

INTERNATIONAL POLICIES AIMED AT THE EDUCATION OF THE DEAF: AN INTEGRATIVE REVIEW

POLÍTICAS INTERNACIONALES DIRIGIDAS A LA EDUCACIÓN DE LOS SORDOS: UNA REVISIÓN INTEGRADORA

POLÍTICAS INTERNACIONAIS VOLTADAS À EDUCAÇÃO DE SURDOS: UMA REVISÃO INTEGRATIVA

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Abstract

The objective of this research is to map scientific articles that deal with the design of public policies for deaf education in other nations. Thus, it performs a survey of academic publications on these international policies. To this end, the methodology adopted was the integrative review in the bases Periódicos Capes and Scielo Portal, because this allows to analyze the knowledge about the phenomenon based on previous studies. As a result, we obtained twelve articles dealing with public policies in Portugal, Sweden, Spain Chile, Germany, Italy, France and Portuguese-speaking countries (Angola, Brazil, Cape Verde, Guinea-Bissau, Mozambique, Portugal, São Tomé and Príncipe, and East Timor). Among the twelve contexts analyzed, eight of them present legal recognition of sign language in their official documents. However, we conclude that most of the international policies for the recognition of sign languages that guide the development of bilingual public educational policies for the deaf listed, do not move these subjects to the position of members of a linguistic minority group, as longed for by deaf communities, but rather carry within them the marks of the representations of the deaf as people with disabilities and place sign languages in the context of accessibility and not of language policy.

Keywords: Special education; Deaf education; Sign language; International educational policies.

Resumen

El objetivo de esta investigación es mapear artículos científicos que aborden el diseño de políticas públicas para la educación de sordos en otras naciones. Para ello, realiza un relevamiento de publicaciones académicas sobre estas políticas internacionales. Para ello, la metodología adoptada fue la revisión integradora en las bases Periódicos Capes y Portal Scielo, porque permite analizar el conocimiento sobre el fenómeno a partir de estudios previos. Como resultado, obtuvimos doce artículos que tratan sobre políticas públicas en Portugal, Suecia, España, Chile, Alemania, Italia, Francia y países de habla portuguesa (Angola, Brasil, Cabo Verde, Guinea-Bissau, Mozambique, Portugal, Santo Tomé y Príncipe). y Timor Oriental). Entre los doce contextos analizados, ocho de

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ellos presentan reconocimiento legal de la lengua de signos en sus documentos oficiales. Sin embargo, concluimos que la mayoría de las políticas internacionales para el reconocimiento de las lenguas de signos que orientan el desarrollo de políticas educativas públicas bilingües para los sordos enumerados, no trasladan a estos sujetos a la posición de miembros de un grupo lingüístico minoritario, como anhela comunidades sordas, sino que llevan en ellas las marcas de las representaciones de los sordos como personas con discapacidad y sitúan las lenguas de signos en el contexto de la accesibilidad y no de la política lingüística.

Palabras clave: Educación especial; Educación para sordos; Lenguaje de señas; Políticas educativas internacionales.

Resumo

A pesquisa tem como objetivo mapear artigos científicos que versam sobre o delineamento das políticas públicas voltadas à educação de surdos em outros países. Para tanto, realiza-se um levantamento das publicações acadêmicas sobre essas políticas internacionais. A metodologia adotada foi a revisão integrativa, utilizando as bases de dados Periódicos Capes e Portal Scielo, pois esse método permite analisar o conhecimento acerca do fenômeno com base em estudos anteriores. Como resultados, foram obtidos doze artigos que tratam das políticas públicas em Portugal, Suécia, Espanha, Chile, Alemanha, Itália, França e países lusófonos (Angola, Brasil, Cabo Verde, Guiné-Bissau, Moçambique, Portugal, São Tomé e Príncipe e Timor-Leste). Dentre os doze contextos analisados, oito deles apresentam o reconhecimento legal da língua de sinais em seus documentos oficiais. Todavia, conclui-se que a maioria das políticas internacionais de reconhecimento das línguas de sinais, que orientam a elaboração de políticas públicas educacionais bilíngues para surdos, não deslocam esses sujeitos para a posição de integrantes de um grupo lingüístico minoritário, conforme almejam as comunidades surdas. Em vez disso, tais políticas carregam consigo as representações dos surdos como pessoas com deficiência e situam as línguas de sinais no âmbito da acessibilidade, não da política lingüística.

Palavras-chave: Educação especial; Educação de surdos; Língua de Sinais; Políticas internacionais.

Introduction

In Brazil, Deaf Education has some legal frameworks, including Law no. 10,436/2002) and Decree 5626/2005, which recognize and regulate sign language and provide for Deaf Education from a bilingual perspective. More recently, we have Law 14,191, of August 3, 2021, which amends Law No. 9,394, of December 20, 1996 (Law of Guidelines and Bases of National Education), dealing with bilingual education for deaf people as a modality of education. In parallel with these documents, the education of deaf people remains within the scope of special education and, therefore, is also governed by documents such as the Brazilian Inclusion Law (Law no. 13,146/15) and the National Policy on Special Education from the Perspective of Inclusive Education (BRAZIL, 2008). In fact, in Brazilian legislation, deaf people are categorized twice: as

people with disabilities and as members of a minority linguistic group. So, what does the debate about educational policies aimed at deaf people look like? We will shortly follow with an explanation of the topic.

