final paper may aid language teachers in understanding Brazil's challenge to offer good quality English classes in public schools considering the complex issue these institutions are going through at the current moment, as mentioned in chapter 3, subsection 3.3. It is also important to mention that, if possible, we, teachers, must provide students with good language teaching, using different resources and tools, as we can see from the *Harry Potter* Project in chapter 3 so that students feel a sense of belonging in the classroom, and, consequently, communicate effectively in diverse linguistic settings.

Notwithstanding, as Brazil has become home for many refugees and immigrants, most from Venezuela and Cuba¹⁹, it is important to recognize the languages from these countries as

¹⁹ Alto-comissariado das Nações Unidas para os Refugiados (ACNUR). Available at: <https://www.acnur.org/portugues/2023/06/20/brasil-reconheceu-mais-de-65-mil-pessoas-como-refugiadas-ate-20>

many children end up frequenting Brazilian public schools so that they can feel safe and welcomed. We would like to retake on what was mentioned in chapter 1, which is not to neglect but value the pupil's first language as it can foster self-confidence, a positive social identity, and the feeling of gratitude towards their families (Isabel Lopes da Silva *et al.*, 2016).

Also, it is important to mention that we acknowledge that it is not possible to actually compare second language teaching in a public school versus in a private international school since both have different resources and infrastructure. However, as we have a comparable vision since we experience teaching in both locations, we decided to juxtaposed both of them so we can have an understanding about how dissimilar one is to another.

To conclude this final paper, we would explore this topic with more depth, greatly highlighting Brazil, and gathering more information through questionnaires and projects with educators, principals, and students, if possible. We would also like to reproduce the *Harry Potter Project* as we came to an understanding that students might benefit more if the language classes involve topics that they are acquainted with.

We believe that educators should demonstrate a welcoming approach towards their students so that they can feel belonging and can express themselves as mediators between different languages and cultures, which helps in fostering cross-cultural understanding and effective communication in various linguistic contexts.

REFERENCES

- Alto-comissariado das Nações Unidas para os Refugiados (ACNUR). **Brasil reconheceu mais de 65 mil pessoas como refugiadas até 2022**. 2023. Available at: <https://www.acnur.org/portugues/2023/06/20/brasil-reconheceu-mais-de-65-mil-pessoas-como-refugiadas-ate-2022/#:~:text=Bras%C3%ADlia%2C%2020%20de%20junho%20de,refugiadas%20pelo%20Brasil%20em%202022> Accessed: 15 Nov. 2023.
- AGUIAR, Cecília. Three reasons to value the first languages of all children in the classroom. **Early Years Blog**. Available at: <http://earlyyearsblog.eu/three-reasons-to-value-the-first-languages-of-all-children-in-the-classroom/> Accessed: 19 Nov. 2023.
- Associação Brasileira de Ensino Bilíngue (ABEBI). Available at: <https://abebi.com.br/> Accessed: 15 Nov. 2023.
- BRASIL. Ministério da Educação. **Base Nacional Comum Curricular**. Brasília: MEC, 2018.
- BRASIL. Ministério da Educação. **Regulamentação da inclusão matrícula de crianças e adolescentes migrantes, refugiados, apátridas e solicitantes de refúgio no sistema público de ensino brasileiro**. Available at: http://portal.mec.gov.br/index.php?option=com_docman&view=download&alias=147031-pceb001-20&category_slug=junho-2020-pdf&Itemid=30192 Accessed: 22 Nov. 2023.
- BRITISH COUNCIL. **O Ensino de Inglês na Educação Pública Brasileira**: elaborado com exclusividade para o British Council pelo instituto de pesquisas Plano CDE. São Paulo: British Council, 2015.
- BRITISH COUNCIL. **Being bilingual...multilingual identities**. escritor Nayr Ibrahim. Available at: <https://www.britishcouncil.fr/blog/being-bilingual-multilingual-identities> Accessed: 8 Sept. 2023.
- CRUZ, D. **Perspectivas de uma professora de Inglês acerca do ensino-aprendizagem em escola pública municipal**. 2018. Available at: <https://www.nucleodoconhecimento.com.br/educacao/perspectivas> Accessed: 15 Nov. 2023
- DEWAELE, Jean-Marc; BOTES, Elouise. Does multilingualism shape personality? An exploratory investigation. **International Journal of Bilingualism**, v. 24, n. 4, p. 811-823, 2020. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1367006919888581>
- DEWAELE, Jean-Marc; PAVLENKO, Aneta. Web questionnaire ‘Bilingualism and Emotions’. **University of London**. 2001-2003. Available at: https://www.academia.edu/2134800/Web_questionnaire_bilingualism_and_emotions Accessed: 11 Sept. 2023.
- DEWAELE, Jean-Marc. Why do so many bi- and multilinguals feel different when switching languages? **International Journal of Multilingualism**, v. 13, n. 1, p. 92-105, 2016. DOI: 10.1080/14790718.2015.1040406. Accessed: 11 Sept. 2023.

ERVIN-TRIPP, Susan. Language and TAT content in bilinguals. **The Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology**, v. 68 n. 5, p. 500–507, 1964. DOI: 10.1037/h0044803. Accessed: 11 Sept. 2023.

ERVIN-TRIPP, Susan. An Analysis of the Interaction of Language, Topic, and Listener, in John Gumperz and Dell Hymes, eds., **The Ethnography of Communication**, special issue of *American Anthropologist*, v. 66, n. 6, part 2: p. 86–102, 1964 DOI: https://doi.org/10.1525/aa.1964.66.suppl_3.02a00050 Accessed: 11 Sept. 2023.

