

**The place of language policy in pre-service German teacher education /  
*O lugar da política linguística na formação inicial de professores de  
alemão***

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**ABSTRACT**

The aim of this article is to investigate the importance of the political dimension in the pre-service language teacher education programme. To do so, some models of necessary competencies for the language teaching craft (ALMEIDA FILHO, 2005; NEWBY et al., 2007, SCHAT and LEGUTKE, 2012; KUMARAVADIVELU, 2012; ENDE et al., 2013) will initially be presented in order to examine the relevance that these authors put on language policy in this context. Based on Christ (1992), we will then debate that the political dimension cannot be considered a secondary aspect of language teaching, but rather should be seen as a basic element that not only determines but also structures the conditions under which language teaching takes place in a given context. For this reason, we will defend that language policy needs to be already addressed in pre-service teacher education. Based on the example of German teaching in Brazil, it will be shown how the impact of the political dimension on language teaching has become more marked in the present situation of globalization.

**KEYWORDS:** Pre-service teacher education programme; German as a foreign language; Competencies; Language policy

**RESUMO**

*O artigo tem por objetivo investigar a importância da dimensão política na formação inicial de professores de línguas. Nesse intuito, apresentaremos, inicialmente, alguns modelos de competências necessárias ao ofício do professor na área (ALMEIDA FILHO, 2005; NEWBY et al., 2007; SCHAT e LEGUTKE, 2012; KUMARAVADIVELU, 2012; ENDE et al., 2013) a fim de examinar a relevância que os autores atribuem a questões da política linguística. Argumentaremos em seguida, com base em Christ (1992), que a dimensão política não pode ser considerada um aspecto secundário do ensino de línguas, mas, ao contrário, deve ser vista como um elemento basilar que determina e estrutura as condições em que o ensino se dá em um dado contexto. Defenderemos, por esse motivo, que a política linguística precisa ser abordada já na formação inicial dos professores. Com base no exemplo do ensino de alemão no Brasil, pretendemos mostrar no final como o impacto da dimensão política no ensino de línguas ficou mais patente na conjuntura atual da globalização.*

**PALAVRAS-CHAVE:** Formação inicial de professores; Alemão como língua estrangeira; Competências; Política linguística

## **1 Introduction**

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Pre-service German as a foreign language<sup>1</sup> (hereinafter FL) teacher education is usually seen today as a cyclical and continuous process that only begins in the undergraduate course (re. KRUMM; RIEMER, 2010, p. 1342) and needs to be complemented by regular periods of continuing teacher education. In this scenario, pre-service teacher education has the role of providing the teacher trainee with solid linguistic competency, as well as a broad and critical view of the didactic-methodological discourses that circulate in the area (UPHOFF, 2018). Other types of knowledge, such as the multiple tasks associated with teaching management, are gradually acquired and need to be expanded on and recycled throughout a teacher's entire professional life. From this point of view, we ask ourselves what is the relevance of addressing political aspects of the teaching of German as a foreign language in the scope of the undergraduate degree, as the initial but obligatory phase of the educational process. In other words, which type of knowledge about the language policy concerning the teaching of German in Brazil could be framed as essential and should be worked on during the university course? At first sight, language policy issues may seem to be less important given the multiplicity of didactic-methodological skills expected of a language teacher today (re. section 2). However, the aim herewith is to discuss, throughout the present article, the fact that the complexity of international relations in the globalized world requires a more accurate understanding of the political dimension of language teaching, and also to illustrate our position through the teaching of German in the Brazilian school.

To begin with, it is worth remembering that, according to Rajagopalan (2013, p. 19), “there is still a lot of confusion or, at the very least, uncertainty about exactly what the term *linguistic politics* itself means”<sup>2</sup>. The author defines the concept as the art of conducting reflections around specific languages in order to carry out concrete public interest actions concerning the language(s) that matter to the people of a nation, state or also, larger transnational instances (*ibid.*, p. 21). Krumm (2016, p. 46), renowned expert in the field of German as a Foreign Language (hereinafter GFL), specifies that language

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<sup>1</sup> In the present article, we have opted for the term “foreign language” over “additional language”, since it is under this label that the teaching of German, in countries far from Europe, is still often dealt with in the specialized literature of the area. In the reproduced excerpts of other authors, we will keep the expression used by the author in question.

