

The Spanish language and its Policies in the State of Paraná

Rosangela Kuspiosz **CALLIARI***
Cibele Krause **LEMKE****

*Doctoral student and master in Education by the Graduate Program in Education of the State University of the Center-West - UNICENTRO. Contact: rosangela.kuspiesz@hotmail.com.

**Doctor of Education by USP (2010). Post-Doctoral in Modern Foreign Languages at the University of Southampton (2019). Professor of the Course of Letters and Graduate Programs in Education and Letters at Unicentro. Contact: cklemke@unicentro.com.

Abstract:

This article, derived from a master's thesis, aims to present public policies implemented in the State of Paraná concerning Spanish language teaching, with a specific emphasis on the Intercultural Border Schools Program (PEIF) in Foz do Iguaçu. The study also conducted a survey on the supply of Spanish in the Centers for Modern Foreign Languages (CELEM) following the repeal of Law n. 11.161/2005, known as the "Spanish Law". Based on data collected from the Paraná State Department of Education (SEED), a panorama of Spanish language offering was outlined for the five years subsequent to the implementation of Law n. 13.415/2017, which instituted English as a compulsory subject starting from the 6th year of Elementary School. The results indicate a progressive decrease in the number of Paraná schools with active Spanish classes; the same trend was identified in CELEM within Foz do Iguaçu's state schools. Therefore, this scenario is posited to result from the implementation of restrictive public policies, such as Law n. 13.415, which contributed to the reduction of space for Spanish in schools by mandating the provision of English language instruction in Basic Education curricula.

Keywords:

Spanish; Language; Linguistic Policies.

Resumo:

Este artigo, parte de uma dissertação de mestrado, tem como objetivo apresentar algumas políticas públicas implementadas no Estado do Paraná em prol do ensino da língua espanhola, com destaque para o Programa Escolas Interculturais de

Fronteira (PEIF), aplicado na cidade de Foz do Iguaçu. Também realizamos um levantamento da oferta dessa língua nos Centros de Línguas Estrangeiras Modernas (Celem) paranaenses após a revogação da Lei n. 11.161/2005, conhecida como a “Lei do Espanhol”. Com base nos dados coletados junto à Secretaria de Educação do Paraná (Seed), traçamos um panorama do oferecimento do espanhol nos cinco anos posteriores à implementação da Lei n. 13.415/2017, que instituiu o inglês como língua obrigatória a partir do 6º ano do Ensino Fundamental. Os resultados revelam uma diminuição progressiva no número de escolas paranaenses com turmas ativas de espanhol, e o mesmo movimento é identificado nos Celem das escolas estaduais de Foz do Iguaçu. Diante disso, presumimos que esse cenário resulta da implementação de políticas públicas restritivas, como é o caso da Lei n. 13.415, que contribuiu para a redução do espaço destinado ao espanhol nas escolas, ao determinar a obrigatoriedade da oferta da língua inglesa nos currículos da Educação Básica.

Palavras-chave:

Espanhol; Língua; Políticas Linguísticas.

Signum: Estudos da Linguagem, Londrina, v.28, n.2, p. 128-142, August, 2025.

Recebido em: 27/05/2025

Aceito em: 08/12/2025

The Spanish language and its Policies in the State of Paraná

Rosangela Kuspiesz CALLIARI
Cibele Krause LEMKE

INTRODUÇÃO

According to Kaplan and Baldauf JR. (1997), language policy, also referred to by some as linguistic planning or even linguistic engineering, is a set of guidelines, strategies, and the execution of public policies that aim to promote or adapt the teaching and use of languages within a country. It can be considered an interdisciplinary field of academic reflection, as it is this policy that decides which languages should or should not be spoken or taught, through analysis and reflection on the current context of that particular society. Ultimately, language policies seek to implement structural linguistic changes within a group, organization, or society, utilizing a set of ideas, laws, regulations, and practices

Calvet (2007, p. 11) defines linguistic policy as "the determination of major decisions concerning the relations between languages and society," meaning the guidelines established through laws and parameters that direct educational and social agents concerning language teaching. Linguistic planning, still according to Calvet (2002, p. 145), is "the practical implementation of a linguistic policy, in short, passage to the act," which is the effective implementation of what documents stipulate in the practice of language teaching. When discussing language policies, it must be borne in mind that they are and will always be treated as a distinctly "political" expression, which takes into account the interests of certain groups but requires government decisions for legalization and actual enforcement.

Varela (2008, p. 4) defines linguistic policy

como el conjunto de decisiones y acciones promovidas por el poder público, que tienen por objeto principal una (o más) lengua(s) de su órbita, y están racionalmente orientadas hacia objetivos que son tanto lingüísticos (esto es, determinado efecto sobre el corpus de la lengua, su estatuto y/o su adquisición) como no lingüísticos.

In short, language policy is a mechanism that combines several characteristics but is, in all cases, directly linked to the power of the State. The State is one of the most powerful agents in this type of policy, as it determines for an entire nation what should or should not be said and written. The differences between British English and American English serve as proof of this: each nation has independently determined its own rules for the spelling and pronunciation of the same language. This example can be brought closer to the reality of Brazil by drawing a comparison between the Portuguese of Portugal and Brazilian Portuguese: two independent nations with distinct spelling, pronunciations, and interpretations of the same language.

In some Brazilian regions, there is a need to implement specific language policies, particularly in border regions shared with other countries. According to data from the Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics (IBGE, 2020), more than 15,000 kilometers of Brazilian territory are considered border areas. Beyond the delimitation of a geographical space, the border functions as a contact zone (Ferrari, 2011; Sturza, 2006), and this contact is primarily legitimized by language. In these areas, the movement of people occurs for several reasons, including economic, educational, and health purposes. The search for resources available on one side but lacking on the other leads to the integration of individuals, the blending of their cultures, and, consequently, the

mixing of languages. For Calliari (2021, p. 32-33), "The mixture between languages present in the border region creates the phenomenon of the crossing space, in which the integration between the two languages generates repercussions that go beyond their existence only as a language."

