

Interculturality and education on the franco-brazilian border: distances between the standardized and the practiced (1996-2020)¹

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Abstract: This article aims to analyze the documents guiding government actions in the area of education in schools located on the Franco-Brazilian border. It is understood that interculturality gains greater importance in border areas, even appearing in cooperation agreements between neighboring countries. This text focuses on such agreements and the implementation of actions derived from them in the educational field in the state of Amapá (Brazil). The article is structured in three sections. The first addresses the trajectory and variations of the concept of interculturality. The second section analyzes the documents guiding government actions in the educational sector that focus on the Franco-Brazilian border. The third section analyzes the discourses of the agents responsible for implementing such actions. The study led to the inference of the existence of a gap between the regulations and the practices of local government agents regarding intercultural education on the border.

Keywords: education; border; interculturality.

1 Introduction

In 1996, the Fortress of São José de Macapá hosted the signing of the Cooperation Agreement between the Government of the Federative Republic of Brazil and the Government of the French Republic. This agreement brought important innovations in terms of foreign policy and international relations, as it approached the border from the perspective of cooperation. In other words, this agreement represents a turnaround in state actions on the Franco-Brazilian border, as these actions are now guided more by the desire for economic integration and less by purely political motivations. Even so, the political content is present, after all, the aim of the Agreement is to strengthen “[...] traditional relations of friendship by

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creating a mechanism for regular bilateral consultations and deepening political dialogue [...]” (Martins, 2008, p. 87).

It was against this backdrop of change that we sought to identify documents and speeches dealing with state action focused on border education in the municipality of Oiapoque². The time frame studied ranges from the signing of the aforementioned agreement to the moment of completion of the collection and analysis of information (2020). The aim of this article is to analyze the guiding documents of government actions for border schools, as well as the speeches of the agents responsible for implementing such actions in the state of Amapá (Brazil), with an eye on the conceptions of interculturality present.

The idea that interculturality is an important feature of border areas has gained force in recent decades. This understanding has also guided international cooperation agreements. In this regard, it is worth asking: how the developers and implementers of these agreements have conceived of interculturality? The use of this concept can help strengthen the understanding that identities are dynamic, open and plural, questioning an essentialist view of their constitution. It can also lead to valuing the actions of subjects, especially those who are subalternized, stimulating processes of seeking autonomy within a horizon of social emancipation, of setting up societies where egalitarian relations between culturally different subjects are possible

The methodology adopted was documentary research, including executive documents, legislative projects and reports produced by ministries that dealt with border issues (such as the extinct Ministry of National Integration³). The collection of documents went beyond the limits of the education sector, as it covered: the Ministry of Education; the Ministry of the Civil House; and the Ministry of National Integration. The *corpus* also includes newspaper articles and interviews with members of the technical and administrative staff of the Amapá State Department of Education (SEED). The investigative process, therefore, examines the sometimes convergent and sometimes divergent perspectives of government agents presented in different records.

² Oiapoque, created on May 23, 1945, is one of the 16 municipalities that today make up the state of Amapá. As well as the administrative seat of the same name, it is made up of the military district of Clevelândia do Norte, Vila Velha do Cassiporé and Taperebá, and the Uaçá, Galibi and Juminá Indigenous Lands. A significant part of Oiapoque is demarcated as a federal environmental preservation area: the Montanhas do Tumucumaque National Park and the Cape Orange National Park. Its 730-kilometer border with French Guiana gives it the status of the only point in Brazil bordering Europe through discontinuous French territory. French Guiana is a French overseas department since March 19, 1946, when its colonial *status* ended (Silva, 2005).

³ This body was abolished by the government of Jair Messias Bolsonaro with the enactment of Law 13. 844 of June 18, 2019. The functions of the extinct Ministry were assigned to the Regional Development Ministry. Available on: <https://dados.gov.br/organization/about/ministerio-da-integracao-nacional-mi>.

The article is structured in three sections. The first seeks to briefly present the trajectory and variations of the concept of interculturality, a notion forged in the field of social struggles and later appropriated by the academic field. The second one looks at the guidelines of the documents that regulate actions in the education sector, which target is the border. The third section analyzes the discourses of the agents responsible for implementing these actions in Amapá, focusing on their visions of education on the border.

