

Language policies in indigenous school education¹

Políticas linguísticas na educação escolar indígena

Políticas linguísticas en la educación escolar indígena

Ivonete Nink Soares²

Universidade Federal de Mato Grosso do Sul – UFMS

Weidila Nink Dias³

Universidade Federal do Rio Grande do Sul – UFRGS

Diego Aram Meghdessian Bedrosian⁴

Universidade Federal do Rio Grande do Sul – UFRGS

Resumo: O presente estudo examina as políticas linguísticas e suas implicações na educação escolar indígena, com ênfase nas trajetórias históricas e nos desafios contemporâneos. O objetivo principal é analisar como as políticas linguísticas influenciam a preservação e revitalização das línguas indígenas no contexto da educação escolar indígena. Além de identificar os obstáculos que ainda persistem na implementação de uma educação intercultural e bilíngue, esta pesquisa busca contribuir para a reflexão e o desenvolvimento de políticas linguísticas educacionais mais eficazes e inclusivas. A metodologia adotada inclui uma revisão bibliográfica, que considera tanto autores indígenas quanto não indígenas, integrando perspectivas teóricas e práticas sobre políticas linguísticas, suas implicações para a educação indígena, a realidade das comunidades indígenas. Os resultados indicam que, apesar dos avanços legais, as políticas linguísticas muitas vezes falham em se concretizar nas práticas pedagógicas, resultando em uma educação que ainda marginaliza as línguas indígenas.

Palavras-chave: Políticas linguísticas; Educação escolar indígena; Línguas indígenas.

Abstract: The present study examines language policies and their implications for indigenous school education, with an emphasis on historical trajectories and contemporary challenges. The main objective is to analyze how language policies influence the preservation and revitalization of indigenous languages in the context of indigenous school education. In addition to identifying the obstacles that still persist in the implementation of intercultural and bilingual education, this research seeks to contribute to the reflection and development of more effective and inclusive educational language policies. The methodology adopted includes a bibliographical review, which considers both indigenous and non-indigenous authors, integrating theoretical and practical perspectives on language policies

¹ Translated by Edneia Dias Santana. E-mail: santanafile.sf@gmail.com.

² PhD student in Language Studies. Federal University of Mato Grosso do Sul (UFMS), Porto Velho, Rondônia, (RO) Brazil. E-mail: ivonettenink@hotmail.com; Lattes: <http://lattes.cnpq.br/7141967707305874>; ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-0040-1811>.

³ PhD student in Psychology. Federal University of Rio Grande do Sul (UFRGS), Porto Alegre, Rio Grande do Sul, (RS) Brazil. E-mail: weidilanink@gmail.com; Lattes: <http://lattes.cnpq.br/6933347195506247>; ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-9183-5334>.

⁴ Master in Psychology. Federal University of Rio Grande do Sul (UFRGS), Porto Alegre, Rio Grande do Sul, (RS) Brazil. E-mail: diegoaram5@hotmail.com. Lattes: <http://lattes.cnpq.br/8087655160988894>; ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0009-0004-7542-0306>.

and their implications for indigenous education, the reality of indigenous communities. The results indicate that, despite legal advances, language policies often fail to materialize in pedagogical practices, resulting in education that still marginalizes indigenous languages.

Keywords: Language policies; Indigenous school education; Indigenous languages.

Resumen: El presente estudio examina las políticas lingüísticas y sus implicaciones para la educación escolar indígena, con énfasis en las trayectorias históricas y los desafíos contemporáneos. El objetivo principal es analizar cómo las políticas lingüísticas influyen en la preservación y revitalización de las lenguas indígenas en el contexto de la educación escolar indígena. Además de identificar los obstáculos que aún persisten en la implementación de la educación intercultural y bilingüe, esta investigación busca contribuir a la reflexión y desarrollo de políticas educativas lingüísticas más efectivas e inclusivas. La metodología adoptada incluye una revisión bibliográfica, que considera autores tanto indígenas como no indígenas, integrando perspectivas teóricas y prácticas sobre las políticas lingüísticas y sus implicaciones para la educación indígena, la realidad de las comunidades indígenas. Los resultados indican que, a pesar de los avances legales, las políticas lingüísticas muchas veces no logran materializarse en las prácticas pedagógicas, lo que resulta en una educación que aún margina las lenguas indígenas.