In the State of Paraná, the best-known border city is Foz do Iguçu. Multilingual and multicultural (Tallei, 2019), it borders the city of Puerto Iguazú in Argentina and Ciudad del Este in Paraguay. As a differentiated space, Foz do Iguçu, like many other Brazilian border cities, has sociocultural and linguistic specificities, making the teaching of the Spanish language essential in this context. However,

[...] there is still no specific regulation focused on education in the border municipalities of Paraná, ... that is, no legislation by the state to guide the teaching of languages in cities covered by multilingualism or bilingualism, leaving the practice still uncertain (Calliari, 2021, p. 27).

With the implementation of Law n. 13.415/2017 (Brazil, 2017), Spanish lost the small space it had conquered within Brazilian educational institutions, making English the only mandatory language offered in school curricula. Calliari (2021, p. 54-55) highlights that: "Some regions of Brazil, especially the border regions, still maintain the teaching of Spanish in the counter-shift/after-hours period, as is the case of municipalities in the State of Paraná that offer language teaching in the Centers for Modern Foreign Languages (CELEM).

CENTER FOR MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES (CELEM)

In terms of public language policies, we highlight the Centers for Modern Foreign Languages (CELEM). Since its creation in 1986, CELEM, a program initiated by the State of Paraná government to "value the multilingualism and ethnic diversity that marks the history of Paraná" (Paraná, 2008a, p. 46), has provided thousands of citizens with opportunities to learn Spanish and other Foreign Languages (FL). According to Santos (2017), in the scenario of Brazil's democratic reopening, teachers' associations from numerous areas were strengthened, leading to calls for increased access to free, quality public education. It was within this framework that the Modern Foreign Language Centers of Paraná were created. The author also highlights that CELEM is a forerunner of public and mass Spanish-language education in our country, making it a crucial program for the expansion of the language. In many municipalities across the State of Paraná, the institution is responsible for teaching the Spanish language to students from both public and private schools.

The language instruction offered by CELEM is aimed at students within the State Basic Education Network, specifically those enrolled in Elementary School (final years), High School, Vocational Education, and Youth and Adult Education (EJA). Instruction may also be extended to teachers, educational agents, and the community, as established by Normative Instruction n. 19/2008 (Paraná, 2008b). Furthermore, CELEM must be aligned with the State Curriculum Guidelines for Basic Education, which serve to guide state education in Paraná, as reported by Santos (2017).

Aimed at the development and preservation of the languages of Paraná's immigrant peoples, the CELEM program is currently present in thirty-two Regional Education Centers, according to data from the Department of Education of Paraná (SEED). Spanish is the language taught in the vast majority of these classes. The increase in the number of Spanish classes offered by CELEM was determined, in large part, by the implementation of Law n. 11.161 (Brazil, 2005), the so-called "Spanish Law" (Santos, 2017). As the State Education Council of Paraná began to consider that CELEM units could be responsible for ensuring compliance with this law, a significant increase in the number of classes at these centers became evident. Consequently, the teaching of Spanish through CELEM has seen considerable expansion since 2010.

Still regarding the increase in the supply of the Spanish language in CELEM, Calliari and Jacumasso (2014) highlight that, in 2010, **455 out of 2,058 state schools** offered Spanish teaching through CELEM classes. Subsequently, in 2011, this number **tripled**, and in 2012, it remained at the 2011 level. It is thus evident that the growth in the Spanish language offering through these centers was significant. However, this expansion is tempered by the fact that these enrollments are optional for students, unlike the subjects regularly offered in the curriculum, making the overall outlook less promising for widespread implementation.

Even not holding a privileged position, that is, a mandatory place within the curricular matrix, in the vast majority of Paraná's educational institutions, the Spanish language still had the possibility of being adopted for this role under Law n. 11.161/2005. With the revocation of this law and the implementation of Law n. 13.415 (Brazil, 2017), CELEM remains the only entity where Spanish instruction is currently offered. Over the years, the program has been restructured, and Resolution n. 1.709/2018 currently governs the extracurricular teaching of modern foreign languages, as follows:

Art. 1º Authorize the extracurricular, multilingual and free offer of courses in Modern Foreign Language - LEM, Portuguese for Speakers of Other Languages - PFOL and Brazilian Sign Language - Libras, with a workload of 160 lesson hours, completion and annual certification, by the Center for Modern Foreign Languages - Celem, in the educational institutions of the State Public Network of Paraná.

Art. 2º Determine that the Superintendence of Education issues normative instruction with criteria for implementation, offer and operation of CELEM courses to students, community, teachers and educational agents (Paraná, 2018).

In addition to the two languages mentioned in Art. 1, teaching of French, English, Italian, German, Japanese, Ukrainian, Polish and Mandarin is also offered. As the demand for the centers is low, as can be observed in Table 1 below, due to CELEM being available in contrurno, the desired multilingualism that guided the creation of the program has not yet reached its fullness. Although other languages have been introduced over the years, such as the Brazilian Sign Language (Libras) and the Portuguese Language for Refugees (PFOL), many educational institutions are unable to open classes due to lack of enrollment.

In addition to the two languages mentioned in Art. 1, teaching in French, English, Italian, German, Japanese, Ukrainian, Polish, and Mandarin is also offered. However, as it can be observed in Table 1 below, the demand for the centers is low because CELEM is offered in the counter-shift/after-hours period. Consequently, the desired multilingualism that guided the program's creation has not yet been fully realized. Although other languages have been introduced over the years, such as Brazilian Sign Language (Libras) and Portuguese for Refugees (PFOL), many educational institutions are unable to open classes due to insufficient enrollment.

Table 1 - LE offer in the Celem of state schools in Paraná (2017 to 2021)

Year	German	Spanish	French	English	Italian	Japanese	Mandarin	Polish	Ukrainian	Libras	PFOL
2017	9	739	18	94	10	4	2	2	5	0	0
2018	8	714	18	125	13	5	1	1	5	16	14
2019	7	584	17	109	10	5	1	1	3	26	14
2020	7	527	15	0	8	4	0	2	4	21	0
2021	7	439	11	0	7	3	0	1	4	17	11

Source: Prepared by the authors.