<sup>2</sup> Translated from Portuguese: “ainda há muita confusão ou, no mínimo indefinição, sobre o que exatamente significa o próprio termo *política linguística*”.

policy can manifest itself essentially in two ways: on the one hand, as an official and explicit language policy, set up through institutional laws, guidelines and regulations and, on the other hand, as an individual action when a person demands – or rejects – the use of a particular language. Krumm notes that for language teaching, it is not common to freely choose the language(s) to be learned, as this decision is subject to social, political and economic factors (KRUMM, 2016, p. 45). In times of accelerated globalization, internationally and economically prestigious languages such as English are valued at the expense of other foreign languages or a more differentiated plurilingual education (re. THÜRMAN, 2016). A current example of this behaviour is the change in the Brazilian Law of Directives and Bases for National Education (*Lei de Diretrizes e Bases*, LDB) enacted by Law No. 13,415 on February 16th, 2017, which makes it compulsory to teach English as of the sixth grade. Thus, based on this determination, the presence of other languages, such as German, becomes complicated in the curriculum of basic education.

Next, we will present some language teacher competency models proposed in recent years, in order to identify the role that the knowledge, related to aspects of language policy, plays in them. We will also examine the very notions of competency and knowledge underlying these frameworks, as well as the conceptual relationship that exists between the two terms.

Following this, our objective is to debate, following Christ's (1992, p. 55) position, that “language politics is not any element of foreign language teaching and learning *alongside* others, but is fundamentally important to this field of action”<sup>3</sup>. In this sense, we discuss that aspects related to the political dimension of language teaching need to be already addressed in the pre-service teacher education and should not be left for later phases of continuing teacher education. In our view, this demand is especially present in the current context of globalization, which makes the political interests involved in the teaching and learning of certain languages much clearer. We will illustrate our argument with examples involving German government policy measures that affect the teaching of German in Brazil's basic education.

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<sup>3</sup> Translated from German: “Die Sprachenpolitik ist nicht irgendeine Komponente des Lehrens und Lernens fremder Sprachen *neben* anderen, sondern sie hat eine grundlegende Bedeutung für diesen Wirkungsbereich.”

## 2 Pre-service teacher education: competencies and knowledge of the foreign language teacher

According to Kumaravadivelu (2012, p. 23), there is a “plethora of labels and definitions” available in specialized literature to differentiate the elements that make up the language teacher's expertise. As Perrenoud (2000, p. 172) observes, “facets of pedagogical work, families of competencies do not exist ‘objectively’, they are *constructed*, certainly from reality, but also from conceptual plots and theoretical and ideological biases”<sup>4</sup>. Thus, we find several proposals, with varying terminology, to describe the necessary skills for the teaching practice in the area of language teaching. Following a general trend in pedagogical discourse, most of the authors we consulted use the term “competency” to designate the teacher's know-how (re. for example, ALMEIDA FILHO, 2005; NEWBY et al., 2007; CONSOLO and PORTO, 2011; SCHAT and LEGUTKE, 2012; ENDE et al., 2013; ENDE and MOHR, 2015); Kumaravadivelu (2012), on the other hand, avoids the expression, giving preference to the term “knowledge”.

Next, we will briefly present some models proposed by these authors in terms of competencies/knowledge of the foreign language teacher, in order to evaluate the role assigned to linguistic policy in these resources. First, however, we would like to give some general clarifications on the concepts of knowledge and competency in the context of pre-service teacher education.

Perrenoud (2000, p. 15) defines competency as the “ability to mobilize various cognitive resources to face a type of situation”<sup>5</sup>. According to him, “competencies are not knowledge, *savoir-faire* or attitudes themselves, but they mobilize, integrate and orchestrate such resources”<sup>6</sup> (*ibid.*). Along the same line, Ende and Mohr (2015), based on the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (COUNCIL OF EUROPE, 2001), see competency as the sum of (declarative) knowledge, (procedural) skills and being linked to personality [*persönlichkeitsbezogene Kompetenzen*] that allow

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<sup>4</sup> Translated from Portuguese: “as facetas do trabalho pedagógico, as famílias de competências não existem “objetivamente”, elas são *construídas*, certamente a partir do real, mas também de tramas conceituais e de pré-conceitos teóricos e ideológicos”.

<sup>5</sup> Translated from Portuguese: “capacidade de mobilizar diversos recursos cognitivos para enfrentar um tipo de situações”.

<sup>6</sup> Translated from Portuguese: “as competências não são elas mesmas saberes, *savoir-faire* ou atitudes, mas mobilizam, integram e orquestram tais recursos”.

human beings to perform actions<sup>7</sup> (ENDE; MOHR, 2015, p. 27). As Schart and Legutke (2012, p. 53) note, there is a close relationship between knowing and knowing how to do (*Wissen* and *Können* in the original German) inherent to the concept of competency.