Palabras clave: Políticas lingüísticas; Educación escolar indígena; Lenguas indígenas.

Received on: September 17, 2024

Accepted on: October 18, 2024

Introduction

In Brazil, language policies aimed at socio-culturally discriminated groups, such as Indigenous peoples, have been marked by a history of exclusion and historical marginalization. For centuries, Indigenous languages were seen as obstacles to development and national integration, resulting in public policies that promoted cultural assimilation and monolingualism in Portuguese. Even though this process was an attempt to eradicate all Indigenous languages, many have survived, although there are still many threatened with extinction today.

In this context, Indigenous schooling in Brazil, as in many other parts of the world, represents a strategic field of struggle and resistance for traditional communities. It is in this space that language policies have a direct impact on the (de)valuation of Indigenous languages, which carry essential knowledge, histories, and cultural identities crucial for the cohesion and continuity of Indigenous cultures. Indigenous schools thus become a locus of linguistic preservation and revitalization, but also a battleground between the appreciation of cultural diversity and the persistent marginalization of languages and traditions.

With the promulgation of the 1988 Federal Constitution (CF), Brazil was officially recognized as a multilingual and multicultural country, providing the legal basis for the development of language policies. This Constitution recognized the rights of Indigenous peoples, including the right to bilingual and intercultural education, marking an important milestone in the attempt to correct historical injustices and promote the inclusion of Indigenous languages and cultures in the educational system. Later, with the enactment of the National Education Guidelines and Framework Law (LDB) in 1996, there was progress in recognizing the linguistic rights of Indigenous populations, consolidating Indigenous schooling as a right for these communities. Since then, there have been advances in the expansion and improvement of the quality of education offered to Indigenous communities, with the development of specific curricula and the inclusion of native language instruction.

However, despite these legal achievements, the effective implementation of these policies faces several challenges. The scenery is marked by complex political and social dynamics, in which the application of language policies, defined as “any institutional action that comes from the State and aims to manage the language or languages spoken in the territory” (Bagno, 2020, live), reveals to be extremely important. When properly implemented, such policies become essential for the preservation of traditional languages and cultures.

In other words, although the official recognition of the linguistic rights of Indigenous peoples represents a significant advancement, translating these rights into concrete educational practices is a challenging process. Discourses promoting the appreciation of cultural and linguistic diversity, as well as diverse ways of thinking and worldviews, are widely present in laws and educational guidelines, but how do they materialize in practice? What are the real impacts of these policies on schools and on the preservation of Indigenous languages?

In this context, the present study aims to analyze how language policies influence the preservation and revitalization of Indigenous languages within the context of Indigenous schooling. To this end, we will seek to identify the persistent obstacles that hinder the achievement of truly intercultural and bilingual education, contributing to the development of more effective and inclusive educational policies.

Based on the methodology adopted for this study, which is grounded in bibliographic research, we aim to contribute to scientific knowledge and reflections on current language policies in Indigenous schooling, with the goal of formulating effective policies for strengthening Indigenous languages. With this in mind, the study is structured into three sections, in addition to the introduction and final considerations.

In the first section, *Language Policies in Brazil: a brief history*, we concisely explored the historical trajectory of language policies in Brazil, from colonization to the present day. We discussed how these often imposing and marginalizing policies contributed to the devaluation of Indigenous languages and the imposition of European languages as dominant.

In the second section, *Indigenous Schooling: paths to intercultural and bilingual practice*, we analyze the trajectory of education for Indigenous peoples in Brazil, from the impositions during the colonial period, through the attempts at assimilation via missionary education, to the promulgation of the 1988 Federal Constitution and the National Education Guidelines and Framework Law (LDB) of 1996, which formally recognized the right of Indigenous peoples to bilingual and intercultural education.

In the final section, *Language Policies in Indigenous Schooling: between advances and resistance*, we address the linguistic diversity of Brazilian Indigenous peoples and explore how the imposition of a Western educational model, which prioritizes Portuguese and disregards Indigenous languages, continues to negatively impact the preservation of Indigenous languages and cultures.