The importance of CELEM in the State of Paraná is undeniable. However, the fact that not all cities have active classes within the program disadvantages students who lack even an initial contact with the Spanish language. According to Santos (2017), if Spanish were included in the curriculum of more than 2,000 state primary and secondary schools, the situation would be more

encouraging. The author also points out that CELEM is the educational system that most promotes Spanish language teaching in Paraná, hence the critical importance of studying and understanding the program's experiences, including both its successful aspects and areas that require improvement.

However, the data presented above indicate a decline in the number of schools in the State of Paraná that offer Foreign Language (FL) teaching through CELEM. It is noteworthy that, until 2021, the State had approximately 2,133 educational institutions, and in the last five years, following the revocation of Law n. 11.161/2005, fewer than half of these schools kept CELEM operational. In 2021, the number of schools providing FL learning opportunities to the community did not reach one-quarter of the state's total number of schools (Calliari, 2021).

The years following 2021 were not included in the analysis of the original master's thesis. However, these data were subsequently requested from SEED to be incorporated into this article.

Table 2 - LE offer in Celem of the state schools of Paraná (2023 to 2025)

Year	German	Spanish	French	English	Italian	Japanese	Mandarin	Polish	Ukrainian	Libras	PFOL
2023	13	704	33	0	12	5	0	3	5	56	24
2024	22	606	32	0	13	5	0	3	4	54	34
2025	13	523	20	0	10	5	0	1	2	47	34

Source: Prepared by the authors.

Information regarding the year 2022 was not provided by SEED. When questioned about the absence of this data, no explanation was received. In 2021, Paraná had a total of 2,133 state educational institutions, while by 2025, this number decreased to 2,088. Comparing the years 2021 and 2023, a notable increase of 265 active Spanish-language classes was observed in the State of Paraná. However, a subsequent decline occurred between 2023 and 2024, with the closure of 98 classes. This trend continued into 2025, with an additional 83 classes being closed

Table 3 - LE offer in the Celem of the state schools of Foz do Iguaçu

CITY / NUMBER OF SCHOOLS	2017		2018		2019		2020		2021	
	Spa.	Eng.	Spa.	Eng.	Spa.	Eng.	Spa.	Eng.	Spa.	Eng.
Foz do Iguaçu / 30	11	8	7	6	8	6	4	0	3	0

Source: Prepared by the authors.

Specifically, the city of Foz do Iguaçu currently has thirty state educational institutions to serve a population of 285,415 inhabitants. Calliari (2021, p. 85) highlights that, among these institutions,

Only eleven had Spanish classes in CELEM in 2017, and eight schools taught English, totaling nineteen institutions with active classes in the language centers, that is, more than half of the state schools in the city were with active classes. In 2018, there was a drop in the Spanish classes from eleven to seven; also a fall in the English classes from eight to six. In 2019, there is the opening of a more Spanish-speaking class compared to the previous year, however, English remains with the same number of classes. In 2020, there is a significant reduction in the opening of classes compared to other years, only four schools still maintain CELEM Spanish language teaching. Moving to three institutions offering the language in 2021. Regarding the classes of English teaching, in 2020 no institution offers this language. The same scenario presents itself in 2021.

Following the revocation of Law n. 11.161/2005, the Spanish language suffered the impact of no longer being mandatory, even within the context of CELEM and in multilingual cities such as

INTERCULTURAL BORDER SCHOOLS PROGRAM (PEIF)

In 2005, the city of Foz do Iguaçu participated in a Federal Government program entitled the “Programa Escolas Interculturais de Fronteira” - Intercultural Border Schools Program (PEIF), which was formerly known as “Projeto Escola Intercultural Bilíngue de Fronteira” - Bilingual Intercultural Border School Project (PEIBF). According to Feix (2018), this project was created in 2005 and has been developed in several border cities shared with neighboring countries, including Argentina, Bolivia, Paraguay, Uruguay, and Venezuela. The project facilitates the exchange of teachers between Brazilian and foreign institutions. Thus,

One of the first programs to think about policy planning for borders was the Border Intercultural Schools Program (PEIF). The program was born from the need to strengthen intercultural ties between neighboring cities that form border with Brazil. At its inception, a bilateral agreement between just two countries, Argentina on one side and Brazil on the other. With the aim of strengthening ties in the area of education, the Joint Declaration of Brasilia was signed in Argentina in 2003 to strengthen regional integration between the Ministries of Education of Brazil and Argentina. In 2004 the first joint work plan was drawn up, entitled: Model of common teaching in schools in border areas, based on the development of a programme for intercultural education, with emphasis on the teaching of Portuguese and Spanish. Subsequently, in 2005 it began as a bilateral programme and in 2007 it was consolidated as an Educational Sector Programme of the Southern Cone Common Market (MERCOSUR), which includes the countries of Bolivia, Paraguay, Uruguay and Venezuela. Since 2004, when a new declaration was signed in Buenos Aires reaffirming the commitment, the programme has been carried out in border areas (Tallei, 2019, p. 160).

It is worth mentioning that the program was created to address the needs of the Educational Sector of Mercosur (SEM), whose mission/mandate is defined as follows:

To form a common educational space, through the coordination of policies that link education with the MERCOSUR integration process, stimulating mobility, exchange and the formation of a regional identity and citizenship, with the aim of achieving quality education for all, with special attention to the most vulnerable sectors, in a development process with social justice and respect for the cultural diversity of the peoples of the region (Mercosul, 2011, p. 10).