Ende and Mohr (2015, p. 62-63) also differentiate between explicit and implicit knowledge, relating the first type to declarative knowledge, which can be stated and, therefore, assessed as correct or wrong, and the second type to knowing how to do (*Können*), also described in Perrenoud by the French expression *savoir-faire*. This modality of knowledge denotes skills that a person can master without being able to clearly and comprehensively explain them, such as sports activities or mental reasoning.

One of the most well known proposals in Brazil, for the set of skills related to a language teacher's craft, was made by Almeida Filho. The author summarizes, in his 2005 work, the competencies as follows:

Implicit competency (which develops in us from the experiences of learning the language(s) we live), theoretical competency (body of knowledge that we can enunciate), applied competency (the teaching we can carry out guided and explained by the theoretical competency that we have), language-communicative competency (the language we know and can use) and professional competency (our recognition of the value of being a language teacher, our responsibility for advancing ourselves and others by means of the reflection and corresponding actions) (ALMEIDA FILHO, 2005, p. 94).

Comparing the model with the concepts of competency and knowledge discussed earlier, it is possible to relate the theoretical competency predicted by Almeida Filho with the declarative or explicit knowledge identified by Ende and Mohr (2015). Implicit and applied competencies, on the other hand, may be associated with what the authors call *Können*, or procedural skills, where implicit competency still relates to implicit knowledge pointed out by the authors. The equivalent to professional competency, stipulated by Almeida Filho, is not that clearly identifiable, but perhaps it can be brought closer to Ende and Mohr's (2015) personal competencies or to what Perrenoud (2000) expresses as attitudes.

According to Consolo and Porto (2011, p. 75), the reference proposed by Almeida Filho remains the most appropriate for the present and, as a result, it is also adopted by these authors. For our purposes, however, the model lacks specific

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<sup>7</sup> Translated from German: “die Summe des (deklarativen) Wissens, der (prozeduralen) Fertigkeiten und der persönlichkeitsbezogenen Kompetenzen, die es einem Menschen erlauben, Handlungen auszuführen“.

information regarding the role of language policy in pre-service teacher education and will therefore not be dealt with in any future discussion (re. section 3).

Let us now move on to another model proposal to describe the competencies needed for a language teacher's craft. Newby et al. (2007), commissioned by the Council of Europe, present a portfolio with 193 competency descriptors for the pre-service teacher trainee. The aim of the subject matter is to be an instrument of reflection and self-assessment during the pre-service teacher education development. The handbook offers some descriptors which are divided into seven categories (context, methodology, resources, lesson planning, class management, autonomous learning, and assessment), and which are related to aspects of language policy in the context category when it comes to curricular issues of language teaching. Thus, we find, for example, the following statements:

I understand the guidelines established in the national and local curriculum parameters.

I can prepare and teach according to national and local curriculum parameters.

I understand the principles contained in the European documents (e.g. Common European Framework of Reference for Languages, European Portfolio of Languages).

I understand the European documents (e.g. Common European Framework of Reference for Languages, European Language Portfolio) and may, if appropriate, integrate their content into my class (NEWBY et al., 2007, p. 15)<sup>8</sup>.

It is noteworthy that the descriptors that are explicitly involving the political dimension of language teaching are few in Newby et al. (2007), and they focus mostly on the knowledge of the different curriculum guidelines that guide teaching, apart from the competency of developing pedagogical practice based on them. Linguistic politics appears here, therefore, as a general condition of language teaching that needs to be recognized and accepted by the teacher.

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<sup>8</sup> Translated from German: “Ich verstehe die in nationalen und lokalen Lehrplänen festgelegten Anforderungen. / Ich kann anhand der Anforderungen in nationalen und lokalen Lehrplänen Sprachunterricht gestalten. / Ich verstehe die in den entsprechenden europäischen Dokumenten enthaltenen Grundsätze (z.B. die des *Gemeinsamen europäischen Referenzrahmens für Sprachen, des Europäischen Sprachenportfolios*). / Ich verstehe die europäischen Dokumente (z.B. die des *Gemeinsamen europäischen Referenzrahmens für Sprachen, des Europäischen Sprachenportfolios*) und kann deren Inhalt gegebenenfalls in meinen Unterricht integrieren.”