In the final considerations, we discuss the importance of constructing and implementing educational public policies that are culturally sensitive and participatory, involving Indigenous communities at all stages of the process. I emphasize the need for ongoing training of Indigenous educators, integration with other public policies, and constant review of educational practices to ensure that they truly meet the needs and respect the linguistic and cultural diversity of Indigenous peoples.

Language Policies in Brazil: a brief history

During the colonial period, language policies in Brazil were imposed by European colonizers as part of their dynamics of power and control. When the Portuguese arrived in the territory now known as Brazil—referred to by Indigenous peoples as Pindorama (Land of the Palm Trees), "so named by the [Indigenous people] of the Tupi nation" (Graúna, 2013, p. 44), they encountered a rich linguistic diversity among Indigenous peoples. Among these many languages, Tupi, particularly Tupi-Guarani, stood out due to its widespread use in interethnic contact.

According to Munduruku (2009, p. 39),

When the Europeans arrived here, they encountered peoples who spoke the Tupi language, such as the Tupinambá — a strong and warrior-like people who resisted many forms of enslavement. This is why that language gained a grand status in Brazilian culture, as it was the most known, studied, and spoken by the early colonizers, even becoming the most spoken language in Brazil until the 18th century, when the Marquis of Pombal decreed its prohibition. This gave the false impression — lasting even to the present day — that Tupi was spoken by all Indigenous peoples in Brazil, leading everyone to believe that all ‘Indians’ are the same.

This prohibition of Tupi by the Marquis of Pombal was one of several repressive measures included in the Directory for Indigenous populations, a law drafted in 1755 by King José I and implemented by his minister. This legislation exemplifies a common practice in colonial language policies: the tendency to simplify and generalize the linguistic diversity of Indigenous peoples, aiming to eliminate widely used and culturally significant languages. In addition to banning Tupi, the Directory also imposed other restrictions on Indigenous peoples. According to Heck and Prezia (2012, p. 30),

indigenous names, both for people and villages, were prohibited—only Portuguese names were allowed; native languages were also banned, as was the ‘língua geral,’ a mixture of Tupi and Portuguese spoken in the missions; Indigenous houses ceased to be collective and became single-family dwellings.

Such measures, in addition to marginalizing the numerous existing languages, conveyed the erroneous idea that all Indigenous languages were the same and that these peoples shared a uniform identity.

Regarding the relationship between language and identity, Vitti (2024, p. 12) states that "the subject's identity is constructed through language, speech, and culture; thus, language, speech, culture, and identity are intrinsically linked concepts". In other words, language is an integral part of a people's identity formation. Therefore, when colonizers impose a language on Indigenous peoples, it is more than just an attack on the languages themselves; it is also a form of violence against cultural identities. This attempt at homogenization had lasting consequences, still influencing the perception and treatment of Indigenous languages and cultures today, as well as contemporary language policies. It is one of the reasons why Indigenous peoples must continue fighting for the preservation of their languages and cultures.

The linguistic and cultural imposition during the colonial period was not an isolated phenomenon but part of a broader process of marginalizing Indigenous languages and cultures. As Mignolo (2017) highlights when discussing "certain

historical-structural knots", a linguistic hierarchy was established. In his words, "between European and non-European languages, communication and theoretical knowledge production were privileged in European languages, while non-European languages were subordinated as mere producers of folklore or culture, but not of knowledge/theory" (Mignolo, 2017, p. 11).

This dynamic of linguistic power established during colonialism persists to this day. Through it, European epistemology, to some extent, continues to be upheld as the universal norm for the production and validation of knowledge. Following this logic, the devaluation of Indigenous languages continues to reinforce the misconception that they are merely vehicles of oral tradition or cultural manifestations, excluded from spaces of knowledge production.

Political power has always favored one language over another, choosing to govern the state in a particular language or even imposing the language of a minority on the majority. However, linguistic policy (the determination of major decisions regarding the relationship between languages and society) and linguistic planning (its implementation) are recent concepts that only partially encompass these ancient practices (Calvet, 2007, p. 11, author's emphasis).

This statement confirms that throughout history, political decisions regarding the use of languages have reflected and reinforced power structures. The practices of imposing a dominant language, often the language of the minority in power, illustrate the use of language as a tool for governance and exclusion.