According to Ferreira (2020), there are three main entities that contributed to the program's idealization: the Treaty of Asuncion, which established Portuguese and Spanish as the official languages of Mercosur; the SEM, which brought the possibility of promoting these languages as disciplines; and the Joint Declarations between Brazil and Argentina, which, since being established in 2003, have sought to implement a shared educational approach in border schools to strengthen regional integration. The author also states that, despite its involvement with international relations, the program proposes a teaching model based on regional integration within the border context: "As it is a common teaching model among schools in border areas, the project proposes the progressive transformation of such schools into intercultural bilingual institutions" (Ferreira, 2020, p. 139).

Foz do Iguaçu was the only municipality along the Paraná border to be included in the program. PEIF was also implemented in the cities of Dionísio Cerqueira (SC) and Bernardo de Irigoyen (MNES). However, in the city of Barracão (PR), which also borders the other two aforementioned municipalities, no school was included "inexplicably, the city of Barracão, which forms a pair with Dionísio Cerqueira and Bernardo de Irigoyen, and shares the same urban network, did not participate in the bilingual project. This seems to make no sense even for teachers participating in that project" (Ferrari, 2011, p. 399-400).

Also exhibiting twin city characteristics are Santo Antônio do Sudoeste (PR) and San Antonio (MNES). In relation to these municipalities, Ferrari (2011, p. 400) points out "the conurbated twin cities of San Antonio and Santo Antônio do Sudoeste also strangely do not participate in the bilingual project. According to the field research, these two cities do not participate in the bilingual project because they are not considered twin cities."

It is not necessary to analyze the non-selection of the aforementioned cities for participation in the PEIF at this moment. However, if these municipalities meet the program's profile, the question of their exclusion remains pertinent. This is because, as Pereira (2009) points out, all border schools carry a significant burden of responsibilities and social duties to be fulfilled, such as the integration of students in a highly plural context (including natives and migrants), under conditions of respect and appreciation for their own cultures and identities.

In the opinion of Sturza (2014), the integration proposal carried out in the PEIF is crucial and complex because the teacher provides another means of connection, making this professional the central figure in this relationship. Thus, such connections extend across different dimensions and meanings, creating bridges or pathways, but always linking students through language, culture, or knowledge. The teacher is responsible for developing and articulating issues and projects with students from Argentina, Paraguay, Venezuela, and Uruguay.

Although it did not involve all border municipalities, the PEIF was a program aimed at this region, but it is currently defunct. One of the reasons for its non-implementation in some border locations is the *cruce*, meaning the act of commuting between countries: "The *cruce* is the crossing, which, in some borders, is a bridge; in others, a ferry and in others, only the street" (Sturza, 2014, p. 5).

According to Souza and Albuquerque (2019), educators who participated in the PEIF in the municipality of Foz do Iguaçu were subject to various border controls during the *cruce*. Argentine Customs acts as a representative of the territorial state during these weekly crossings, and the time spent on controls varies according to the flow of vehicles from both countries. This instability necessitates an early departure for educators to ensure their classes start on time. Furthermore, the state border authorities attempt to control the documents and identities of these educators upon entry and exit. Specific permits are also required for the transport of materials between institutions. Some limitations prevent the implementation of certain joint activities in these border regions, including the Argentine Customs barrier, which prohibits the movement of underage students due to concerns about child trafficking.

In relation to their Argentinian female teacher, the Brazilian female educators from Foz do Iguaçu report a significant wage disparity: the former receive twice the salary, while Brazilian female educators do not receive any extra remuneration to carry out the transfer or crossing. The lack of time to prepare for program-related activities is also a problem reported by Brazilian female teachers. This is because they have only one day allocated to prepare the weekly planning for their Brazilian classes, and this same day is used to conduct activities in schools in the neighboring country (Souza; Albuquerque, 2019).

Still with regard to the *cruce*, Ferrari (2011) highlights that teachers participating in the program in the municipalities of Dionísio Cerqueira/Bernardo de Irigoyen were often standing in inspection lines. Consequently, classes were compromised or delayed. Lacking life insurance to carry out the transfer or crossing, teachers are left without any support in the event of an accident on this route. That is, these barriers were not exclusive to the State of Paraná, as demonstrated..

Souza and Albuquerque (2019) highlight that, with respect to the PEIF, a lack of temporal coherence and definition exists in the program on both the Brazilian and Argentinian sides. Despite the physical proximity between the participating schools, the divergent pedagogical policies and practices, coupled with the legislation of each country, create and exacerbate problems, thereby hindering the effective operation of the border schools.

Therefore, "En el año 2016, el PEIF pone fin a una historia de educación fronteriza, cuando deja de llevarse a cabo en varias ciudades de frontera" (Tallei, 2019, p. 161). The few policies designed for border regions are often developed by individuals unfamiliar with the reality of these

spaces, as was the case with the PEIF implemented in the aforementioned municipalities. In the opinion of the teachers involved with the program, the PEIF was highly important; however, as they stated, "it was practically thrown from top to bottom, and important local issues for the project's advancement, such as the transport and safety of teachers and students from one school to another, were not considered" (Ferrari, 2011, p. 402).

With regard to policies created for these spaces by individuals unfamiliar with their reality, Baller (2014) shows that the agents who make decisions concerning border regions perceive them through the lens of their own political landscape, considering their own intricacies, treaties, covenants, and agreements. Border regions possess realities that differ from those of the capitals, and their relationships are often distant from these spaces of political discussion. Due to these considerations, many proposals and projects developed with such areas in mind ultimately lack precision and fail to address the needs they were intended to meet.

Oliveira and Morello (2019) mention that serious deficiencies are identified in Brazil regarding the encouragement and creation of policies that promote Portuguese-Spanish bilingualism and South American integration. Proof of this is the end of the PEIF, which highlights these systemic weaknesses, often exposed by changes in government. Nevertheless, the legacy left by the instituted policies and programs, with ten years of history in cooperative intercultural bilingualism along the borders, is of extreme technical and political importance for the future. Therefore, it is necessary to elaborate on and systematize these experiences, taking into account all the knowledge accumulated through already prepared theses and studies.