Public policies, presented in laws and decrees, that regulate the education of deaf people bear the marks of struggles and movements of different social groups, which attribute different interpretations regarding deafness and, consequently, to the design and implementation of educational models aimed at this issue. target audience (Lodi, 2013; Santos; Coelho; Klein, 2017). In this context, Lacerda, Albres and Drago (2013) emphasize that:

[...] legal texts constitute an important field of research since they materialize ideas and proposals for implementing practices that directly interfere in people's lives, so that a better understanding of such texts can help, in our specific case, for better care for deaf subjects (Lacerda; Albres; Drago, 2013, p. 68-69).

However, the current legislation regarding the education of deaf people in the Brazilian scenario reflects a territory of conflicts of different conceptions, which includes, among other factors: a) the definition of what it means to be deaf; b) sign language recognition; c) the role of sign language in the education of deaf people; d) which educational spaces are most appropriate for carrying out this education (common school/class or bilingual school/class); and finally, e) what teacher training is appropriate for the formal instruction of this audience.

Luz (2013) highlights that both in national and international literature, there is an old conflict, in effect since the 18th century, between the different social interpretations of deafness and, therefore, the meaning of being deaf. In Brazil, deaf education historically permeates the struggle between Brazilian deaf movements and the emergence of inclusive public policies in the field of special education (Lodi, 2013; Câmara; Souza, 2017; Santos; Coelho; Klein, 2017; Fernandes, 2019).

In this context, the struggle for recognition of bilingual education for deaf people in Brazil and the specificities of deaf people signing are evidenced in several Brazilian publications and even in a field of knowledge called Deaf Studies. According to Skliar (2010) and Rangel (2012), Deaf Studies can be understood as a territory of educational

research and political propositions that, through a set of linguistic, cultural and identity conceptions, define discourses on deafness and deaf people, starting not from a clinical vision but from a sociocultural and anthropological point of view. In other words, in this theoretical perspective, we seek to break with the interpretation of deaf people as disabled, aiming to invert the logic of hegemonic representations of normality, outlining new perspectives and possibilities. In the words of Lopes (2011):

The proposed notion of inversion is related to the knowledge postulated by the clinical view on deafness; it is about inverting, breaking and problematizing issues relating to deaf subjects. The use of the expression Deaf Studies in Brazilian productions, according to Lopes (2011), is an attempt to translate the so-called Deaf Studies, which constitutes an interdisciplinary field in articulation with different fields of research. (Lopes, 2011, p. 11)

In addition to the aforementioned academic research, which offers theoretical support for this investigation, we have documents from entities and associations that represent Brazilian deaf movements, corroborating, in the field of political activism, this perspective of deaf education under the bias of difference and not disability. Among these documents, I highlight those produced by FENEIS (National Federation of Deaf Education and Deaf Integration) in defense of bilingual schools and classes. As an example, it is possible to cite the “Official Note: Education of the Deaf in Goal 4 of the PNE” (FENEIS, 2013), produced in response to a proposal to change the wording of Goal 4 of the National Education Plan, by the then Senator Vital Rêgo:

[...] What is behind this dispute over words? OUR RIGHT TO SEEK THE TYPE OF EDUCATION THAT MOST ADEQUATELY MEETS OUR VISUAL NEEDS: SPECIFIC BILINGUAL SCHOOLS AND CLASSES FOR THE DEAF. The MEC's fight for inclusive schools (common schools that serve all types of people with disabilities in regular classrooms and with support in specialized educational service rooms for a few hours a week in the off-shift) DOES NOT RESOLVE our need for an ENVIRONMENT NATURAL LINGUISTICS FOR THE ACQUISITION OF OUR SIGN LANGUAGE! We understand that bilingual schools and classes are different from regular schools with the presence of Libras interpreters. (FENEIS, 2013, np, capital letters in the original)

Such statements meet the prerogative that public policies aimed at deaf education constitute “a field of struggles, a field of contestation, an arena of conflicts around representation and social significance” (Santos; Coelho; Klein, 2017, p.226).

Based on this premise, we are interested in knowing how these tensions surrounding the education of deaf people, which have been outlined in the policies of other countries, emerged from this concern. Santos, Coelho and Klein (2017) contribute to the topic by bringing the following highlights:

The struggle for the meanings of what deaf people are and what education is proposed for them is fought in legal discourses both in Brazil and in Portugal, on the one hand through the field of special education, and on the other through linguistic-cultural perspectives, at the same time, the time between an inclusive government policy and deaf movements. It becomes evident that education policies for deaf people are the result of actions developed in different spaces, whether political, academic or social, as well as by different actors before, during and after the production of legal texts. (Santos; Coelho; Klein, 2017, p.226)

That said, the study mentioned above demonstrates that the national and international conflicts present in the debate on deaf education present similarities and differences in relation to the development of policies in different countries. Understanding the perspective of researchers on these policies, considering the different social and historical contexts, is an important movement for the reflection of our politics, as it allows us to expand “the field of analysis and understanding of the national reality in the confrontation with other(s) country(ies)” (Montes; Lacerda, 2019, p. 03), which justifies the social and academic relevance of the proposed investigation.