According to Graça Graúna (2013, p. 15), a Potiguara Indigenous:

[...]The rights of Indigenous peoples to express their love for the land, to live their customs, their social organization, their languages, and to manifest their beliefs have never been truly considered. However, despite the intrusion of dominant values, the way of being and living of Indigenous peoples endures through time: the literary tradition (oral, written, individual, collective, hybrid, plural) is a testament to this resistance.

In other words, despite the linguistic and cultural imposition by colonizers and state policies, Indigenous peoples resist and keep their languages and cultures alive. They confront the marginalization and devaluation imposed by dominant power structures, insisting that their languages continue to serve as translators of knowledge, stories, and ways of life. This is practically achieved in various ways, one of which, central to this study, is through Indigenous school education, the subject of the next section.

Indigenous Schooling: paths to intercultural and bilingual practice

Currently, Indigenous schooling in Brazil is conceived as an educational modality that seeks to be intercultural, bilingual, and specific. This model aims to value and incorporate traditional knowledge, mother tongues, and the unique learning processes of Indigenous peoples, while also providing an education that allows for the integration of these communities into the broader context of Brazilian society.

During colonization, formal education for Indigenous peoples was used as a means of cultural assimilation. European missionaries, particularly the Jesuits, taught the Portuguese language and Christian values in “school” settings, often disregarding and replacing Indigenous languages and cultures. The purpose was religious conversion and the adoption of European culture.

This assimilationist practice can be understood through the concept of acculturation. According to Funari and Piñón (2016, p. 26-27), “the acculturation assumes that an inferior people will spontaneously adopt a superior culture and abandon their own. This would be the case for all colonized peoples in relation to their colonizers.” This was, to some extent, a death sentence, as language carries the essence of a people. How can one be oneself without being able to express one's identity, roots, and words that are uniquely their own?

Each Indigenous language⁵ carries a wealth of knowledge, both of the natural and spiritual worlds, that is fundamental to Indigenous identities and cultures. As Luciano (2017b, p. 300) emphasizes, “in an Indigenous language, every creature, whether material or immaterial, every place, and every space in nature has its own name and meaning.” This suggests that the foreign language does not always capture this translation. In fact, it is impossible to fully translate what a language can express, including moments of silence and profound, contextual meanings.

This difficulty in translation and the loss of cultural and contextual meanings are not new. Since the beginning of colonization in Brazil, attempts to erase Indigenous languages and cultures have been constant. As Brandão (2021, p. 12) points out, “this model of education completely disregarded the knowledge and experiences of Indigenous peoples, instructing instead from the perspective of European science and so-called modernity”.

⁵ According to data from the IBGE (Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics) 2010, Brazil records 274 different Indigenous languages spoken by 305 ethnic groups.

It was only from the 20th century onwards, especially with the promulgation of the Federal Constitution of 1988 and the Law of Guidelines and Bases of National Education (LDB) in 1996, that there was formal recognition of Indigenous school education as a fundamental right of Indigenous populations.

The "Citizen Constitution" guaranteed [indigenous peoples] the right to remain [indigenous], as well as the maintenance of their ethnic and cultural identities. It also enabled indigenous school education, grounded in instruments that value indigenous languages, knowledge, and traditions (Silva; Costa, 2018, p. 113).

With the establishment of these laws, the development of policies specifically aimed at promoting Indigenous school education, with an emphasis on valuing Indigenous cultures and languages, underwent significant changes. In 1991, the responsibility for Indigenous school education was transferred from FUNAI to the Ministry of Education, with the implementation of policies becoming the responsibility of the States and Municipalities. As Brandão (2021, p. 13) notes, "Still in the 1990s, more specifically in 1996, the Guidelines and Bases of Education were launched, which contributed to the theme of Indigenous School Education".

In addition to these legal milestones, the modality of Indigenous school education in Brazil is regulated by other legislations that establish essential guidelines and orientations for its implementation. Among these, we can highlight the National Curricular Reference for Indigenous Schools (RCNEI) from 1998, Resolution No. 3 from 1999, which sets the National Curricular Guidelines for the operation of Indigenous schools, and Resolution CNE/CEB No. 5, from June 22, 2012, which defines the National Curricular Guidelines for Indigenous School Education in Basic Education.