THE #FICAESPANHOL MOVEMENT

Launched in 2016, the #ficaespanhol movement was created to support the permanence of the Spanish language in educational institutions in the state of Rio Grande do Sul after the language's offer was negatively affected by the implementation of Law n. 13.415/2017. The movement was established by a group of Spanish teachers, students from the Letters course at the Federal University of Rio Grande do Sul (UFRGS), and teachers from the UFRGS Application College. It gained traction on social media and received support from other *gaúcho* educational institutions, including the federal universities of Santa Maria, Pelotas, Rio Grande, Unipampa, Federal da Fronteira Sul, and the Federal Institutes. Marcos Fontana, a professor of Spanish at the Federal University of Santa Maria, stated: "We are in favour of multilingualism, not the exclusion of a language to give exclusivity to English. After all, we live in a state that borders two Spanish-speaking countries and Brazil borders seven Spanish-speaking countries" (IPOL, 2020).

Furthermore

Motivated by the impact in the press, different groups of teachers and students, with the support of local politicians, were able to send out motions of support in their cities that were approved in the municipal councils and then sent to the State Assembly. Thus, between the months of May and August 2018, 54 documents supporting the teaching of Spanish were collected, allowing state deputies to assess the impact of the movement throughout the region, especially in border cities (Souza, 2019, p. 85).

The movement garnered the support of State Representative, Juliana Brizola, the author of the Proposal for a Constitutional Amendment (PEC) n. 270/2018 (which was later converted into Constitutional Amendment (EC) n. 74/2018). With the support of more than thirty-six deputies, EC n. 74/2018 mandates that the teaching of the Spanish language be a compulsory subject in the curricula of primary and secondary schools in Rio Grande do Sul, though it remains optional for the student:

Art. 1.o The § 3 is added to art. 209 of the Constitution of the State of Rio Grande do Sul, with the following wording:

§ 3.o The teaching of the Spanish language, with optional enrolment, will be a compulsory subject in public primary and secondary schools.

Art. 2 This Constitutional Amendment enters into force on the date of its publication (Rio Grande do Sul, 2018).

With regard to the proposal for a constitutional amendment, Souza (2019, p. 85) clarifies: "The suggestion came from the deputy who supported the movement, Juliana Brizola, because if it is approved in two rounds by the majority of the state deputies, the text is included immediately, without the governor being able to intervene in the decision."

One of the founders of the movement, and the creator of its website, is Monica M. Rodrigues, a professor at the Institute of Letters of the Federal University of Rio Grande do Sul. According to IPOL (2020), this union inspired other states to advocate for multilingualism. Representatives from Santa Catarina, Paraná, Pernambuco, and Rio de Janeiro contacted the group and initiated their own mobilization. These efforts yielded specific results, such as the movement by the Association of Spanish Teachers of the State of Paraíba (APEEPB), which succeeded in maintaining the mandatory offer of Spanish in the state's High Schools, supported by Law n. 11.191/2018. Furthermore, social networks and their followers represent a growing aspect of the union. As mentioned by Professor Rodrigues, the State of Paraná also joined the movement (IPOL, 2020).

Due to the scarcity of printed material published about the #fícaespañol movement in the State of Paraná, the analysis relies on recordings of live streams held by teachers engaged with the movement. These became prevalent in 2020, following the health crisis established by the Corona Virus Disease (COVID-19) pandemic. As face-to-face classes in Paraná's education networks were suspended in May 2020, all educational institutions, from Basic to Higher Education, were required to adapt. Consequently, universities also needed to modify their planned events, which began to take place remotely, through the real-time transmission of activities via the internet. The subsequent discussion regarding the #fícaespanholnoparana movement is based on a specific lecture promoted within the *Colores del Español* extension program of the Federal Institute of Paraná (IFPR¹), Curitiba campus. This program aims to promote the Spanish language for IFPR's internal and external communities.

In Paraná, in 2017, the Association of Spanish Teachers of the State of Paraná (APEEPR), together with higher education institutions offering the Letters-Spanish course, their students, and the support of society and federal and state educational networks, began articulating a defense of Spanish language teaching in the state. In 2018, this movement was consolidated as #fícaespanholnoparana, according to Professor Dr. Deise Picanço, of the Federal University of Paraná.

Professor Dr. Jacicarla Souza da Silva, from the State University of Londrina, reports that in 2017, during the *Encuentro de Profesores(as) de Lengua Española Del Estado de Paraná* (Meeting of Spanish Language Teachers from the State of Paraná), the first technical meeting of the state's Higher Education Institutions (IES) was held. The purpose was to devise strategies and actions to mobilize support for Spanish language teaching and solicit public backing. Jacicarla points out that implementation of these actions is slow and requires time. She adds that it was only in 2019, as a result of these articulations, that SEED and the Superintendence of Science, Technology and Higher Education of Paraná (SETI) organized a state Working Group (GT) to discuss language policies in Paraná, primarily those directed at Spanish teaching. Also in 2019, the movement's pages on Facebook and Instagram were created.

On October 15, 2019, the first meeting with the Education Commission took place, facilitated by Deputy Arilson Chiorato. Subsequently, on December 17 of the same year, the initial meeting was held with the Secretary of Education, Renato Feder, along with members of several state public institutions and representatives of APEEPR. The following teachers were present: Amábile Piacentini (UNESPAR), Hellen Gonçalves (IFPR), Isabel Cristina Jasinski (UFPR), Melissa Andres

¹ Movimento [...], (2020).

Freitas (UEPG), Glenda Cáceres (UFPR), and Professor Jefferson Januário dos Santos (UEL). During this specific meeting, the teachers presented a document proposing the offer of Spanish in Paraná's educational institutions for Elementary School II and High School³. The outcome of this meeting guaranteed the continuity of CELEM's offer for existing classes in 2020, as well as the submission of an expansion plan for 2021.