The choice for an integrative review of studies on international policies was due to the fact that we found scientific publications that directly analyze official documents, that is, public policies aimed at the education of deaf people in other nationalities. In this context, I intend to carry out a mapping and analysis of studies published in Brazil on the policies of other countries and not to analyze the isolated policies of each country. In the wake of Nóvoa’s (2017) reflection, it is possible to state that:

More than a country-by-country comparison focused on “educational transfer,” more than a macro, global vision, we need to understand the propagation of policies, like waves that vibrate in different spaces and -times, with movements in both directions, giving the origin of combinations and compositions that are not just transfer logic. (Nóvoa, 2017, p. 25)

Therefore, since there are already published studies on international policies that deal with the education of deaf people, it is necessary to understand how national academic production has presented and related to this debate. This is not about seeking solutions in this research for the educational issues of deaf people in Brazil but rather about expanding the discussion about them. Said another way,

[...] opening up problems, without being reduced to metrics, must promote scientific approaches that favor the appropriation of knowledge by different individual and collective actors, recognizing the role of experts, but without granting them decision-making and definitional power of educational policies. (Nóvoa, 2017, p. 21)

In summary, we emphasize that the objective of this research is to map scientific articles on the design of public policies aimed at deaf education in other nations. We believe that the integrative review presented here can contribute to the development of studies in the area, as we opted for secondary documents, which allow an analysis of the different positions of researchers on international policies, expanding the discussion in relation to them, which would not be possible by simply analyzing the legal framework of each country.

Methodology

The present study is configured as an integrative review of the literature regarding scientific production on public policies aimed at deaf education in other countries. Therefore, the process of preparing this investigation followed the six steps of the integrative literature review: 1) elaboration of guiding questions; 2) literature search or sampling; 3) data collection; 4) critical analysis of included studies; 5) discussion of results; 6) presentation of the integrative review (Souza; Silva; Carvalho, 2010).

As guiding questions, the following stand out: What are the studies on public policies aimed at the education of deaf people of other nationalities available in the main Brazilian article bases? What debates about the topic are highlighted in these publications? Do these studies make comparisons with the Brazilian reality? Do international experiences offer support for reflecting on our politics?

Therefore, the following databases were chosen as search sources: Scielo and Portal Periódicos Capes, as they are the platforms with the greatest visibility and concentration of scientific productions nationwide.

Next, four combinations of descriptors were listed, namely: 'education and deaf people,' 'deaf education and policies,' 'sign languages and linguistic policies,' and 'sign languages and policies.' The Boolean operator was used to refine the research further. The searches were carried out in September and October 2022. From this initial screening, the results presented in Table 1 were obtained.

Table 1. Results of searches and selection of articles by descriptors in the databases.

Descriptors	Capes Periodicals	Scielo Portal	Selection by titles and abstracts Capes Periodicals	Selection by titles and abstracts Scielo Portal	Selection after duplication exclusion Capes Periodicals	Selection after duplication exclusion Scielo Portal
Education and deaf people	918	182	11	4	11	0
Deaf education and policies	165	26	3	2	0	0
Sign languages and policies	61	2	3	0	1	0
Sign languages and policies	121	6	3	1	0	0

Source: Prepared by the authors themselves.

Reading the titles and abstracts led to the choice of scientific articles to be analyzed, adopting as inclusion criteria: 1) publications that address the theme of public policies in the education of deaf people in other nationalities; 2) full works in scientific article format; 3) works subsequent to the Declaration of Salamanca (1994)³; 4) articles in Portuguese. Productions that did not fit the described items were excluded, as well as those that were duplicates.

³ With regard to the temporal delimitation, publications subsequent to the Declaration of Salamanca (1994) were chosen, given the relevance and impact of this international document for the Education of the Deaf. In the statement itself: “19. Educational policies should take individual differences and situations into full consideration. The importance of sign language as a means of communication between deaf people, for example, should be recognized and provision should be made to **ensure that all deaf people have access to education in their national sign language**. Due to the particular communication needs of deaf people and deaf/blind people, their education may be more adequately provided in special schools or special classes and units in regular schools” (UNESCO, 1994, np, my emphasis). From the text of the document, it is possible to observe that it already guided educational policies to respect singularities and individual differences, **recognizing** the importance of Sign Language for the training of deaf subjects and guaranteeing its use in the schooling process.

In this way, the largest number of selected works (eleven) was located using the descriptors education *and* deaf people on the Periódicos Capes platform and only one through sign languages *and* policies on the Scielo Portal. With regard to nationalities, three of the selected articles deal with Portugal, two with Sweden, two with Spain and the others deal respectively with Chile, Germany, Italy, France and Portuguese-speaking countries (Angola, Brazil, Cape Verde, Guinea-Bissau, Mozambique, Portugal, São Tomé and Príncipe, and East Timor). Table 3 presents the selected articles.