2. Interculturality: one word and lots of meanings

The debates on interculturality are not due to the academic field. Although this debate has taken on a scientific form, especially since the 1990s in Latin America. As Moreira and Candau (2008) point out, intercultural issues have long been crossed by demands arising from social struggles, activism and public policies. The reflection on multiculturalism in Latin America leads us to confront our historical formation. The thing that marks this formation is the physical violence perpetrated against the Other, added to the inferiorization of their otherness at the level of representation or social imagery.

Vera Candau (2012a), in highlighting the need to address the relationship between multiculturalism and interculturalism, argues that for some authors these terms are opposed, so that multiculturalism tends to be seen as the affirmation of various groupings in their cultural differences, while interculturalism is perceived as valuing the relationships between various cultural groups. Candau also identifies authors who use the terms practically synonymously, with those from the Anglo-Saxon academic tradition commonly using the term multicultural. On the other hand, in neo-Latin speaking countries, particularly Spanish and French speakers, the term interculturality is frequently used in specialized bibliography. In view of the theoretical complexity posed by the trajectory of a term that was not born in academic circles, but was “phagocytized” by them, Vera Candau (2012a), as it could be seen below, proposes as an alternative the adjectivation of the noun interculturality.

Walsh, Oliveira and Candau (2018) state that, in the 21st century, the debate on interculturality has been broadened by the emergence of the so-called Decolonial Pedagogy. As with every theoretical perspective that is presented as new, “decolonial intellectuals” offer us various new concepts, such as: the founding myth of modernity, coloniality, epistemic racism, colonial difference, transmodernity, liminal thinking, border thinking, critical interculturality, among others. The resulting arguments point to the possibility of a thought developed from “[...] those subalternized by European capitalist modernity and [of] a theoretical project aimed at critical and transdisciplinary rethinking, in opposition to the dominant academic trends of a Eurocentric perspective on the construction of knowledge [...]” (Walsh; Oliveira; Candau, 2018, p. 83).

However, indigenous school education was very important for the development of debates on interculturality in Latin America. A new stage in the development of this education began in the 1970s, with alternative experiences led by community leaders, in partnership with universities and progressive sectors of the Catholic Church. Furthermore, governmental and non-governmental organizations, focused on defending the indigenous cause, began to emerge on the international scene. Alternative teaching materials and bilingual education programs began to be produced and, although they still sought to “integrate” native groups into national societies, they recognized their right to strengthen and maintain their local culture (Candau; Russo, 2010).

Groups of African origin have also contributed significantly to the construction of the concept of interculturality, because the lack of inclusive spaces in school education and the difficulty in disseminating their knowledge have been the driving force behind contemporary demands. Indigenous and black people are still fighting against racism in its different manifestations, as well as for the affirmation of their right to education.

There is also a third important agent in the formulation of this concept: the Popular Education Movement, that emerged in the transition from the 1950s to the following decade and which led by Paulo Freire, opened a way of confronting social inequalities and exclusions, promoting struggles for the democratization of public education (Scocuglia, 1997). Ivanilde Apoluceno de Oliveira (2015) elucidates that Paulo Freire, even in a Marxist-inspired approach centered on the notion of class struggle, was sensitive to cultural issues. For the author, the idea of interculturality can be seen clearly in Paulo Freire’s works, especially those written in the 1990s, in which the contours of intercultural analysis are given by the following categories: oppressed, culture, cultural invasion, cultural synthesis, dialog, autonomy, difference, tolerance, cultural identity, gender and race relations.

Adopting another perspective, Walsh (2009) emphasizes the strengthening of the intercultural agenda within the agenda of big business on a global scale. The author does not deny the protagonism of social movements and the fact that reparation policies have more and more resulted from popular demands for recognition and rights. However, she argues that this “protagonism” must be understood in the view of its political context. For her, this contextualization includes: 1) the recognition of “race” as an “instrument of classification and social control” and the development of world capitalism (modern, colonial and Eurocentric) which is a constitutive part of America’s history; 2) the continuation of the coloniality of power and the establishment of a racialized hierarchy (Europeans x mestizos), which erases historical, cultural and linguistic differences, and establishes “Indians” and “blacks” as common and negative identities; and 3) the denial of the vital-magical-spiritual forces of Afro-descendant and indigenous communities, as well as their historical particularities, stereotyped as “primitive”.