These legislations represented a significant advancement in the trajectory of Indigenous school education in Brazil, granting greater legitimacy and visibility to the demands of Indigenous communities in the educational field. Overall, they reflected the recognition of the importance of Indigenous education as a fundamental right, demonstrating the need to integrate Indigenous communities into the national educational system in a broader and more inclusive manner.

The Federal Constitution (1988, p. 124), in its Article 210, § 2, ensures that: "Regular elementary education will be taught in Portuguese, while also guaranteeing Indigenous communities the use of their native languages and their own learning processes". This constitutional provision, which must be implemented in all Indigenous education schools, represents a formal acknowledgment of the need for education that respects and values the

linguistic and cultural particularities of Indigenous peoples. In theory, bilingual and intercultural education ensures that Indigenous peoples have greater control over the contents and teaching methods. In practice, it guarantees that the educational process aligns with their values, traditional knowledge, and worldviews, resulting in more meaningful learning that strengthens their identities.

The interculturality, in the context of Indigenous school education, should be a critical interculturality, which Walsh (2009, p. 22) defines as “a construction by and from the people who have historically suffered submission and subalternization”. In other words, it involves promoting a dialogue between cultures in which Indigenous knowledge, traditions, and practices are considered an integral part of the school curriculum. This critical approach recognizes that interculturality is not a mere act of peaceful coexistence or functional interculturalism (Walsh, 2009) between cultures, but an active process of resistance and reevaluation of identities and knowledge that have been marginalized for centuries.

The intercultural education, therefore, implies a reinterpretation of school curricula to reflect both Indigenous cultural realities and the broader history and social structures that impact(ed) these communities. This poses a significant challenge in an educational context governed by standardized curricular policies, such as the National Common Curriculum Base (BNCC). Although this document proposes respect for diversity, in practice, its standardized model tends to promote a homogenization of the curriculum, which often ignores or marginalizes the cultural and linguistic specificities of Indigenous communities.

Thus, it is necessary to critically analyze this regulation, pointing out its limitations and contradictions. From this analysis, it is essential to create spaces for Indigenous peoples themselves to contribute to the re-elaboration of this framework, constructing a curriculum that not only tolerates but effectively engages with the cultural and linguistic plurality present in Brazil. As Oliveira (2008, p. 38) notes, “it is with an urban, white, masculine, heterosexual, and christian curriculum that we teach colonists, blacks, indigenous peoples, elders, homosexuals, the poor, etc”. This imposed curriculum, which does not allow for critical interculturality, fails to recognize the cultural and linguistic diversities present in schools, including Indigenous ones, perpetuating a logic of domination and exclusion.

Recognizing these shortcomings is crucial to advancing towards a truly intercultural and bilingual education. The curriculum transformation must go beyond symbolic inclusion and seek a profound reconfiguration of content, methods, and pedagogical practices so that all voices and knowledge are genuinely represented and valued.

From the perspective of Indigenous communities, intercultural Indigenous schooling should aid in understanding the logic of thought and functioning of the surrounding modern society. This is because Indigenous peoples recognize that their partial defeat in the colonial process was fundamentally due to a lack of knowledge about the *modus operandi* of the conquerors (Luciano, 2017, p. 13).

In this understanding, knowledge of the mechanisms of power and the cultural practices of the dominant society is essential for Indigenous peoples to protect their rights. By understanding the processes and systems that have historically subordinated them, these communities can develop strategies to empower themselves and ensure that their voices are heard, both in the political and social arenas. In this regard, critical intercultural education is one possible pathway for fostering an equitable dialogue with the dominant society.

Furthermore, Indigenous schooling must be viewed in its own complexity, which goes beyond the mere transmission of school content. As Munduruku (2010, p. 50) emphasizes, “Indigenous education can only be understood through the inseparability of the triad body-mind-spirit, each of these poles responsible for the blossoming of senses, experience, and dreams”. This holistic perspective underscores that Indigenous education is not limited to intellectual learning; it also encompasses spiritual and cultural dimensions that are fundamental to the individual's integral development. The language of the foreigner, with its distinct structure and logic, cannot capture and convey the full framework of meanings and experiences inherent to Indigenous languages. Thus, curricular and pedagogical transformation must contribute to the preservation and revitalization of these languages.