Table 2. Articles selected for analysis.

	Title	Authors	Country analyzed	Year
01	Bilingualism practices – experience report.	Stumpf, M.	France	2006
02	Thirty-five years of bilingual education for deaf people - what then?	Svartholm, K.	Sweden	2014
03	Concepts of deaf identity in the media discourse on educational inclusion in Germany	Zambrano, R.; Pedrosa, C	Germany	2016
04	Education of people who are deaf or hard of hearing in Brazil and Portugal: policies of linguistic recognition, bilingualism and teacher training	Santos, A.; Coelho, O.; Klein, M.	Portugal	2017
05	Possible ways of being in linguistic policies for deaf education in Portugal	Witchs, P.; Lopes, M.; Coelho, O.	Portugal	2019
06	Sign Language Recognition: Brazil-Sweden comparative study	Montes, A.; Lacerda, C.	Sweden	2019
07	Language policies for deaf people in Portuguese-speaking countries	Basoni, F.; Witchs, P.	Angola, Brazil, Cape Verde, Guinea-Bissau, Mozambique, Portugal, São Tomé and Príncipe, and Timor-Leste	2020
08	Deaf Education in Spain: Bibliometric Analysis in Doctoral Theses Databases	Schiavon, D. N.; Hayashi, M. C. P. I.	Espain	2020
09	Bilingual education for deaf people in Barcelona - Spain	Chaveiro, N.; Rodríguez-Martín, D. Faria, J.	Espain	2020
10	Language Policies in Deaf Education in Portugal	Vaz Carvalho, P.; Mineiro, A.	Portugal	2020
11	Vision of Deaf Education in Brazil and Chile: Teaching Policies for the Learning Process of Deaf Students	Dall'Asen, T.; Gárate, F.	Chile	2021
12	Using the Common European Framework of Reference for Teaching Italian Sign Language: Lessons from Research and Practice	Monte, M. T. D.	Italy	2022

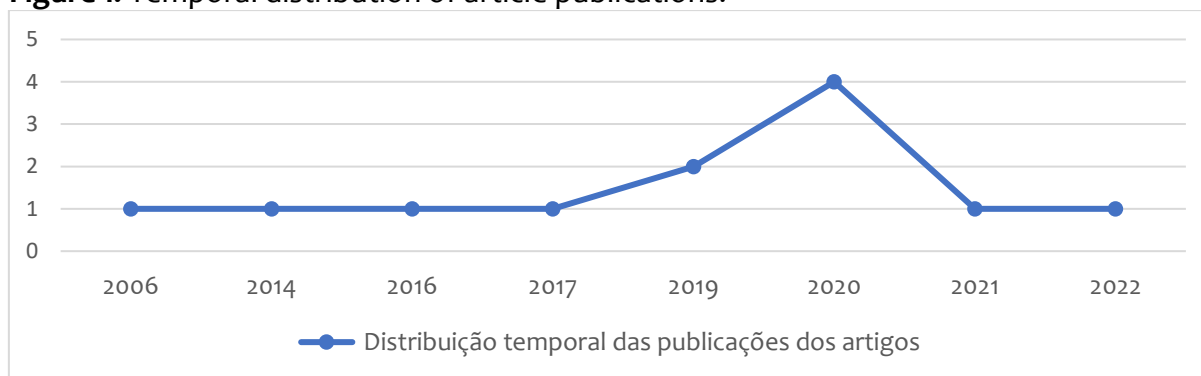
Source: Prepared by the authors themselves

Data analysis, therefore, took place through reading and critical analysis of the included studies. In the next session, we will present and discuss the results obtained from the investigation.

Discussion of results

The studies found date from 2006 to 2022, as shown in Figure 1. Below, we will make a brief presentation of the articles based on their publication dates and then their analysis.

Figure 1. Temporal distribution of article publications.



Source: Prepared by the authors.

It is important to highlight that although the time frame of this integrative review is based on the Declaration of Salamanca (1994), only twelve years after it, in 2006, the first study was located in Brazil on international policies aimed at deaf children's education. This is a report with observations by deaf researcher Marianne Rossi Stumpf about bilingual education for deaf people in France. Later, in 2014, we saw the publication of Kristina's article, Svartholm which reflects on 35 years of bilingual education for the deaf people in Sweden.

In 2016, Zambrano and Pedrosa (2016) presented an analysis of the concepts of deaf identity present in the media discourse regarding educational inclusion in Germany from 2011 to 2015. Although the main focus of this work is not the policies themselves but rather the discourse and deaf identities, the publication provides a series of relevant information about the education of deaf people in relation to the policies present in that

country. The following year, Santos, Coelho and Klein (2017) carried out a comparative study between Brazil and Portugal regarding linguistic recognition policies, bilingualism in deaf education and teacher training.

In 2019, two articles were published, entitled: “Recognition of Sign Languages Comparative Study Brazil-Sweden” authored by Montes and Lacerda (2019) and “Possible ways of being in Linguistic Policies for deaf education in Portugal” by Witches, Lopes and Coelho (2019).