The author points out how dominant agents in capitalism assimilate multicultural discourse by incorporating difference. This action neutralizes and empties otherness, turning it into a new strategy of domination, which overshadows colonial violence through the discursive rhetoric of multiculturalism and its conceptual tool, “functional” interculturality with an integrationist bias. Walsh (2009, p. 16) also states that this tool aims “[...] to control ethnic conflict and preserve social stability in order to boost the economic imperatives of the neoliberal model of capitalist accumulation”. She provides a detailed analysis of the forms taken by these manifestations on the world stage and states that the educational and constitutional reforms of the 1990s – which recognize the multi-ethnic character of societies and introduce specific policies for indigenous people and people of African descent – are part of this multicultural logic of capitalism. In September 1991, the World Bank published its operational guidelines “4.20: Indigenous Peoples”, which served both as a model for creating regional policies and as a guide for promoting the participation of indigenous peoples in state projects. This moment is orientated by the multicultural logic of multinational capitalism, which is “open” to diversity, while at the same time securing the interests of big, globalized capital. This logic tries to rebuild relations between the state and society through inclusion that reduces ethnic conflicts and increases economic efficiency.

In academic literature, there are expressions such as conservative, multiculturalism, liberal, celebratory, critical, emancipatory, revolutionary and other multiculturalisms. Candau (2008b) indicates that multiculturalisms are ways of dealing with cultural relations, of designing public policies that converge or not towards the radicalization of democracy. The author says that it is possible to recognize three fundamental types of multiculturalism: assimilationist multiculturalism, differential multiculturalism and interactive multiculturalism.

Assimilationist multiculturalism admits that citizens do not have the same opportunities. According to this line of thought, by adopting an assimilationist policy, it would be possible to favor the integration of everyone into the hegemonic culture. Candau (2012b) points to the commitment of assimilationist multiculturalism to the permanence of an exclusionary status quo, since it seeks to assimilate marginalized groups to values and knowledge socially valued by the hegemonic culture. In the field of education, this multiculturalism promotes a policy of universalizing schooling without questioning “the monocultural character present in its dynamics, both in terms of the content of the curriculum and the relationships between the different actors” (Candau, 2012a, p. 243).

Differentialist multiculturalism, on the other hand, is based on a critique of assimilationist multiculturalism, pointing out that the emphasis on assimilation ends up denying difference or silencing it. This differentialist approach demands the guarantee of the expression of different cultural identities or of spaces in which they can express themselves. It can be said that only in this way the socio-cultural groups will be able to maintain their cultural

matrices. However, some of the positions of this view end up assuming an essentialist vision of cultural identities.

The third perspective presented by Candau is that of open and interactive multiculturalism, which considers interculturalism to be the most appropriate way of establishing democratic societies that promote the recognition and appreciation of different cultural groups. In contrast to the functionalist perspective, open multiculturalism is “[...] built from people who have suffered historical submission and subalternization [...]” (Candau, 2012b, p. 21). This approach questions the inequalities built up throughout history through ethnic-racial, gender and sexual orientation inferiorization, among others.

This article is theoretically aligned with open and interactive multiculturalism, as it considers it to be more suitable for establishing democratic and inclusive societies, which combine equality policies with identity policies. This branch also has the following characteristics: 1- Deliberate promotion of the interrelationship between different subjects and socio-cultural groups; 2- Rupture with an essentialist view of cultures and cultural identities, conceiving of them in a continuous process of construction, destabilization and reconstruction; 3- Defense of cultural hybridization as mobilizing the construction of open identities, in permanent transformation; 4- Promotion of awareness of the power mechanisms that permeate cultural relations; and 5- Encouragement of dialogue between different types of knowledge, assuming the tensions and conflicts that emerge from this debate.

3 Border schools in international agreements and Brazilian regulations

The Framework Agreement signed between Brazil and France has economic integration as the driving force and guiding reference for subsequent actions. Signed in Paris on May 28, 1996, this document sets out actions in various sectors, including education. According to the Agreement, cooperation will take place in the “[...] economic, cultural, scientific and technical fields, as well as in new sectors of common interest [...]” (Brazil, 1997, p. 1). To this purpose, its nine articles set out the lines of organization and regulation. The first paragraph article 3 refers to cultural, scientific and technical cooperation. This ratifies the idea of the border as a space for cooperation that favors the achievement of the Agreement’s educational objectives. Educational activities are included in the field of scientific and technical activities. These activities, in turn, are in charge of a general committee, which is divided into two subcommittees: the Scientific and Technical Committee and the Cultural and Linguistic Committee. The purpose of each subcommittee is to establish, regulate and monitor cooperation programs in their respective areas.