This conduct also prevails in the *Deutsch Lehren Lernen* (DLL) series, published since 2012 by the Goethe Institute for the purpose of pre-service and continuing GFL<sup>9</sup> teacher education. In the first volume of the series, devoted to the skills needed by the teacher's craft, Schart and Legutke (2012, p. 55-57) differentiate the following types of competencies: didactic, organizational, personal, communicative, theoretical and interpersonal. Even not going into detail about the characteristics of these competencies, it is possible to notice, by their denominations, that the methodological skills of teaching prevail as a whole. In the examples provided by the authors, there is no explicit reference to political documents that may influence teaching. In the sixth volume of the series, on the other hand, entitled “Curriculum Guidelines and Lesson Planning” (*Curriculum Vorgaben und Unterrichtsplanung*, re. ENDE et al., 2013), the reader is encouraged to learn about the curricular parameters that guide teaching:

In many countries, the teaching of German as well as other subjects is governed by guidelines from ministries or other institutions, sometimes even in very detailed ways. They define what needs to be learned and that teachers need to get a certain content across. However, in practice we are not always aware of these norms. We are guided by textbooks and official exams without knowing about the aims of educational policy that they outline. You may even ask yourself “What good is it for me to know more about it? The institutions need to take care of it! I have enough work giving a good class”. But ministerial guidelines certainly influence the margin of freedom you have in the classroom (ENDE et al., 2013, p. 8)<sup>10</sup>.

Another aspect related to the skills of the language teacher is observed here: the importance of what the teacher him/herself, as a recipient of the pre-service and continuing teacher education actions, recognizes as a necessary competency for his/her craft. As the next excerpt shows, Ende et al. (2015) do not expect their readers to have much knowledge of the political dimension of teaching German:

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<sup>9</sup> Re. The electronic site [<https://www.goethe.de/de/spr/unt/for/dll.html>] (Accessed in: 20/06/2019) for more details on the subject matter.

<sup>10</sup> Translated from German: “In vielen Ländern werden der Deutschunterricht wie auch der Unterricht in den übrigen Fächern über Vorgaben von Ministerien und anderen Institutionen zum Teil bis ins Detail festgelegt. Es wird vorgeschrieben, was gelernt werden soll, und die Lehrenden müssen dann mit dem Stoff „durchkommen“. Auch wie sie dabei vorgehen sollen, ist zum Teil festgeschrieben. Allerdings ist man sich in der Praxis nicht immer der Vorgaben bewusst. Man hält sich an Lehrwerke und vorgeschriebene Prüfungen, ohne genau darüber informiert zu sein, welche bildungspolitischen Ziele damit verfolgt werden. Vielleicht fragen Sie sich sogar: „Was nützt es mir eigentlich, wenn ich darüber Bescheid weiß? Sollen sich doch die Institutionen darum kümmern! Ich habe schon genug damit zu tun, dass ich einen guten Unterricht gebe.“ Doch ministerielle Vorgaben haben natürlich einen Einfluss auf Ihren Spielraum im Unterricht.”

You will notice that we will present, in the first chapter, a lot of information that should be [...] new to you. Nevertheless, it is important information about the Framework, parameters and curricular guidelines that have consequences for your class, although usually indirectly – for example, by means of textbooks and exams. But even when these effects manifest themselves only indirectly, you need to know them to be in a position to decide how to optimize your field of action (ENDE et al., 2013, p. 9).<sup>11</sup>

Let us now move to one last model of teacher training education in the area of languages: Kumaravadivelu's "KARDS" proposal (2012). This model consists of modular components: Knowing; Analyzing; Recognizing; Doing; and Seeing; which form the acronym "KARDS" in English. In the author's words:

In identifying these components, I have kept in mind what teachers have to basically do in order to become self-determining and self-transforming individuals. They have to (a) develop their professional, procedural and personal knowledge base; (b) analyze learner needs, motivation, and autonomy; (c) recognize their own identities, beliefs and values; (d) perform teaching, theorizing and dialogizing; and (e) monitor their own teaching acts (KUMARAVADIVELU, 2012, p. 17).

Explicit elements of political dimension of language teaching are found in the Knowing and Analyzing modules. As can be seen from the last passage, Kumaravadivelu subdivides the first module into professional, procedural and personal knowledge. Professional knowledge, according to him, "the intellectual content of the discipline, a compilation of facts, theories, and concepts" (KUMARAVADIVELU, 2012, p. 24). Procedural knowledge, in turn, is linked to the ability to manage classroom language learning effectively (*ibid.*, p. 31), while personal knowledge indicates the set of reflections and intuitions of the teacher in terms of what might be considered a good class (re. *ibid.*, p. 32). We note here a certain similarity to other already discussed concepts. Thus, professional knowledge configures declarative and explicit knowledge, in Ende and Mohr's (2015) terminology, greatly coinciding with what Almeida Filho (2005) calls theoretical competency. Procedural knowledge, in turn, corresponds to the *Können*, or know-how, proposed by Ende and Mohr (2015) based on the terminology