Regarding the state Working Group (GT), Professor Dr. Adriana Fiuza, from the State University of Western Paraná (UNIOESTE), Cascavel campus, mentions that the following Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) are members: UNIOESTE, UEL, UNESPAR, UEPG, UNICENTRO, and UENP. SEED (through its CELEM and Curriculum departments) and SETI are also part of the GT. Due to the pandemic, no GT meetings were held in the first half of 2020. However, meetings became constant in the second half, and as a result of this work, the GT secured the maintenance of all existing CELEM classes and the inclusion of fifty new classes for 2021. During the lecture, the professor also emphasizes that discussions include the incorporation of the Spanish language into the curriculum of the new High School and the initiation of dialogue with Municipal Secretariats of Education for the possible implementation of the language in Elementary School I. The professor defends multilingualism in schools, arguing that the more languages offered, the greater the possibilities for dialogue, learning, and interaction.

Professor Dr. Jacicarla Souza da Silva mentions that, on May 29, 2020, the first meeting of the *Movimento Fica Espanhol* in Brazil took place. The national movement is divided into five interconnected working groups (GTs): GT1—Social Support and Dissemination Mobilization (with the participation of Professor Jacicarla Souza da Silva); GT2—Document Preparation and Review; GT3—Political Contacts and Advisory; GT4—Collection of Specific Data (with the participation of Professor Adriana Fiuza); and GT5—Research on Social and Economic Impact (with the participation of Professor Deise Picanço).

According to the teacher Prof. Dr. Deise, the GT5 is collaborating with data to assist in the argumentation of a bill that is currently being processed in Congress. The Bill n. 3.849/2019 is authored by federal deputy Felipe Carreras, who requests the amendment of the Law of Guidelines and Bases of National Education (LDB) of 1996, to make the teaching of the Spanish language mandatory in high school curricula and its offer also in Elementary Education II of all Brazilian institutions (Brazil, 2019).

According to Professor Dr. Deise Picanço, GT5 is collaborating by providing data to support the arguments for a bill currently being processed in Congress. This Bill, n. 3.849/2019, is authored by Federal Deputy Felipe Carreras. It requests an amendment to the Law of Guidelines and Bases of National Education (LDB) of 1996 to make the teaching of the Spanish language mandatory in High School curricula and mandate its offer in Elementary Education II across all Brazilian institutions (Brazil, 2019).

On July 12, 2021, State Deputy Arilson Chiorato presented the Constitutional Amendment Proposal (PEC) n. 03 to the Legislative Assembly of the State of Paraná (ALEP). This proposal provided for the mandatory inclusion of Spanish language teaching in public schools from Elementary School II to High School. The PEC specifically proposed inserting §9 of Art. 179 into the State Constitution, mandating that the teaching of Spanish be offered during regular class hours, with a minimum of two weekly classes. The proposal was signed by more than twenty deputies and was awaiting an opinion from the Constitution and Justice Commission (CCJ). A positive opinion from the CCJ would then forward the document for analysis in the plenary session of the fifty-four Paraná deputies.

The PEC mobilized Paraná society, resulting in letters of support from various institutions and public authorities. These included Professor Dr. Cibele Krause Lemke, Coordinator of the Office of International Relations at Unicentro; Professor Dr. Tadinei Daniel Jacumasso, Director of the Language Center at the same institution; the Commercial and Industrial Association of Apucarana; and the Municipal Council of Education of Foz do Iguaçu. The "PEC do Espanhol" campaign, as it has been named, gained strength and representation on social networks, while the *Fica Espanhol*

movement in Paraná publicized the actions of teachers and students to encourage support for the proposal.

Thanks to movements such as *Fica Espanhol* in Paraná, which unified the efforts of APEEPR, IES, parliamentarians, and the general society identified with the cause of defending Spanish language teaching in the state, the PEC do Espanhol was published in the Official Journal of the Legislative Assembly on August 31, 2022. Approved as Constitutional Amendment n. 52/2022, the proposal was incorporated into the Constitution of Paraná (Paraná, 2022).

Thus, the Spanish language secured a new public policy in the State of Paraná, a direct result of a societal struggle to protect the teaching of a foreign language.

CONSIDERATIONS

This analysis emphasizes the importance of creating public policies that genuinely value the teaching of the Spanish language in Paraná, focusing on the CELEM, the PEIF, and the #ficaespañol movement. We also present an overview of the offer of Spanish in state CELEM educational institutions between 2017 and 2021, including specific data related to the city of Foz do Iguaçu. It is pertinent to recall that the "Spanish Law" was repealed in 2017. Concerning the supply of Spanish in CELEM during the five years following the repeal of the aforementioned law, we observed a progressive decrease in the number of schools with active classes, a trend also verified in Foz do Iguaçu's state schools. We propose that this panorama results from the implementation of restrictive public policies, such as Law n. 13.415/2017, which mandates the teaching of English in the curriculum. In short, following the repeal of Law n. 11.161/2005, Spanish has steadily been losing ground in Paraná's state schools

We emphasize that, in border cities such as Foz do Iguaçu, bilingualism is common, given that many individuals use Spanish within their family environments, which, in some cases, constitutes their mother tongue. In this sense, the teaching of Spanish in border municipalities would represent the development of a second language already utilized by individuals in their social interactions, rather than the teaching of a foreign language. Furthermore, we observe that the few public educational policies addressing the unique specificity of the border area are frequently elaborated by agents who lack familiarity with this context. We can also conclude that, currently, there are no public policies at either the federal or state level that adequately address the teaching of the Spanish language in border municipalities.

As previously mentioned, data concerning the supply of the Spanish language in Paraná's educational institutions after 2021 were not included in the master's research developed by the author(s). However, observing the subsequent three years reveals a continuing decline in the language's offer within CELEM. This sustained trend clearly demonstrates that the negative impacts resulting from the approval of Law n. 13.415/2017 still persist.

REFERENCES

BALLER, Leandro. *Fronteira e fronteiriços: a construção das relações sociais e culturais entre brasileiros e paraguaios (1954-2014)*. 2014. Tese (Doutorado em História) – Universidade Federal da Grande Dourados, Dourados, 2014. Disponível em: <https://repositorio.ufms.br/handle/123456789/2531>. Acesso em: 15 nov. 2025.