Although the Framework Agreement was signed in the mid-1990s, the materialization of a protocol explicitly aimed at education only took place on March 20, 2018. However, it is

worth noting the (previous) Ministry of Education's Ordinance number 798, which dates from June 19, 2012 (Brazil, 2012). The referred Ordinance contains instructions for implementing the Intercultural Border Schools Program (PEIF)⁴. This document mentions experiences that led to the need to standardize actions that had been taking place since before the publication of the Ordinance. Ministries of Education in Mercosur countries have signed agreements to encourage collaboration in the educational field. In November 2003, the Brasília Joint Declaration for Strengthening Regional Integration was signed by Brazil and Argentina. In this document, education was recognized as a cultural space conducive to strengthening awareness of regional integration. On November 24, 2006, the XXXI Meeting of Education Ministers from Mercosur countries took place. This meeting ratified the importance of the First Mercosur Border Schools Seminar, and the Regional Coordinating Commission for Basic Education was asked to elaborate the project for the following year, in support of the Andean Development Corporation (CAF) (Brazil, 2012, p. 30).

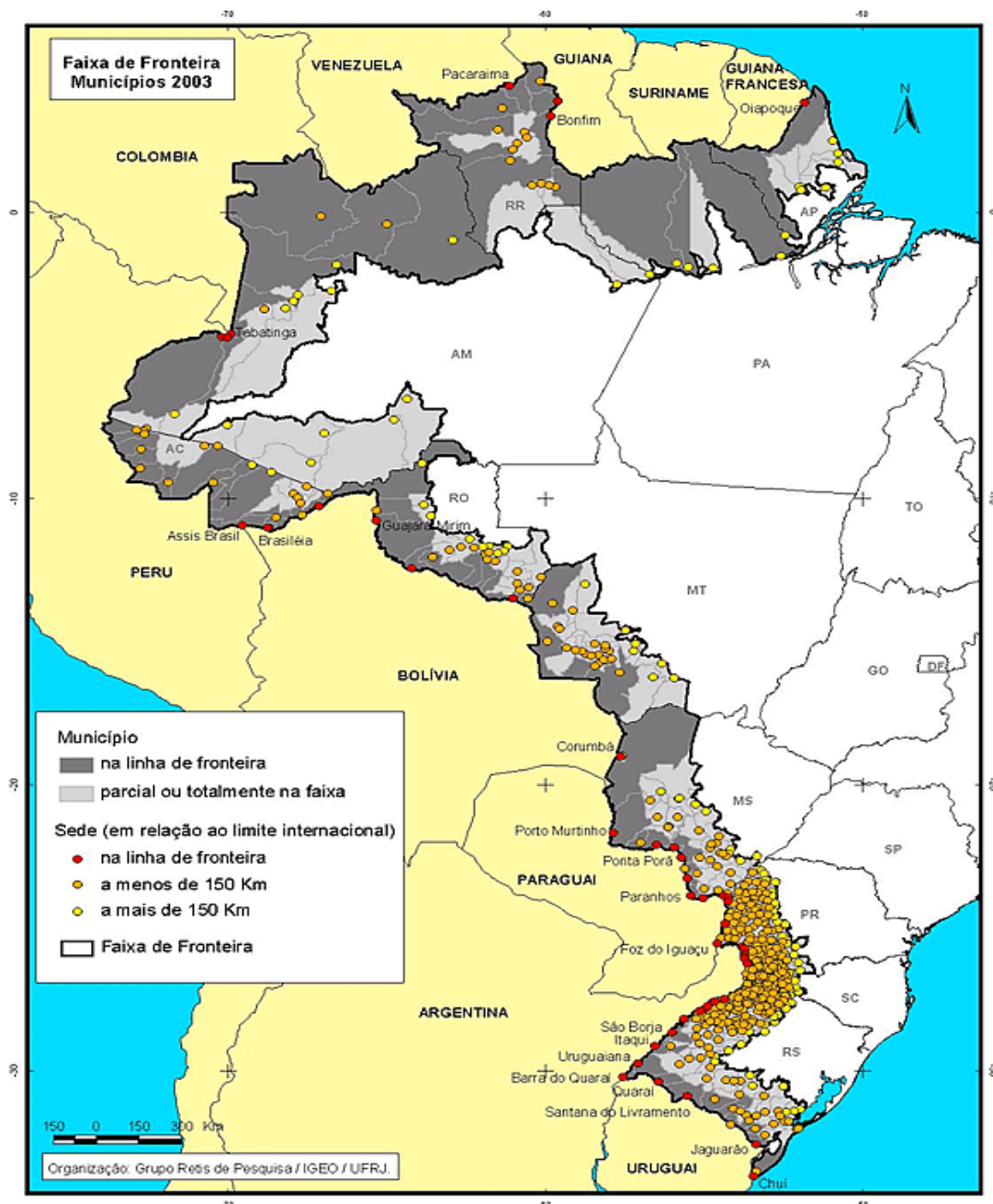
Ordinance 798 consists of 10 articles in total. The first of these articles deals with the establishment of a program based on the intercultural model, which aims at regional integration and foresees the expansion of the supply of knowledge, methods and educational processes. This article also has two paragraphs, the first one specifying the types of schools that should take part in the Program: "those, municipal and state schools, located on the border strip" and instructed by the "common border zone teaching model", based on the development of a Program for intercultural education, with an emphasis on teaching Portuguese and Spanish.