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<sup>11</sup> Translated from German: "Sie werden merken, dass wir Ihnen in Kapitel 1 recht viele Informationen präsentieren, die für Sie [zum Teil] neu sein dürften. Bei diesen Informationen zum GER, zu Leistungsstandards und zu Curricula/Lehrplänen handelt es sich allerdings um für Sie wichtige Hintergrundinformationen, die sich auf Ihren Unterricht auswirken, in der Regel allerdings eher indirekt – z.B. über Lehrwerke und Prüfungen. Doch auch, wenn der Einfluss sich lediglich indirekt auswirkt, sollten Sie ihn kennen, um dann entscheiden zu können, wie Sie Ihren eigenen Handlungsspielraum möglichst optimal gestalten können."



proposed by the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (COUNCIL OF EUROPE, 2001).

However, it is interesting to note that Kumaravadivelu and Almeida Filho, although conceiving very close categories, choose different criteria to distinguish between procedural and personal knowledge, and applied and implicit competency, respectively.

For Kumaravadivelu, the criterion that separates both categories lies in the collective/individual binomial: procedural knowledge derives from the collective knowledge of the specialist (KUMARAVADIVELU, 2012, p. 32), while “personal knowledge reflects the individual endeavor”<sup>12</sup> (*ibid.*) of the teacher to construct, throughout their career, their “sense of plausibility” (re. PRABHU, 1990). Almeida Filho (2005, p. 94), on the other hand, mobilizes the explicit/implicit binomial to differentiate applied competency - developed by theoretical competency and, therefore, the explicit - from implicit competency. This subtle difference will be seen later (re. section 4).

As already mentioned, questions regarding language policy in the KARDS model, appear above all in the professional knowledge category of the Knowing module. Professional knowledge is subdivided by Kumaravadivelu (2012) into knowledge concerning language, language learning and language teaching. In the context of knowledge related to language learning, the author identifies, among others,

educational factors such as language policies and language planning put in place by governmental or educational agencies. These factors determine the types and goals of instructional programs made available to L2 learners (KUMARAVADIVELU, 2012, p. 26).

In addition, in the Analyzing module, the author considers that

[...] in order to carry out their duties responsibly and successfully, L2 teachers must develop the knowledge and skill necessary to analyze and understand learner needs, learner motivation, and learner autonomy. What makes such analysis and understanding so complicated and challenging is that learner needs, motivation, and autonomy are determined by a combination of individual, institutional, governmental, and societal demands. These demands, sometimes competing with each other, change from context to context and from time to time (KUMARAVADIVELU, 2012, p. 37).

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<sup>12</sup> In the original: “[If professional and procedural knowledge systems represent the] collective wisdom of the expert, [personal knowledge] reflects the individual endeavor [of the teacher].”

Examining the different references of competencies/knowledge of language teachers dealt with so far (ALMEIDA FILHO, 2005; NEWBY et al., 2007; SCHAT and LEGUTKE, 2012; ENDE et al., 2013; and KUMARAVADIVELU, 2012), it can be seen that there are relatively few explicit references to aspects of language policy. Nevertheless, the space given to the theme seems to increase over time. The focus, in the excerpts analysed, is mainly on the recognition of the political dimension of language teaching itself, recorded in official documents and curriculum guidelines that come from higher levels and need to be respected (re. ENDE et al., 2013). In addition, Newby et al. (2007) are also concerned with devising descriptors to gauge the teacher's competency to operationalize these guidelines in the classroom, along with respect for other factors such as learners' cognitive and emotional needs, as well as expectations of others (parents, employer, for example) (*ibid.*, p. 16). However, Kumaravadivelu (2012) is the only author consulted who explicitly draws attention to the competition and the possible conflicts that may arise between these varied claims, demanding a critical position regarding this condition of language teaching from the teacher.

In the next section, we will discuss how the diverging interests identified by Kumaravadivelu currently manifest themselves in the teaching of the German language in Brazilian schools.

### **3 Language Policy in the age of globalization: the example of German language teaching in Brazil**

As already mentioned in the introduction, the renowned German language didactics expert Herbert Christ (1992, p. 60) considers language policy to be “a core discipline of foreign language teaching-learning theory”<sup>13</sup> which can be compared in importance to reference sciences such as in the area of linguistics and pedagogy. According to the author, the institutional conditions of language teaching are a direct reflection of language policy and need to be raised empirically and recognized by the professionals who work in them.