BRASIL. Câmara dos Deputados. *Projeto de Lei n. 3.849, de 3 de julho de 2019*. Altera a Lei n. 9.394, de 1996, de diretrizes e bases da educação nacional, para dispor sobre a obrigatoriedade do ensino da língua espanhola nos anos finais do ensino fundamental e no ensino médio. Brasília, DF: Câmara dos Deputados, 2019. Disponível em: https://www.camara.leg.br/proposicoesWeb/prop_mostrarintegra?codteor=1780506&filename=Avulso%20PL%203849/2019. Acesso em: 17 nov. 2025.

BRASIL. Presidência da República. Casa Civil. Subchefia para Assuntos Jurídicos. Lei n. 11.161, de 5 de agosto de 2005. Dispõe sobre o ensino da língua espanhola. *Diário Oficial da União*, Brasília, DF, 8 ago. 2005. Disponível em: https://www.planalto.gov.br/ccivil_03/_ato2004-2006/2005/lei/111161.htm. Acesso em: 28 out. 2025.

BRASIL. Presidência da República. Secretaria Geral. Subchefia para Assuntos Jurídicos. Lei n. 13.415, de 16 de fevereiro de 2017. Dispõe sobre a Medida Provisória 746 que altera, dentre outras, a Lei n. 9.394, de 20 de dezembro de 1996 e revoga a Lei n. 11.161, de 5 de agosto de 2005. *Diário Oficial da União*, Brasília, DF, 17 fev. 2017. Disponível em: http://www.planalto.gov.br/ccivil_03/_Ato2015-2018/2017/Lei/L13415.htm#art2. Acesso em: 23 out. 2025.

CALLIARI, Rosangela Kuspiosz. *Ensino de Língua Espanhola em municípios de fronteira entre Brasil e Argentina: um olhar para as possibilidades de educação intercultural bilingue*. 2021. Dissertação (Mestrado em Educação) – Universidade Estadual do Centro-Oeste, Irati, 2021.

CALLIARI, Rosangela Kuspiosz; JACUMASSO, Tadinei Daniel. A oferta de língua espanhola nas escolas estaduais paranaenses: uma análise a partir da lei 11.161/2005. *Publicatio UEPG: Ciências Humanas, Linguística, Letras e Artes*, Ponta Grossa, v. 22, n. 2, p. 189-198, jul./dez. 2014. Disponível em: <https://revistas2.uepg.br/index.php/humanas/article/view/5612/4645>. Acesso em: 31 jul. 2025.

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

CALVET, Louis-Jean. *Sociolinguística: uma introdução crítica*. São Paulo: Parábola, 2002.

FEIX, Silvane Deila. *Políticas linguísticas e gestão de línguas em escolas interculturais de fronteira – Brasil / Argentina*. 2018. Dissertação (Mestrado em Educação) – Universidade Estadual do Centro-Oeste, Irati, 2018.

FERRARI, Maristela. *Interações transfronteiriças na zona de fronteira Brasil-Argentina: o extremo oeste de Santa Catarina e Paraná e a Província de Misiones (século XX e XIX)*. 2011. Tese (Doutorado em Geografia) – Universidade Federal de Santa Catarina, Florianópolis, 2011. Disponível em: <https://repositorio.ufsc.br/xmlui/bitstream/handle/123456789/95358/297827.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y>. Acesso em: 15 nov. 2025.

FERREIRA, José Genival Bezerra. Cenário da língua portuguesa no Mercosul: o caso da Argentina, do Paraguai e do Uruguai. *Revista Latinoamericana de Educación Comparada*, Buenos Aires, v. 11, n. 17, p. 132-147, 2020.

IBGE. *IBGE divulga relação dos municípios na faixa de fronteira*. Rio de Janeiro: IBGE, 2020. Disponível em: <https://agenciadenoticias.ibge.gov.br/agencia-sala-de-imprensa/2013-agencia-de-noticias/releases/28009-ibge-divulga-relacao-dos-municipios-na-faixa-de-fronteira>. Acesso em: 15 nov. 2025.

IPOL - INSTITUTO DE INVESTIGAÇÃO E DESENVOLVIMENTO EM POLÍTICA LINGUÍSTICA. *#Ficaespanhol: movimento ganha força no RS após lei alterar ensino de idiomas nas escolas*. Florianópolis: IPOL, 2020. Disponível em: <http://ipol.org.br/ficaespanhol-movimento-ganha-forca-no-rs-apos-lei-alterar-ensino-de-idiomas-nas-escolas/>. Acesso em: 8 out. 2025.

KAPLAN, Robert B.; BALDAUF JR, Richard B. *Language planning: from practice to theory*. Clevedon: Multilingual Matters LTD., 1997.

MERCOSUL. *Planos de Ação*. Uruguai: MERCOSUL Montevideu, 2011. Disponível em: <https://www.mercosur.int/pt-br/temas/educacao/planos-de-acao/>. Acesso em: 17 nov. 2025.

MOVIMENTO fica Espanhol em 2020 - um panorama do Paraná e do Brasil. Curitiba: [s. n.], 2020. 1 vídeo (1h43). Publicado pelo canal Cores del Español - Cores Cartonera. Disponível em:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gvP6n3Rw5mM&t=3246s&ab_channel=ColoresdelEspa%C3%B1ol-ColoresCartonera . Acesso em: 19 abr. 2024.

OLIVEIRA, Gilvan Müller de; MORELLO, Rosângela. La frontera como recurso: el bilingüismo portugués-español y el Proyecto de Escuelas Interculturales Bilingües de Frontera en el Mercosur (2005-2016). *Revista Iberoamericana de Educación*, Madrid, v. 81, n. 1, p. 53-74, 2019. Disponível em: <https://doi.org/10.35362/rie8113567>. Acesso em: 15 nov. 2025.