According to the 2005 Border Strip Restructuring Program (PRFF), the border strip is internal, and it is 150 kilometers wide and parallel to the land dividing line of the national territory. Established by Law 6,634 of May 2, 1979, regulated by Decree 85,064 of August 1980 and ratified by paragraph II of article 20 of the 1988 Federal Constitution, the notion of a border strip is considered vital to national security (Brazil 2005). However, the PRFF (2005) re-signified this notion, incorporating perspectives from Human Geography, which are anchored in concepts such as: territory (product of processes of control, domination and/or appropriation of physical space by state and non-state agents); territoriality (of an "inclusive" nature, which incorporates new and old spaces selectively, territoriality hardly coincides with the boundaries of a territory); network (conceived as a fundamental component in territorial articulation and disarticulation); region (space of functional, symbolic or identity cohesion); and regionalization (an effective process, forged in the very action of social subjects, combining interests that constantly redesign their spaces).

⁴ There is no consensus in the documentation analyzed about the name of the program. We have decided to standardize the nomenclature using the name given in Ordinance 798, of June 2012: Intercultural Border Schools Program (PEIF in Portuguese language).

The PRFF distinguishes border strip and a border zone. The border strip expresses a “linear” conception, typical of the notion of international boundary or divider, in other words, a de jure notion, associated with the territorial limits of the state. The concept of border zone, on the other hand, points to a locus of interaction, a specific landscape, with a transitive social space, made up of differences arising from the international boundary and cross-border flows and interactions, whose most evolved territorialization is that of the twin cities (Brazil, 2005, p. 17-22).

Figure 1 - Map of the municipalities located in the Border Strip



Source: Organized by Grupo Retis of research/Igeo/UFRJ and adapted by Sudeco (2003).

Information from the official website of the Amapá Government (Diário do Amapá, 2016) shows that actions like those provided for in PEIF were already discussed at the 10th Meeting of the Joint Commission for Cross-Border Cooperation (CMCT in Portuguese Language), which took place in 2016. The meetings of this Commission were provided for in Article 2 of the 1996 Framework Agreement. Paragraphs 1, 2 and 3 of the Agreement established that the meetings of the Joint Commission would take place every two years to promote political dialogue and coordinate the different aspects of bilateral relations. Specifically, paragraph 1 of article 3 stated the intention of cultural, scientific and technical cooperation. As defined in paragraph 2, this cooperation was to be led by a general Franco-Brazilian commission, a scientific and technical commission and a cultural and linguistic commission, all charged with establishing a common cooperation program in their respective areas.

In an interview, A.S.L.⁵ (Torres, 2020) said that PEIF was expected to be implemented in schools in the municipality of Oiapoque in 2019. In 2017, the Amapá state government and the French Guiana Ministry of Education began the process of implementing the Intercultural Border School Program in the cities of Oiapoque and Saint-Georges. This initiative would be the late start of the educational actions provided for in the Franco-Brazilian Agreement of 1996, as well as representing a consequence of the commitment signed during the 10th Meeting of the Brazil-France CMCT, which took place in Cayenne in 2016.

Still in the context of planning cooperation actions in the educational area, it is worth noting that on March 20, 2018, the Protocol of Agreement between the Amapá State Department of Education and the *Académie de la Guyane* was signed. The construction of this Protocol was based on the discussions proposed by the Brazil-France CMCT, in the action plan and in the bilateral cooperation agreements that resulted in the strategic partnership established during the II Bilateral Summit, held in Rio de Janeiro on December 23, 2008⁶. This Protocol consists of 11 articles in total. In it, the signatories declared their “intention to develop mutual knowledge through closer relations, [and that] they intend to significantly develop cooperation in the fields of education and training” (Amapá, 2018). Organized around the axes of training engineering, training, pedagogical research and mobility, article 1 of the Protocol deals with the development of the signatories’ language learning, the promotion of exchange programs and study visits by groups of students, teachers and education man-

⁵ Technical Advisor to the Deputy Secretariat for Educational Policies (SAPE/SEED). Interview given to Andreia Martel Torres on September 27, 2018.