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<sup>13</sup> Translated from German: “[Sprachenpolitik ist] eine der Grundlagendisziplinen der Theorie des Lehrens und Lernens fremder Sprachen [...]”

In the case of the German language, the promotion of foreign language teaching has long been seen by the German government as an important resource for strengthening cultural and economic ties with other countries. A clear example of this policy is the extensive network of the currently 159 Goethe Institutes scattered in 98 countries around the world<sup>14</sup>. As explained by Augspurger (1993), lecturer at the Goethe Institute during the 2nd Brazilian Congress of German Teachers, in 1991:

We do not *advertise* in the political sense, we do not want to be missionaries and we do not intend to show national arrogance; no language is better than the other; but as German teachers we represent Germany and the German language, as well as the rich German culture and its history and civilization, especially of contemporary Germany (AUGSPURGER, 1993, p. 137)<sup>15</sup>.

As I reflected in another article (UPHOFF, 2015, p. 282), the concern that the commitment to teaching German abroad could be misunderstood as an unethical and even overbearing attitude echoes. However, it is interesting to note that in a 2015 publication of the German Foreign Ministry (*Auswärtiges Amt*), i.e. two decades after Augspurger's lecture (1993), this policy is stated with much more objectivity and self-confidence:

Language promotion is a particularly sustainable instrument of foreign policy. It promotes dialogue, exchange and collaboration between people and cultures, conveys a positive image of Germany abroad and brings people to Germany. With today's young German learners, we have gained important partners for tomorrow's politics, economics, culture, science and research (AUSWÄRTIGES AMT, 2015, p. 3)<sup>16</sup>.

The quotation is taken from a report by the German government, which, since 1985, periodically surveys the number of GFL apprentices worldwide. As noted in the 2015 edition of the document:

In many parts of the world, the German language enjoys a growing demand. This is also a consequence of globalization. Geographically distant countries are becoming closer to many young people in China

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<sup>14</sup> Data from the electronic site [<https://www.goethe.de/de/wwt.html>] (Access on: 20/06/2019).

<sup>15</sup> Translated from German: “Wir machen keine *Propaganda* im politischen Sinne, wollen nicht missionieren und zeigen dabei keine nationale Überheblichkeit; keine Sprache ist „besser“ als die andere, aber wir vertreten als Deutschlehrer Deutschland und die deutsche Sprache und werben und unterrichten mit der deutschen Sprache und auch für die reiche deutsche Kultur und Geschichte und Landeskunde, insbesondere des Deutschland von heute.“

<sup>16</sup> Translated from German: “Sprachförderung ist ein besonders nachhaltiges außenpolitisches Instrument. Sie fördert Dialog, Austausch und Zusammenarbeit zwischen Menschen und Kulturen, vermittelt ein positives Deutschlandbild im Ausland und bringt Menschen nach Deutschland. Mit den jungen Deutschlernenden von heute gewinnen wir wichtige Partner in Politik, Wirtschaft, Kultur, Wissenschaft und Forschung für morgen.“

and Brazil. Germany can compete outstandingly in this international competition for the best minds – considering that in recent years our country has become more attractive as an internationally recognized place of economics, science and research for people around the world (AUSWÄRTIGES AMT, *ibid.*)<sup>17</sup>.

Globalization, with its flow of capital, commodities, people, images and discourses that flows around the world (THÜRMAN, 2016, p. 51), is therefore seen as a phenomenon that facilitates contact with other languages and cultures, but at the same time it stirs up global competition “for the best minds”.

It is in this context that the PASCH (abbreviation of *Schulen - Partner der Zukunft*, “Schools – Partners for the Future”) initiative, a German government program launched in 2008, to set up a global network of elementary and secondary schools of excellence to promote GFL learning, must be considered. Initially designed to integrate 1,000 schools around the world, the initiative has already surpassed this goal by currently encompassing around 1,800 institutions.<sup>18</sup> As highlighted in the German Government report cited (AUSWÄRTIGES AMT, 2015, p. 27), the PASCH program has a prominent role (*Leuchtturmfunktion*, literally “lighthouse function”) in the effort to increase the numbers of GFL apprentices in Brazil, in the school environment. With currently 43 affiliated schools<sup>19</sup>, the country has the largest infrastructure of the program in the Iberian-American world, ahead of countries such as Spain, Portugal, Argentina and Mexico<sup>20</sup>.