FORBES, Karen; RUTGERS, Dieuwerke. Multilingual identity in education. **The Language Learning Journal**, v. 49, n. 4, p. 399-403, 2021. DOI: 10.1080/09571736.2021.1918850 Accessed: 11 Sept. 2023.

FORBES, Karen *et al.* Developing a multilingual identity in the languages classroom: the influence of an identity-based pedagogical intervention. **The Language Learning Journal**, v. 49, n. 4, p. 433-451, 2021. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1080/09571736.2021.1906733> Accessed: 15 Oct. 2023.

FORBES, Karen. We are multilingual: identity education to promote engagement and achievement in schools. **Languages, Society and Policy**, 2022. Available at: <https://www.lspjournal.com/post/we-are-multilingual-identity-education-to-promote-engagem-ent-and-achievement-in-schools>. Accessed: 13 Nov. 2023.

FRITZEN, Maristela Pereira; DE SOUZA NAZARO, Ana Carolina. Línguas adicionais em escolas públicas: discussão a partir de um cenário intercultural. **Educação em Revista**, v. 34, p. e162012, 2018. Available at: <https://www.scielo.br/j/edur/a/BMg9yGxVfw4tpCm3wsPJtyK/#>. Accessed: 18 Sept. 2023.

Foreign Language Requirements for College. College Transitions. 2023. Available at: <https://www.collegetransitions.com/dataverse/foreign-language-requirements> Accessed: 15 Oct. 2023.

GROSJEAN, François. **Bilingual: Life and Reality**. CambriUS and England. Harvard University Press, 2010. Accessed: 18 Sept. 2023.

JESPERSEN, Otto. Language; its nature, development and origin. London: George Allen and Unwin, 1922. Available at: https://pure.mpg.de/pubman/item/item_2350913_3/component/file_2350912/Jespersen_1922_Language_Its_nature.pdf Accessed: 10 Sept. 2023.

KAVEH, Y. A.; LENZ, A. “I’m embarrassed and scared to speak a different language”: The complex language beliefs and emotions of bi/multilingual children of immigrants in monolingual U.S. schools, **Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development**. 2022. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1080/01434632.2022.2062367> Accessed: 17 Nov. 2023.

MALDANER, Luana Paula; MONZÓN, Andrea. O ensino de Língua Inglesa nas escolas públicas através de *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer’s Stone*. **LínguaTec**, Instituto Federal de Educação, Ciência e Tecnologia do Rio Grande do Sul, Bento Gonçalves, v. 8, n. 2, Número Especial – LETRAS IFRS p. 157-172, ago. 2023. Available at:

<https://periodicos.ifrs.edu.br/index.php/LinguaTec/article/download/6705/3381>. Accessed: 15 Sept. 2023.

MANESS, Whitney. **OPINION: What's so un-American about being bilingual?** 2018. Available at:

<https://www.greenvilleonline.com/story/opinion/2018/06/07/opinion-whats-so-un-american-being-bilingual/673858002/> Accessed: 15 Oct. 2023.

OBSERVATÓRIO DA LÍNGUA INGLESA. **Ensino de inglês na escola pública:** cenário atual e principais desafios. 2022. Available at:

<https://www.inglesnasescolas.org/headline/ingles-na-escola-publica/>. Accessed: 15 Sept. 2023.

Ofsted. **Research Review Series: languages.** 2021. Available at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/curriculum-research-review-series-languages/curriculum-research-review-series-languages#print-or-save-to-pdf> Accessed: 23 Oct. 2023.

ORELLANA, M. F. *et al.* Bilingual education in an immigrant community: Proposition 227 in California. **International Journal of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism**, v. 2, n. 2, p. 114–130, 1999. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1080/13670059908667683> Accessed: 15 Oct. 2023.

PAVLENKO, Aneta. 1. Bilingual Selves. *Bilingual Minds*, edited by Aneta Pavlenko, Bristol, Blue Ridge Summit: Multilingual Matters, p. 1-33, 2006. DOI:

<https://doi.org/10.21832/9781853598746-003> Available at: http://www.anetapavlenko.com/pdf/Bilingual_Selves.pdf Accessed: Sept. 2023

SHEPPERD, Louise. Foreign languages: primary and secondary schools. **House of Lords Library: In Focus**, 2021. Available at:

<https://lordslibrary.parliament.uk/foreign-languages-primary-and-secondary-schools/#:~:text=Schools%20in%20England%20face%20challenges,content%20and%20timing%20of%20prosals>. Accessed: 23 Oct. 2023.

STOCKHOLM UNIVERSITY. **Hej, hello, hola:** Does your personality change when you speak another language? 2023. Available at:

<https://www.thelocal.se/20221102/hej-hello-hola-does-your-personality-change-when-you-speak-another-language-stockholm-university-tlccu> Accessed: 11 Oct. 2023.

ZEIGLER, Karen; CAMAROTA, Steven A. **67.3 Million in the United States Spoke a Foreign Language at Home in 2018.** 2019. Available at:

<https://cis.org/Report/673-Million-United-States-Spoke-Foreign-Language-Home-2018> Accessed: 18 Nov. 2023.

The Benefits of Bilingual Education and Its Impact on Student Learning and Growth. **School of Education.** 2020 Available at:

<https://soeonline.american.edu/blog/benefits-of-bilingual-education/#:~:text=Those%20who%20learn%20a%20second,additional%20languages%20in%20the%20future>. Accessed: 15 Nov. 2023.



Pontifícia Universidade Católica do Rio Grande do Sul
Pró-Reitoria de Graduação
Av. Ipiranga, 6681 - Prédio 1 - 3º. andar
Porto Alegre - RS - Brasil
Fone: (51) 3320-3500 - Fax: (51) 3339-1564
E-mail: prograd@pucrs.br
Site: www.pucrs.br