PARANÁ. Emenda Constitucional n. 52, de 29 de agosto de 2022. Acrescenta o §9º ao art. 179 da Constituição do Estado do Paraná, para instituir o ensino da língua espanhola como disciplina de oferta obrigatória na matriz curricular e de caráter optativo aos estudantes das escolas públicas no Estado do Paraná. *Diário Oficial Paraná*, Curitiba, n. 2.517, p. 3, 31 ago. 2022. Disponível em <https://www.documentos.dioe.pr.gov.br/dioe/consultaPublicaPDF.do?action=pgLocalizar&enviado=true&ataInicialEntrada=31/08/2022&dataFinalEntrada=31/08/2022&numero=2517&diarioCodigo=10&submit=Localizar>. Acesso em: 20 out. 2023.

PARANÁ. Secretaria de Estado da Educação do Paraná. Departamento de Educação Básica. *Diretrizes Curriculares da Educação Básica: língua estrangeira moderna*. Curitiba: Secretaria de Estado da Educação do Paraná, 2008a. Disponível em: https://www.educacao.pr.gov.br/sites/default/arquivos_restritos/files/documento/2019-12/dce_lem.pdf. Acesso em: 30 jun. 2025.

PARANÁ. Secretaria de Estado da Educação. Resolução n. 1.709, de 19 de abril de 2018. Regulamenta a oferta e o funcionamento dos cursos de Língua Estrangeira Moderna, Língua Brasileira de Sinais e Português para Falantes de Outras Línguas pelo Centro de Línguas Estrangeiras Modernas, na Rede Pública Estadual de Ensino do Paraná. *Diário Oficial Paraná*, Curitiba, n. 10178, p. 26, 26 abr. 2018. Disponível em: <https://www.legislacao.pr.gov.br/legislacao/pesquisarAto.do?action=exibir&codAto=196871&indice=1&totalRegistros=1&dt=11.1.2020.16.55.12.194>. Acesso em: 11 out. 2025.

PARANÁ. Secretaria de Estado da Educação. Superintendência da Educação. *Instrução nº 019/2008 - SUED/SEED*. Assunto: Critérios para implantação e funcionamento de cursos de Línguas Estrangeiras Modernas (LEM) e atribuições para os profissionais com atuação nos Centros de Línguas Estrangeiras Modernas (CELEM) da Rede Estadual de Educação Básica do Estado do Paraná. Curitiba : Secretaria de Estado da Educação, 2008b. Disponível em: https://www.educacao.pr.gov.br/sites/default/arquivos_restritos/files/documento/2019-12/instrucao192008.pdf. Acesso em: 17 nov. 2025.

PEREIRA, Jacira Helena do Valle. Diversidade cultural nas escolas de fronteiras internacionais: o caso de Mato Grosso do Sul. *Revista Múltiplas Leituras*, São Paulo, v. 2, n. 1, p. 51-63, jan./jun. 2009.

RIO GRANDE DO SUL. *Emenda Constitucional n. 74, de 19 de dezembro de 2018*. Acrescenta parágrafo ao artigo 209 da Constituição do Estado do Rio Grande do Sul. Porto Alegre: Assembleia Legislativa do Rio Grande do Sul, 2018. Disponível em: <https://leisestaduais.com.br/lei/constituicao-estadual-rs>. Acesso em: 17 nov. 2025.

SANTOS, Jefferson Januário dos. *A qualidade e a qualificação no ensino de espanhol nos Centros de Línguas Estrangeiras Modernas do Paraná (Celem-PR): um estudo de caso*. 2017. Tese (Doutorado em Educação) – Faculdade de Educação, Universidade de São Paulo, São Paulo, 2017. Disponível em: <https://teses.usp.br/teses/disponiveis/48/48134/tde-06122017-120010/pt-br.php>. Acesso em: 17 nov. 2025.

SOUZA, Flávia Alves de; ALBUQUERQUE, José Lindomar C. Nação e integração nas escolas de fronteira: a mobilidade docente e a aprendizagem das línguas nacionais entre o Brasil e a Argentina. *Etnográfica*, Lisboa, v. 23, n. 3, p. 627-648, 2019. Disponível em: <https://journals.openedition.org/etnografica/7313#text>. Acesso em: 6 maio 2025.

SOUZA, Henry Daniel Lorencena. Propuesta de enmienda a la constitución que obliga la enseñanza del

español en los colegios públicos del estado de Río Grande do Sul. In: ENCUENTRO INTERNACIONAL DE INVESTIGADORES DE POLÍTICAS LINGÜÍSTICAS, 9., 2019, Rosario. *Anais* [...]. Rosario: Humanidades y Artes Ediciones, 2019. p. 81-87. Disponível em: <https://grupomontevideo.org/ndca/ndeducacionparalaintegracion/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/C-E-BOOK-IX-Encuentro-2019.pdf>. Acesso em: 17 nov. 2025.

STURZA, Eliana Rosa. Das experiências e dos aprendizados no Programa Escolas Interculturais de Fronteiras. *Salto para o Futuro*. [S. l.: s. n.], 2014. Publicado por TV Brasil.

STURZA, Eliana Rosa. *Línguas de fronteiras e política de línguas: uma história das ideias linguísticas*. 2006. Tese (Doutorado em Linguística) – Instituto de Estudos da Linguagem, Universidade Estadual de Campinas, Campinas, 2006. Disponível em: <https://repositorio.unicamp.br/acervo/detalhe/375748>. Acesso em: 17 nov. 2025.

TALLEI, Jorgelina. Pensando una pedagogía de frontera desde la ciudad de Foz de Iguazú, Brasil. *Revista Mercosur de Políticas Sociales*, Asunción, v. 3, p. 156-164, dez. 2019. Disponível em: <https://revista.ismercosur.org/index.php/revista/article/view/41/50>. Acesso em: 17 nov. 2025.

VARELA, L. Política lingüística: ¿qué está pasando en Argentina?. In: PIÑÓN, F. J. *Indicadores culturales 2007*. Caseros: EDUNTREF, 2008. p. 164-174.