⁶ According to published by the newspaper O Estado de S. Paulo on December 23, 2008, Brazil and the European Union (EU) announced a joint plan with actions to be implemented between 2009 and 2011. The commitment was signed by the President of France at that time, Nicolas Sarkozy, who was President of the Council of the European Union, and the President of Brazil at the time, Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva. The plan would be an attempt to put into practice the Strategic Partnership, signed in 2007. The document was made up of six themes, including the global financial crisis, climate change and bilateral relations between Brazil and the European Union.

agers from the various teaching modalities. Article 2 regulates continuing training for teachers and educational managers, exchanges of information and experiences in educational sectors of common interest, as well as the continuity of cooperation within the framework of the multi-annual plan for linguistic and cultural training in immersion (Amazon internship), in order to develop the linguistic proficiency of teachers of French as a Foreign Language (FLE) and Portuguese as a Foreign Language (PLE).

One of the actions resulting from the agreements between the governments of Amapá and French Guiana was the inauguration in 2018 of the Marly Maria de Sousa da Silva State School. This school is in the city of Macapá, specifically in the Macapaba housing estate, approximately 580 km from the border, that is, outside the border strip (the location of the cities in this strip can be seen on the map above). Therefore, considering what the first paragraph of Ordinance 798 of June 19, 2012 (Brazil, 2012) says, we see a disagreement between what is regulated and what has materialized as public policy in the Amapá area. Concerning the implementation of a bilingual school in the capital Macapá, the aforementioned SEED representative said in an interview that this option would save the effort needed to modify a pre-existing pedagogical structure. So, because it was new, the Marly Maria de Sousa da Silva State School was seen as a viable option. In addition, the staff at this institution would have the profile required by the proposal. According to A.S.L., this professional profile is designed to meet the needs of basic education, as set out in the current LDB, in addition to foreign language training. With the beginning of the implementation of PEIF, we now have two categories of school in Amapá: border schools - those described in official documents, and which have a specific pedagogical profile - and border schools, which are located on the border strip, but do not necessarily have a profile adapted to the specificities of the border area. We found there are schools in Oiapoque which, despite meeting the requirements deemed necessary to take part in PEIF, were not covered by the government's measures to adjust to the intercultural education model (Escola, 2017; Escola, 2018).

4 Interculturality in the documents and the sponsor's interpretation of interculturality

It is important to examine the concept of interculturality underlying the discourses of the agents responsible for implementing border schools in Amapá. An article published in the newspaper *Diário do Amapá* on December 9, 2016 points out that the state secretary of education, Goreth Sousa, was part of the Amapá delegation at the meeting of the Joint Cross-Border Commission (CMT), which took place in Cayenne in 2016. The secretary then said that it would be possible to move towards "ethnological education". She also mentioned local cultural and kinship links as possible references for the actions to be developed. However, she did not describe what this "ethnological teaching" would be. In fact, she didn't even

clarify whether this model would follow the interculturalist perspective present in the documents examined here. These gaps can be seen in the following excerpt:

The foreign language in the curriculum in Amapá's state schools is French. In addition, the state has a significant number of French language teachers in its 16 municipalities," she said. The secretary also recalled the specific activities developed by its centers of culture and French language studies, such as the Centro Cultural Franco Amapaense and the Danielle Mitterand French School. "We are studying the creation of a technical school of culture within the Franco Amapaense Cultural Center to encourage cultural exchange in the format described in the convention, as well as continuing the Amazon internship, which exists for exchanges between Brazilian and Guyanese basic education teachers," she explained. The Danielle Mitterand French Language School, in addition to teaching French to citizens of Amapá, also takes care of specific demands. As an example, Goreth said that SEED has a specific class for technicians from the Environment Secretariat to help with cooperation on environmental issues about breaking down the language barrier on the Brazil-French Guiana border. (Diário do Amapá, 2016).

We can see in the secretary's speech that she defends the integration of the state of Amapá into a cross-border economic circuit, which is different from open multiculturalism or critical interculturalism. This discourse points to the incorporation of difference through an integrationist strategy, which maintains the dominant socio-economic order, to the detriment of any horizon for change.