The support given to these schools includes the donation of didactic materials and continuing in-service teacher education, but, depending on the case, also technical resources such as data-show and digital whiteboard, as well as travel scholarships to Germany for teachers and students. In addition, through the program's website, it is possible to find partner schools from other countries and continents to develop joint didactic activities in the German language. At all participating schools, the students are

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<sup>17</sup> Translated from German: “Die deutsche Sprache erfreut sich in vielen Teilen der Welt einer wachsenden Nachfrage. Dies ist nicht zuletzt eine Folge der Globalisierung. Geografisch weit entfernte Länder rücken für viele junge Menschen in China oder Brasilien in erreichbare Nähe. Deutschland kann sich in diesem internationalen Wettbewerb um die besten Köpfe hervorragend behaupten – hat unser Land doch in den vergangenen Jahren an Attraktivität als international anerkannter Wirtschafts- und ebenso auch Wissenschafts- und Forschungsstandort für Menschen aus aller Welt hinzugewonnen.“

<sup>18</sup> Re. Data from the electronic site of the program in [<https://www.pasch-net.de/de/par.html>] (Accessed in: 21/06/2019).

<sup>19</sup> Re. Data on [<http://weltkarte.pasch-net.de/>] (Accessed on: 21/06/2019).

<sup>20</sup> Re. numers on the world map available on the PASCH program in [<http://weltkarte.pasch-net.de/2015/map/files/print/PASCH-Weltkarte-Partnerschulen-201903.pdf>] (Accessed on: 21/06/2019).

prepared to obtain official German language proficiency certificates. In institutions that provide a greater language teaching schedule (around six hours/class per week), thus enabling the construction of a more advanced language proficiency, at the B2/C1 level according to the Framework, there is the possibility of taking the *Deutsches Sprachdiplom* (DSD II), which exempts the student, who is interested in taking a university course in Germany, from proving the language skills required to enter a German college for non-native speakers.

In order to get licensed as a “DSD school” (the official German language term is *DSD-Schulen*), the school must follow the guidelines of the *Rahmenplan* (ZfA, 2009), the curriculum for the teaching of GFL established by the *Zentralstelle für das Auslandsschulwesen*, a public body from Germany who oversees German schools abroad.

The vast majority of schools that are part of the PASCH initiative in Brazil are private, but there are also public schools, such as Juarez Távoa and Paulo VI State Vocational Schools<sup>21</sup>, in the city of Fortaleza, Ceará.

The structure of the PASCH, created in just over ten years by the German government, is impressive, contrasting sharply with the promotion of FL school education provided by Brazilian law. Except for commendable exceptions, such as the Language Study Centres (*Centros de Ensino de Línguas* - CELs) of the state of São Paulo, there is little incentive to learn a second or third foreign language in basic education and also in secondary schools, when the obligatory offer of Spanish was hampered by Law No. 13.415, February 16th, 2017. It can be concluded that there is no institutional support, at least at the national level, for teaching German in Brazilian schools. This absence opens the way for the German government's PASCH initiative, especially in the private school system, where building plurilingual proficiency, as a means of a broad education that can lead to a successful working life, is appreciated.

As early as 1992, Christ questioned: “If there were no institutionalized teaching of foreign languages, the teaching and learning of these languages would certainly be

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<sup>21</sup> These two schools are part of the *Fit-Schulen*, that (still) do not offer a GFL academic schedule as big as the *DSD-Schulen*, re. [<http://welkarte.pasch-net.de/>] (Accessed on: 21/06/2019). Presently in Brazil, there are 20 partner schools in the *Fit-Schulen* and 19 *DSD-Schulen* category, apart from 4 schools in the *Deutsche Auslandsschulen* category that also offer the *Abitur*, which is the German secondary school diploma.

possible as well - but to what extent, by what means, where?"<sup>22</sup> (CHRIST, 1992, p. 60). Looking at the political conditions of the teaching of German in the Brazilian school, it is easy to see that the space of this language exists, in present proportions, mainly because of the German - and not Brazilian - policy of language promotion. This policy opens up very interesting opportunities for Brazilian students, but it is also accompanied by certain methodological and curricular requirements, due to the available materials (usually international textbooks, produced in Germany) and also the *Rahmenplan*, which the teacher needs to reflect on. In this scenario, we consider it important to ask how these political conditions of the German teaching craft should be addressed within the scope of the Brazilian language teaching degree course *licenciatura*. In the next section, based on Kumaravadivelu (2012), we will make some initial reflections on this, which may be a starting point for a broader discussion.