In 2020, we found the largest number of publications (four), with Schiavon and Hayashi (2020) and Chaveiro, Rodríguez-Martín and Faria (2020) dealing with the reality of Spain with different approaches, and two other publications discuss and problematize language policies for deaf people in Portugal (Carvalho; Mineiro, 2020) and in Portuguese-speaking countries (Basoni; Witches, 2020), respectively.

In 2021, the article by Dall'Asen and Gárate (2021) provides a comparative study between Brazil and Chile in the learning process and school education of deaf people. Furthermore, finally, in 2022, Monte (2022) discusses the use of a common European framework applied to teaching Italian sign language.

In general, between 1994 and 2006, no publications on the topic of interest to this study were found; since 2006, these emerged and are present until 2022, and the localized publications are subsequent to the recognition of Libras in Brazil (Brazil, 2002) and the decree that regulates it (Brazil, 2005).

In this context, based on the critical analysis of the studies included in light of the research objective, two thematic axes were defined that permeate the publications and, therefore, allow an interpretation of the results in order to answer the guiding questions of the integrative review: the recognition of sign language and bilingual education for deaf people. The discussion regarding both is interspersed in the subtopic that follows.

- International Debate on Sign Language Recognition and Bilingual Education for the Deaf

As mentioned previously, the duality in the characterization of deaf people is present in Brazilian legislation, where, at certain times, they are defined as linguistic subjects and, at others, as people with disabilities. This duplicity in the social representations of deaf people directly impacts the process of formulating educational policies for the public. In the articles analyzed, they all present, to a greater or lesser extent, a debate about the recognition of sign language and bilingual education for deaf people in the legal context.

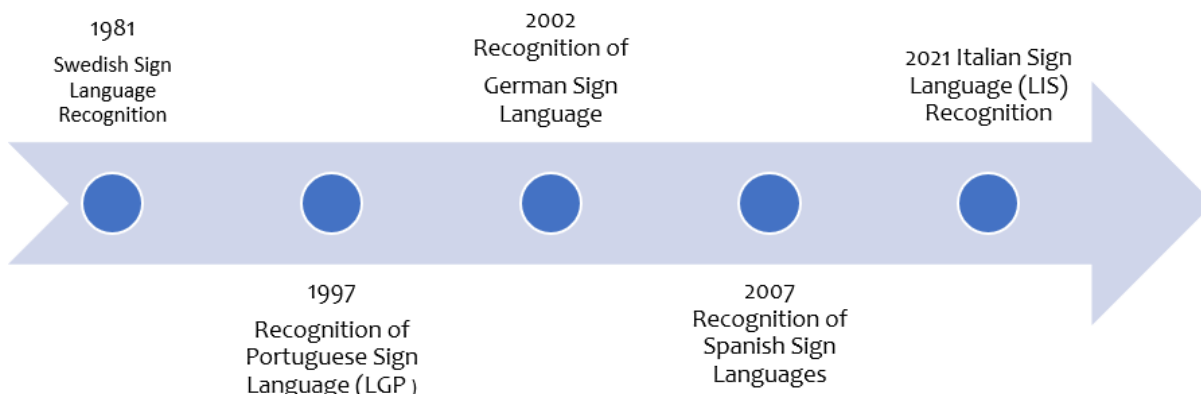
At this juncture, Stumpf (2006) reports that in France, a country often cited as having possibly opened the first school dedicated to the education of deaf people, the right to bilingual education for deaf people – involving the use of sign language and written French - has been legally guaranteed since 1991. In the researcher's words:

The recognition of the right of deaf people to bilingual education was established in France by law 91 – 73, article 33 of January 18, 1991: “In the education of deaf young people, freedom of choice between bilingual communication – sign language and French written – and oral communication is the right.” The promulgation of this decree was preceded by a long journey and struggles undertaken by educators, researchers, and families of deaf people. The actions that have historically been carried out included experimentation with teaching methods and techniques, writing texts, social movements, conferences, the establishment of specialized services, tests, ministerial notes, circulars from the Ministry of Education regarding school organization, exams and public competitions, decrees describing support actions for families, including specialized home services, medical and technical care, communication development, personality development and social integration. (Stumpf, 2006. p 283-284)

Therefore, according to the author, the right to bilingual education, in which deaf children have access to French sign language as their first language, is guaranteed within the legislative scope. Furthermore, after twenty years of research on bilingual education for the deaf, excellent results were observed with the adoption of an educational model based on bilingualism (Stumpf, 2006).

In this context, when considering the selected studies that debate the panorama of educational policies aimed at deaf people in European countries and the recognition of sign language in each of them, the data presented in Figure 3 were obtained.

Figure 1. Sign Language Recognition – European Context.



Source: Prepared by the authors.

Notably, the legal recognition of sign language in each European country has varied over time, covering a long period of 30 years (from 1981 to 2021).