The title of the article refers to the implementation of PEIF. But the secretary's report is clumsy, as it does not clarify the implementation methodologies: it is known that the program will take place, but it is not known exactly how. It is mentioned that a technical school of culture will be set up within the Franco-Amapaense Cultural Center and that the Amazon internship will be continued for exchanges between Brazilian and Guyanese basic education teachers. However, it is worth highlighting that, in general, educators who carry out their teaching activities in the city of Macapá have provided some kind of internship, more precisely: at the Franco-Amapaense Cultural Center, at the Danielle Mitterand School and at the Marly Maria de Sousa da Silva bilingual school. This information is confirmed by the article from July 4, 2019, in the newspaper Diário do Amapá, which covered the provision of French language teaching in Amapá and Portuguese language teaching in France.

On Thursday 4, the second and final day of discussions at the XI Meeting of the Joint Commission for Cross-Border Cooperation (CMT), held in the Sebrae auditorium in Macapá, it was agreed that bilingual school teachers will receive special training this year during an exchange program in French Guiana. The proposal was presented by the Secretary of State for Education, Goreth Sousa, and the general coordinator of Continuing Education at Rectorat, José Festá. They reported on the progress made

in offering French language teaching in Amapá and Portuguese language teaching in France, as well as teacher training and the importance of this teaching in both places. “We have an average of 70 Portuguese teachers in Guyana, and there are 7,500 students studying Portuguese as a foreign language. We are the only place in France that will have Portuguese language and Brazilian literature as subjects on the entrance exam. This is the result of this cooperative relationship,” said Festá. Secretary Goreth Sousa said that Amapá currently has 153 French teachers in state schools. In addition, there is the work of the Danielle Mitterrand State Center for French Language and Culture and the Franco Amapaense Cultural Center. “The Franco Amapaense Center alone serves more than 800 students”.

The exchange of experiences restricted to teachers in the capital of Amapá shows only partial adoption of the strategies indicated on the Ministry of Education’s website, on the page dealing with border schools. Among the actions indicated by the Ministry that have not been adopted locally, we would highlight boosting relations with schools in the neighboring country through a plan of joint actions to carry out: exchanges between teachers, exchanges of experiences and other actions that promote interculturality. Although these strategies should be aimed at schools on the border, we did not identify the involvement of teachers from Oiapoque in the actions promoted by the state government. The article cited refers to educational experiences carried out in this municipality, but aimed at promoting economic activities and the health sector:

There is also training for taxi drivers from Oiapoque in the use of the French language, and for health professionals in the care of indigenous people. It’s a great job that serves the people of Amapá,” he said. Teacher training - The Government of Amapá, in partnership with the French Embassy, has already offered training courses for Amapá teachers in Paris, the French capital, and others in Brasília (DF) throughout 2017. The expectation is to have as many trained professionals as possible, thus ensuring the best school education. In November this year, French Guiana will host the Amazon Internship, an exchange of pedagogical practices and linguistic reflection for teachers of Portuguese as a Foreign Language in French Guiana and French Language teachers from the Amapá state network.

The educational actions mentioned in the text are based on an assimilationist and functional multiculturalist conception. This is evident, for example, in the training of taxi drivers in Oiapoque and in the cooperation with Sesi and Senai to offer free courses to the local population who are looking to enter the job market and generate income. Regarding the possibility of offering French language teaching in the training of teachers who work in schools on the border, we see a complex scenario, since most education professionals are employed in schools in the city of Oiapoque via temporary administrative contracts, which means that the local teaching staff has to be constantly replaced (Torres, 2022).

The exclusively utilitarian approach of local state agents is evident. The assimilationist tendency can also be seen in A. S. L.'s discourse on the implementation of the border schools project. This discourse expresses the understanding that incorporating elements of French culture will bring various "gains" to the people of Amapá.

Secretary Goreth provided the proposal, an explanation about intercultural border schools. She did the proposal to the CMT, which deals with all areas of international relations between Brazil and France here in Amapá. So, we have all the sectors you can imagine in there: industry, health... And education is one of these areas, which entered very timidly in 2016 with the work of Secretary Goreth. [...]. Because you know that economically Brazil is "above" all the other countries in South America, so our human development index is higher than the others. In this respect, in this technical cooperation we help other countries more than other countries help us. This is different, for example, from our reality with Amapá's border with French Guiana. Guyana's Human Development Index is higher than ours. So, when it comes to technical cooperation in this area of education, we have a lot more to gain. Not that we don't have something to offer (Torres, 2020).