#### **4 The importance of the political dimension in pre-service German teacher education**

Throughout this article, we seek to investigate the place of language policy in the pre-service GFL teacher education in Brazil. We discuss various models of competencies considered necessary for the teaching craft of the FL teacher and also examine different aspects related to the concept of competency, as well as their relationship with the term "knowledge". We debate, based on Christ (1992), that language policy is fundamentally important for language teaching, since it defines the institutional conditions under which teaching - especially in basic education - can take place. The example of the German government's PASCH initiative showed that, in addition to the national policy of the country in which a specific language is studied, other nations are also interested in promoting the offer of their official language abroad in order to increase their broadcasting range and thereby gain political, economic and scientific advantages in today's globalized world. Now what are the consequences of this language competition in the globalized world for the *licenciatura* course? How

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<sup>22</sup> Translated from German: "Wenn es Fremdsprachenunterricht als Institution nicht gäbe, dann wäre zwar auch Lehren und Lernen fremder Sprachen möglich – aber in welchem Umfang, mit welchen Mitteln, an welchem Ort?"

should the political dimension of language teaching be addressed at the undergraduate level and what kind of pre-service teacher education knowledge or competency should be pursued in this area?

To answer this question, it is worth remembering Perrenoud's (2000, p. 172) words, cited in section 2, that the teacher's competencies cannot be objectively framed, since they are set up from certain theoretical and ideological notions. Thus, we would like to base our final reflections on the three parameters proposed by Kumaravadivelu (2003, 2006) - particularity, practicality and possibility - which, according to the author, "can function as operating principles for language teacher education as well" (KUMARAVADIVELU, 2012, p. 12).

Thus, according to the principle of particularity, pre-service language teacher education should also take into account local teaching conditions, including the recognition of laws and guidelines that define and structure the institutional provision of a specific language in schools. In order to ensure the collective and explicit knowledge of these conditions (re. stated above about the collective/individual and explicit/implicit binomials in section 2), it is essential that these topics be already addressed in the *licenciatura* course.

The principle of practicality, in turn, aims to overcome the dichotomy between theory and practice and also give the teacher the opportunity to theorize about their teaching practice. Kumaravadivelu (2012, p. 14) explains that, in order to make this goal possible, the pre-service language teacher education needs to be equipped with observation and research tools to systematically investigate classroom events. We believe that, in this context, reflecting on the political dimension of language teaching during undergraduation has less of an effect, as it takes time and classroom experience to feel the tensions between theory and practice and to stimulate the theorization process of the trainee teacher. However, depending on the location, it is possible to organize, during the *licenciatura* course, visits to schools, which have varying profiles, to provide an experience of the different institutional conditions in which the teaching of German is carried out. In the city of São Paulo, we have the privilege of having all categories of schools affiliated to the PASCH program (*Fit-Schulen, DSD-Schulen and deutsche Auslandsschulen*), as well as Language Study Centres (*Centros de Ensino de Línguas - CELs*), which cater to the students of the public school system. Visits to these

institutions provide a different view of the future labour market, sharpening the undergraduates' perception of the value of an educational policy in favour of plurilingualism.

Finally, the principle of possibility defends the building of a critical conscience on the part of the trainee teacher with regard to expectations and demands related to their profession in a globalized world (re. KUMRAVADIVELU, 2012, p. 15). In this context, it is worth mentioning the tensions between local and global methodologies for example, that may arise when working with international textbooks or a teaching program prepared by a foreign body - a very likely scenario in PASCH-partner schools, considering the set of didactic and curriculum guidelines they receive from ZfA. As Kramersch (2014, p. 299) puts it, “the competition between teaching styles is also the competition between the symbolic value of different languages on the global market [...]”.

Similar to practicality, the principle of possibility also needs time and needs to be gradually fed through all the cycles of continuing in-service language teacher education. However, as in the case of the principle of practicality, it also seems important here to already lay the foundations in the pre-service education of the GFL teacher, by raising awareness, in terms of this peculiar configuration of German teaching, that there is little political interest at the national level to reserve space for the German language in the public school system. However, in contrast, there is great interest from Germany in promoting the teaching of its language, especially in private schools where the conditions to deploy a second or third language in the curriculum are more favourable.

In conclusion, we defend the importance of addressing the political dimension of GFL teaching already in the pre-service language teacher education, starting with the construction of a body of explicit knowledge about the laws and curricular guidelines from all involved sectors that shape the institutional conditions in which teaching can be carried out. Certainly, this professional knowledge, as per Kumaravadivelu's terminology (2012), represents only one of the ingredients that make up the teacher's competencies, but it is, in our view, necessary knowledge for the development of other skills, as well as of critical awareness, which are built progressively throughout one's professional life.



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