Svartholm (2014) highlights the recognition of Swedish Sign Language as “a language in its own right” in 1981, by a decision of the Swedish Parliament, together with the “recognition of the right of the deaf population to become bilingual.” Thus, Sweden was the first country to offer sign language the status of a language, consequently influencing the recognition and education of deaf people in other nations (MONTES; LACERDA, 2019). In the words of the authors:

In Sweden, the function of sign language is not cultural but rather a constitutive language that favors the development of deaf people, who are seen primarily as Swedes; the right to acquire and use the Swedish sign language as a mother tongue is provided by law, and the country effectively contributes to creating real conditions for its acquisition by the deaf community; linguistic policies govern the entire process of linguistic law and the right to acquire language for deaf people. (Montes; Lacerda, 2019, p. 19)

However, the study by Montes and Lacerda (2019) showed that, in Sweden, the right to acquire and use sign language is provided for in language policy legislation that encompasses all languages used in the national territory by Swedish citizens. The country, in the meantime, effectively contributes to ensuring full access to this language. Therefore, according to the authors, legal recognition ratified education in Swedish sign language during the school career of deaf people, unlike Brazil, which does not provide for the acquisition of Libras in legislation, keeping the education of deaf people within the scope of special education and thus not guaranteeing bilingual education as a linguistic right for deaf people.

Basoni and Witches (2020), as well as Carvalho and Mineiro (2020), present the recognition of Portuguese Sign Language in the revision of the Constitution in 1997 as a “cultural expression and instrument of access to education for deaf children and young people” (Basoni; Witches, 2020, p. 1351). In the wake of this reflection, in a comparative study between Brazil and Portugal, Santos, Coelho and Klein (2017) highlighted that with regard to the recognition of sign language, both Libras ⁴and LGP ⁵are not recognized as official languages of their respective countries, but rather as a means of communication. However, this recognition was important to guarantee, at least legally, the right of deaf people to sign language as a language of instruction in their training processes. Carvalho and Mineiro (2020) also highlight that attempts to implement bilingual education for the deaf date back to the late 1980s and early 1990s.⁶

[...] the first attempts to implement the bilingual model of education for deaf people emerged, as previously mentioned, through the Portuguese-Swedish agreement by professors Sérgio Niza and José Bettencourt, and in the early 90s, at the Instituto Jacob Rodrigues Pereira. (Carvalho; Mineiro, 2020, p. 6)

Still, in relation to Portugal, despite the legislation pointing to bilingualism, Decree Law No. 3 / 2008 deals with specialized services within the scope of special education, presenting bilingual education for deaf people in article 23 of the chapter that deals with specific types of education (Santos; Coelho; Klein, 2017). At this juncture, the right to bilingual education is linked, as in Brazil, to special education, with the deaf subject remaining doubly categorized as a linguistic subject and as a person with a disability.

Zambrano and Pedrosa (2016) state that, in Germany, the first experimental bilingual education project took place in 1993 in a school unit in Hamburg. However, the country recognized German Sign Language ⁷as a distinct language in 2002, and it was only in 2008, upon joining the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with

⁴Brazilian Sign Language

⁵Portuguese Sign Language

⁶ (CARVALHO; MINEIRO, 2020)

⁷ *Deutsche Gebärdensprache, DGS*

Disabilities⁸, that Germany adopted the concept of inclusive education, committing itself from this to facilitate the learning of sign language, as well as ensuring that the education of deaf people takes place using the most appropriate means and modes of education to promote the social and academic development of individuals. Until then, generally speaking, deaf people were taught in special schools (Zambrano; Pedrosa, 2016).

Still, according to the researchers, in this conjunction, the barriers encountered by Germany in implementing the commitments signed since 2008 stand out. One of these difficulties concerns the administrative and legislative responsibility for education, which lies with the states rather than the federation. This decentralization results in a variety of interpretations of the Convention and different ways of carrying out inclusive education from one state to another. Furthermore, the German educational system appears to be segregationist and, therefore, contradictory to the concept of inclusion. The following excerpt illustrates the functioning of the German educational system:

In addition to supporting schools (special schools) with different focuses, there are three different types of schools starting from the secondary level (Gymnasium, Realschule, Hauptschule). The quality and focus of teaching vary greatly, as demonstrated, for example, by the fact that only completion of the Gymnasium qualifies directly for university study, while the Hauptschule, which represents the most basic education of the three, qualifies for training in vocational schools (VIOTTI, 2014). The system defends the principle that the best educational results are obtained in homogeneous groups, which is opposed to the idea of inclusive education. (Zambrano; Pedrosa, 2016, p. 574)

In conjunction with these studies, Zambrano and Pedrosa (2016) state that, in general terms, “[...] in Germany, deaf people are socially defined as people with disabilities” (p. 566). However, Schulteis (2006), mentioned by the authors, argues that such a definition is not in accordance with the self-understanding of a significant portion of German deaf people, considering that “many perceive themselves as part of the deaf community, a linguistic minority or a subculture, while few see themselves as disabled” (Zambrano; Pedrosa, 2016, p. 566).

⁸From here on, to make writing and understanding easier, I will refer to this document as the Convention.