Language Policies in Indigenous Schooling: between advances and resistance

The preservation and revitalization of indigenous languages have been themes discussed in Brazilian language policies, reflecting an effort to maintain this intangible heritage of indigenous communities. In this context, it is essential to understand the linguistic diversity of Brazilian indigenous peoples. Munduruku (2020) offers a broad view of this diversity, describing the organization of indigenous languages into three major linguistic trunks. In his words,

There are three major linguistic trunks that encompass most of the indigenous languages spoken in Brazil. Imagine three large trees full of branches. Each tree represents a trunk, and the branches represent the languages. In each tree, the branches communicate with each other because they are close to one another. Therefore, they bear similar fruits, even though they are not the same.

One tree is the Tupi trunk. The second is the Macro-Jê trunk, and the third is Aruak. Since they are different trees, the branches do not communicate with each other. What unites them today is the Portuguese language, which has received and continues to receive influence from all of them (Munduruku, 2020, p. 46).

This metaphor of trees and branches illustrates the complexity and linguistic diversity of indigenous peoples in Brazil. The Tupi, Macro-Jê, and Aruak trunks represent broad linguistic families, each containing several interrelated languages. The Portuguese language, which dominates the national linguistic scene, interacts with these indigenous languages, often influencing and being influenced by them. Furthermore, according to Heck and Prezia (2012), in addition to the panorama presented by Munduruku,

There are also thirteen linguistic families that could not be grouped into trunks due to the great process of destruction they have suffered: *aruak*, *aruá*, *bora*, *guaikuru*, *karib*, *katukina*, *maku*, *mura*, *nambikuara*, *pano*, *txapakura*, *tukano*, and *yanomami*. Each family includes from two to twenty groups. There are also twelve peoples that have “isolated languages,” that is, languages that do not resemble others, such as Tikuna’, Mÿky, Iranxe, and others (Heck and Prezia, 2012, p. 11).

This diversity, which includes isolated languages that do not fit into the large linguistic families, adds an extra layer of complexity to the task of preserving and revitalizing indigenous languages. Each of these languages represents unique cultures and traditions that cannot simply be grouped or compared with each other. Therefore, for language policies to be effective, they must consider this diversity, adopting strategies that respect and address the particularities of each language and each people.

Moreover, the integration of these languages into the school curriculum must reflect this diversity, providing indigenous students with an education that values and preserves their linguistic and cultural heritage. Thus, a truly more inclusive and representative educational space is created.

Language policy is not merely a technical issue of choosing languages to be taught or used, it is also a field of contestation for identities, rights, and recognition, where languages become symbols of resistance and resilience against cultural erasure. Therefore, it is essential to consider the historical and political dimensions when developing and implementing contemporary language policies, ensuring that indigenous languages can continue to play their vital role in preserving and promoting the cultural identities of indigenous peoples.

Since the arrival of colonizers and the subsequent Western educational model, various challenges have been imposed on the preservation of these languages and cultures. According to Delmira de Almeida Peres (2019), an indigenous person from the Avá-Guarani people, in her dissertation in Latin American Studies,

From the arrival of the whites, the school with its capitalist Western model imposed itself among the indigenous peoples, establishing writing and the school contents present in textbooks as predominant. The goal of these procedures was to make indigenous peoples abandon their own religions, traditions, languages, and cultures (Peres, 2019, p. 45).

To some extent, what began in the colonial period continues to this day. The school, built on colonial molds, continues to impact indigenous languages and cultures by forcing them to adopt Western values and practices. Even with laws and policies, such as the Federal Constitution and the LDB (Law of Guidelines and Bases) and others previously mentioned, which aim to recognize and protect indigenous languages, practical implementation often fails to reflect these intentions.

According to the indigenous teacher Delmira de Almeida Peres (2019),

Unfortunately, even today, teaching predominantly in Portuguese prevails, even when the lead teacher is indigenous and speaks Guarani, as supposedly the curriculum requires that subjects such as science, geography, history, and mathematics be taught in Portuguese, and the educational system itself demands reading and writing in Portuguese (Peres, 2019, p. 95-96).