A. S. L. starts from the idea of local backwardness. Backwardness that goes beyond the economic context and materializes in education on the Oiapoque border, because according to him: "in this area of education, we have a lot to gain". The possibility of interaction appears timidly in his speech: Brazilians can "offer" some experience. The interviewee emphasizes that Brazilians have a lot to gain, and the French have the most to offer. The vision of Amapá's government agents reinforces power relations based on an absolute socio-cultural hierarchy. In addition, we observed that state planning has taken little account of the use of experiences and learning mechanisms that have already been tried out in border schools. This planning is not even guided by the guidelines of the Ministry of Education.

These guidelines are divided into three pillars: #1 - Operation of the Program in the school, which deals with the involvement of the entire school unit, including the definition of learning project methodologies, the construction of the intercultural school's pedagogical political project and internal regulations, taking into account local curricular and sociocultural specificities and the dynamization of the relationship with the neighboring country through a joint action plan for carrying out teacher exchanges, as well as other actions that promote interculturality in all the school's years of education and the use of available and necessary information and communication technologies; #2 - Management arrangement and conditions from the education department (municipal and/or state), which concerns the construction of technical-pedagogical-financial cooperation terms with adherence through the Integrated Monitoring, Execution and Control System (SIMEC), including negotiation of the training calendar with the universities, transportation for the teachers who carry out the exchange,

among others; and #3 - Continuing training for basic education professionals under the coordination of universities, which deals with the composition of the local group, made up of the General Coordinator of PEIF, the Assistant Coordinator of Integral Education, the Pedagogical Articulation and Monitoring Supervisor (education department), Researchers, Teacher Trainers (university), Teacher Trainer (pedagogical coordinator or school principal), Distance Tutor (university), Face-to-face Tutor and/or PIBID (University, for Pedagogical Monitoring in the School), with the aim of: the promotion of the articulation, in the university space, between integral education and interculturality, the offer of training actions/courses, the repository of training materials, the streamlining of procedures for leaving the country (internal procedure of the higher education institutions), the definition of arrangements that allow training to be carried out within border regions, the elaboration of final products, resulting from each module of joint training with other countries, among others.

5 Final considerations

The analysis pointed out that largely, local government actions have taken place in disregard of the regulations resulting from international negotiations and have been characterized less as institutionalized educational policies and more as occasional measures. In this way, using the words of Carmentilla Martins (2008, p. 89), we can say that the Franco-Brazilian border is “representative of the deep hiatus in the relationship between state and society in Brazil, in the context of the reforms undertaken in the Brazilian political field from the mid-1990s onwards”.

The measures taken by the state managers have had no significant impact on the schools of Oiapoque, which should have been directly covered by actions coming from PEIF. We note that the state managers do not know about other experiences of implementing the intercultural bilingual education model, including those mentioned in the document that justifies the creation of Ordinance 798 of 2012 (Brazil). That document describes actions and experiences of implementing border schools in Mercosur. This text does not advocate the blind adoption of teaching models from other border areas, because the Oiapoque border is a singular space in the Americas. For example, in addition to its thriving socio-biodiversity, it is Brazil's only border with the euro zone, which permanently motivates emigration in search of better living conditions. But it does not mean that experiences from other borders cannot be partially used or adapted here.

In the Memorandum of Understanding signed between SEED and the *Académie de la Guyane* (Amapá, 2018), we can see that educational partnerships are being set up locally without any basis in the studies or work of the commissions listed in the Framework Agreement. On the one hand, we see that actions in the educational sphere in Amapá are being

carried out in the wake of economic interests and they are, in fact, at the origin of the 1996 agreement, as we pointed out at the beginning of this article. On the other hand, we can see that local state agents are not very sensitive to PEIF's guidelines, which are not in line with these interests, and which aim to undermine existing processes of cultural domination in border areas. At times, the discourse of SEED representatives disregards the experience of the school community, as well as Oiapoque people in general - something that clashes with an education aligned with the concept of interculturality underlying PEIF.

Finally, the analysis showed that the vision adopted by SEED agents is in line with functional, assimilationist multiculturalism. This view disregards power relations and reinforces the cultural domination that exists locally, and this conflicts with a critical intercultural perspective. SEED received the demand but disregarded the guidelines and deliberations of the Brazilian Ministry of Education and the CMCT. This has created a gap between the idea of interculturality that underpins the regulations examined and that which underlies local educational policies.

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