Schiavon and Hayashi (2020) point out that, in 2007, Law 27/2007 “recognized Spanish sign languages” (Schiavon; Hayashi, 2020, p.70). The researchers use the plural 'sign languages,' although, in Spanish, they highlight the term *Lengua de Signos Española* (LSE) without offering further details about its recognition, acquisition, dissemination or use. However, the authors hypothesize that there was a positive impact of this legislation on the development of research on the education of deaf people since an expansion of doctoral theses on the education of deaf people can be seen in the period from 2008 to 2012.

Furthermore, Schiavon and Hayashi (2020), through biometric analysis of doctoral theses related to deaf education, located forty-five studies from 1987 to 2017 and, among the communicative approaches⁹ used in the studies, bilingualism stood out (30.7%), oralism (30.7%), bimodalism (23.1%) and 15.4% adopt the perspective of a balance between different communicative approaches. Indeed, in the author's

In relation to communicative modalities, currently, the main debate is between oral language and bilingualism, and also considering the different complementary systems that support communication, such as, for example, bimodal and the complemented word. (Schiavon; Hayashi, 2020, p. 78)

Locksmith, Rodríguez-Martín and Faria (2020) explain that Spain has two officially recognized sign languages: Spanish Sign Language (LSE) and Catalan Sign Language (LSC). About this country, it is important to highlight the following:

The Spanish State is divided into 17 Autonomous Communities and two Autonomous cities. The city of Barcelona is the capital of the Autonomous Community of Catalonia, considered the second most populous city in the Kingdom of Spain. (Chaveiro; Rodríguez-Martín; Faria, 2020, p. 2)

Therefore, such an organization justifies the recognition of two official sign languages. In this scenario, with regard to bilingual education in Barcelona, Chaveiro, Rodríguez-Martín and Faria (2020) state that it has been implemented for approximately 25 years, being understood as an educational modality within the framework of Law 17/2010. Regarding the legislation mentioned above, the authors highlight:

⁹It is important to clarify that the term “communicative approaches” was used by the authors.

Said Law gives deaf people the right to choose between the oral educational modality or the bilingual educational modality. As stated in Chapter I, which deals with general provisions, the bilingual educational modality is seen as one in which HL is used both as an object of study and, in the communication process, as a language of access to curricular content. Furthermore, in bilingual education, HL and oral and written language coexist, the latter seen as an object of learning. (Chaveiro; Rodríguez-Martín; Faria, 2020, p.2)

In the meantime, it can be inferred from the two studies mentioned above, which deal with the education of deaf people in Spain, the presence of two categories that define deaf subjects: disabled and linguistic minority. Thus, the debate regarding the educational modality that best serves deaf people continues.

In Italy, the law that recognized Italian Sign Language (LIS) and Italian Tactile Sign Language (LIST) as languages of the Republic of Italy only arrived much more recently, with the Sostegni Decree on May 19, 2021 (Monte, 2022). Segundo Monte (2022):

With the passage of the law, roundtable discussions were held to learn more about how to apply it in the best interests of the deaf, deafblind, and hard of hearing. In April 2022, an implementing decree recognizes and finances the creation of academic courses to train LS interpreters. As discussions continue and the pandemic continues to invade Italy, there is still no chance to improve its implementation in regular education. (Monte, 2022, p. 117)

According to Gomes (2012), the first resolution of the European Parliament (EP) on Sign Languages for Deaf People (Document A2 -302/87) of June 17, 1988, presented several reasons for the recognition of these languages¹⁰. However, with regard to the resolutions and guidelines of the EP and the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe on deafness, the researcher highlights:

From the analysis of our documentary corpus, we found that, as a result of the efforts of the World Federation of the Deaf (WFD) and the European Union of the Deaf (EUD), the European Parliament (EP) and the Parliamentary Assembly

¹⁰ “a) The existence of around half a million profoundly deaf people in the European Union; b) The fact that the majority can never become proficient in the spoken language; c) The existence of studies that show that sign language is a genuine language, with its own grammar and the natural language of deaf communities d) The recognition that sign language and sign language interpreters are one of the means, through which deaf people can more easily access the information they need on a daily basis; e) The desire to promote the integration of deaf people into hearing society, under conditions that are fair for deaf people; f) Recognition of the great contribution of the World Federation of the Deaf in the fight to improve the quality of life of deaf people, namely through the creation of a Regional Secretariat to cover European Union countries” (GOMES, 2012, p. 54- 55).

of the Council of Europe began, from at the end of the 80s of the last century, to address the issue of the recognition of sign languages in Europe, a question posed to these bodies in terms of human rights. The openness and dialogue with deaf communities resulted in several guidelines and recommendations from these bodies for their Member States. (Gomes, 2012, p. 54)

According to Monte (2022), the educational path of deaf subjects in Italy, up to the time of writing his article, follows the same path as hearing students, with the difference that deaf students can legally count on the presence of a teaching assistant. Communication and special education teacher. From these meanings, it highlights:

Despite the number of professionals available to deaf children at school, their educational trajectory and training for HL is still a matter of debate, especially with regard to professionals specialized in communication. While the special teacher's academic training began in 1999, the communication assistant and educational operator only needed to complete high school and attend professional classes with very little indication of the topics being studied. This situation obviously leads to diverse paths and training. Furthermore, LS is not mandatory since this training context has considered deaf children educated orally as the majority and deaf children who sign as the minority. (Monte, 2022, p. 120)

Therefore, deaf children can be assisted by educators trained to work with students considered to have sensory disabilities and communication disorders, but they have no legal obligation to know or even use sign language (SL) at school. Therefore, professionals who choose some training in LS do so out of personal interest (Monte, 2022).