This persistence of an educational model that does not adequately integrate indigenous languages and cultures, even in contexts with qualified indigenous teachers, reveals a significant gap in the implementation of intercultural and bilingual education policies. The requirement that essential subjects be taught exclusively in Portuguese, despite the presence of indigenous educators and the need to respect the students' native language, demonstrates a structural resistance to the true inclusion of indigenous languages and cultural practices within the educational system.

Resistance, as pointed out by Peres (2019), is not limited to dominant power structures but is rooted in the very conception and functioning of schools in indigenous lands.

The School in indigenous lands, however, still do not adequately understand the need to value indigenous languages and how they are fundamental to maintaining indigenous identity, keeping indigenous culture alive, as well as living out indigenous religiosity and the daily learnings of indigenous life (Peres, 2019, p. 44).

This statement exposes a concerning reality: despite legal advances and public policies that recognize the rights of indigenous peoples to a differentiated education, educational practices in some indigenous schools still do not meet the needs and expectations of these communities. The continuation of the Western curriculum and the neglect of indigenous languages and cultures perpetuate the marginalization of indigenous knowledge and compromise the survival of mother tongues, which are fundamental pillars for maintaining cultural identities.

For linguistic policies to be truly effective, a profound reassessment and transformation of the educational system is essential. As Funari and Piñón (2016, p. 104) state, "the Brazilian indigenous school, with the proper support and political interest, can play this dual role of renewing traditions and creating opportunities for new cultural insertions". This includes the development of curricula that genuinely integrate indigenous languages and promote a pedagogy that values and respects cultural diversity.

Therefore, bilingual and intercultural education must be more than a formality; it must reflect a real commitment to the inclusion and appreciation of indigenous languages and cultures, offering an educational environment that supports the preservation and revitalization of these linguistic and cultural heritages. This change requires a critical and integrated approach, involving state powers and teaching practices, as well as a curriculum that moves away from eurocentric and monolingual approaches, recognizing and reclaiming indigenous languages and traditional knowledge in the education of indigenous peoples.

Final considerations

At the end of this study, based on the discussions presented, it was possible to observe that linguistic imposition has been a tool for controlling and marginalizing indigenous languages, reinforcing dominant power structures. Thus, despite the advances made in recent decades, indigenous schooling in Brazil still faces considerable challenges in ensuring a quality education that respects and values the diverse cultures and indigenous languages present in the country.

For public educational policies aimed at the indigenous population to be inclusive and effective, it is essential that these policies recognize and value the linguistic and cultural diversity of indigenous communities. They should be formulated with a deep understanding of the specificities of each people, including their languages, traditions, and forms of knowledge, and bilingual and intercultural curricula should be adapted to local realities, respecting traditional knowledge and practices.

The active participation of indigenous communities in the development of these policies is equally important, as it ensures that the needs and perspectives of indigenous peoples are taken into account and that the policies are suitable for their realities. Consultations and partnerships with community leaders and indigenous educators are essential for creating policies that meet local expectations and demands, as well as investing in curricular policies based on intercultural, bilingual education.

Furthermore, it is fundamental to invest in the training and continuous development of indigenous educators, who must develop pedagogical skills and strengthen their knowledge of local traditions and languages. The presence of teachers who understand and respect the cultures and languages of their students is vital for the success of these educational policies.

Finally, the integration of educational policies with other public policies is also of great relevance. Only with a genuine commitment to inclusion, respect, and appreciation of indigenous cultures and languages will it be possible to create an educational system that supports the preservation and revitalization of these cultural riches, promoting justice and equity for all.

References

BAGNO, Marcos. *Políticas Linguísticas*. YouTube, 20 set. 2020. Disponível em: https://youtu.be/wKVqI0idxlk?list=PLJTYyIbC0Twmq_HtS3Ng8vi9rJOuucu4f. Acesso em: 20 ago. 2024.

BRANDÃO, Victor José Lima da Silva. *Educação decolonial dos povos indígenas no Brasil: a importância de uma educação diferenciada, intercultural e multilíngue*. Dissertação (Mestrado em História, Relações Internacionais e Cooperação) – Faculdade de Letras da Universidade do Porto, 2021.

BRASIL. *Constituição da República Federativa do Brasil*: texto constitucional promulgado em 5 de outubro de 1988, com as alterações determinadas pelas Emendas Constitucionais de Revisão nos 1 a 6/94, pelas Emendas Constitucionais nos 1/92 a 91/2016 e pelo Decreto Legislativo no 186/2008. – Brasília: Senado Federal, Coordenação de Edições Técnicas, 2016.

CALVET, Louis-Jean. *As políticas linguísticas*. Tradução de Isabel de Oliveira Duarte, Jonas Tenfen, Marcos Bagno. – São Paulo: Parábola Editorial: IPOL, 2007.

FUNARI, Pedro Paulo. PIÑÓN, Ana. *A temática indígena na escola: subsídios para os professores*. – 1. ed., 2ª reimpressão. – São Paulo: Contexto, 2016.

GRAÚNA, Graça. *Contrapontos da literatura indígena contemporânea no Brasil*. Belo Horizonte: Mazza Edições, 2013.

HECK, Egon; PREZIA, Benedito. *Povos indígenas: terra é vida*. – 7. ed. – São Paulo: Atual, 2012.

LUCIANO, Gersem José dos Santos. Educação intercultural: direitos, desafios e propostas de descolonização e de transformação social no Brasil. *Cadernos CIMEAC* – v. 7. n. 1, Uberaba-MG, 2017.

LUCIANO. Gersem José dos Santos – Língua, educação e interculturalidade na perspectiva indígena. *Revista Educação Pública*. v. 26, n. 62/1 - Mai/Ago. 2017b, p. 295-310, Cuiabá.

MIGNOLO, Walter D.. Colonialidade: O lado mais escuro da modernidade. Tradução de Marco Oliveira. *Revista brasileira de Ciências Sociais*, v. 32, n. 94, p. 1-18, 22 jun. 2017. Disponível em: <https://doi.org/10.17666/329402/2017>. Acesso em: 27 ago. 2022.

MUNDURUKU, Daniel. *Crônicas indígenas: para rir e refletir na escola*. – 1. ed. – São Paulo: Moderna, 2020.

MUNDURUKU, Daniel. *Mundurukando 1: sobre saberes e utopias; participação de Ceixa Almeida*. – 1. ed. – Lorena: UK'A, 2010.

MUNDURUKU, Daniel. *O Banquete dos deuses: conversa sobre a origem e a cultura brasileira*. – 2. ed. – São Paulo: Global, 2009.

OLIVEIRA, Teresinha Silva de. Arco, flecha, tanga e coçar... ensinando sobre índios. In: SILVEIRA, Rosa Maria Hessel. *Estudos culturais para professor@s* – Canoas: Ed. Ulbra, 2008. cap. 2, p. 27-39.

PERES, Delmira de Almeida. *Os saberes guarani e os processos de ensino e aprendizagem no Colégio Estadual Teko Nemoingo da aldeia indígena Tekoha Ocoy - Paraná*. Dissertação (Mestrado Interdisciplinar em Estudos Latino-Americanos). Universidade Federal Da Integração Latino-Americana – UNILA, Foz do Iguaçu, 2019. Disponível em: https://www.oasisbr.ibict.br/vufind/Record/BRCRIS_f2c21288b0c4fba0f64869e0c5be13f9. Acesso em: 26 ago. 2024.

SILVA, Giovani José da; COSTA, Anna Maria Ribeiro F. M. da. *Histórias e culturas indígenas na Educação Básica*. – 1. ed. – Belo Horizonte: Autêntica, 2018.

VITTI, Sylvia Cristina de Azevedo. A língua como elemento constitutivo da identidade e cultura. *Revista Foco*. v. 17, n. 6, p. 1-22, |2024. Disponível em: <https://ojs.focopublicacoes.com.br/foco/article/view/5201>. Acesso em: 27 ago. 2024.

WALSH, Catherine. Interculturalidade crítica e pedagogia decolonial: in-surgir, re-existir e re-viver. In: CANDAU, Vera Maria (org). *Educação intercultural na América Latina: entre concepções, tensões e propostas*. Rio de Janeiro: 7 Letras, p. 11-42, 2009.