Therefore, global influences are evident in the processes of recognition of sign languages in Europe and the development of educational policies regarding the education of deaf people. International documents, agreements and organizations stand out, such as the World Federation of the Deaf (*World Federation of the Deaf / WFD*) and the European *Union of Deaf the Deaf / EUD*).

Following the reflection of Basoni and Witches (2020), we shift our gaze from Europe to the so-called Portuguese-speaking countries, having as a backdrop the construction of the notion of Lusophony represented by Bernardes Campos' famous phrase "“My homeland is the Portuguese language.” Indeed, in the words of the authors:

¹¹ Pseudonym of Fernando Pessoa

According to Freixo (2009), this construction, combined with the Portuguese State's commitment to creating the Community of Portuguese-Speaking Countries (CPLP), can be related to a reinvention of the Empire through language. When focusing on the political games that involve the desire to unify the Portuguese language and the power associated with the constitution of a national language, we ask: What is the place occupied by sign languages in the Lusophone scenario? (Basoni; Witches, 2020, p. 1342)

As a result, the researchers mentioned above, when analyzing the recognition of sign language in eight Portuguese-speaking countries, highlighted that four of them (Cape Verde, Guinea-Bissau, São Tomé and Príncipe and Timor-Leste) do not have any official documentation that regulates the teaching or using a sign language. However, there are local efforts aimed at promoting and standardizing these languages, especially with the construction and development of dictionaries with international collaboration. This is the case of Cape Verdean Sign Language, as well as Guinean Sign Language (LGG) and São Tomé and Príncipe Sign Language (LGSTP), which had dictionaries published respectively in 2019, 2008 and 2014.

Basoni and Witches (2020) state that in Cape Verde, deaf education only gained visibility after 1996. However, according to Tavares (2013), cited by the authors, until 2013, there was no Cape Verdean sign language ¹²and no deaf teachers to teach this language. It is important to highlight that in the Constitution of the Republic of Cape Verde, approved in 1992; there is no direct mention of education for the deaf or sign language. However, it presents an article that provides for the

[...] rights of people with disabilities, in which it is the responsibility of public authorities to promote economic, social and cultural conditions that facilitate the participation of these subjects in active life; ensure the elimination of architectural and other barriers to access public facilities and social facilities; as well as organizing, promoting and supporting the integration of people with disabilities in education and technical-professional training. (Basoni; Witches, 2020, p. 1349)

¹² In 2013, Cape Verde participated in the International Technical Cooperation Project “Escola de Todos,” carried out in collaboration with the government of Brazil, through the Federal University of Santa Maria (UFSM). The aim of the project was the construction and development of a dictionary aiming to standardize the Cape Verdean Sign Language, which is heavily influenced by Portuguese Sign Language. The dictionary in question was published in 2019.

In the case of Guinea-Bissau, “according to Martins (2013), it was in 2003 that a greater number of deaf people were grouped under an educational institution” (Basoni; Witches, 2020, p. 1343). In the so-called Bengala Branca School, created by the Guinean Association for the Rehabilitation and Integration of the Blind (AGRICE), and with the collaboration of the Portuguese Association of the Deaf (APS), the beginning of a “certain linguistic unification of the Guinean deaf community” was notable (Basoni; Witches, 2020, p. 1344)

In São Tomé and Príncipe, according to Palha and Mineiro (2019),¹³ until 2013, deaf people did not have access to school education, nor was there a common sign language in use by the deaf community. In this context, the government of São Tomé and Príncipe requested help from the Portuguese Catholic University to provide the basis for the emergence of a sign language for deaf children (Palha; Mineiro, 2019 *apud* Basoni; Witches, 2020).

In East Timor, in 2019, there was a colloquium held in partnership with the Australian Embassy with the purpose of recording information from those who use sign language to think about ways to implement its teaching in the educational system of the country (Basoni; Witches, 2020). It is worth mentioning that although there is no mention in the Constitution of East Timor about education for deaf people, Santos and Souza (2017)¹⁴ state that in one of the institutions dedicated to this purpose, sign language is in use, which is characterized by a mixture of signs native speakers, Filipino Sign Language and American Sign Language.

The Portuguese-speaking countries that recognize sign language in official documents are Angola, Brazil, Mozambique and Portugal. Considering that aspects related to Portugal have already been commented on when we mentioned the European context, we will now focus on Angola and Mozambique. In Angola, a project began in 2004, carried out by the National Institute for Special Education, which aimed to develop and standardize the Angolan Sign Language (LGA). However, it was only in 2016, with the so-called Accessibility Law (Law nº 10/16), that the LGA was officially recognized. In the words of the authors:

¹³Apud Basoni and Witches (2020)

¹⁴Quoted by Basoni and Witches (2020)

This law describes, in paragraph gg), its art. 5th, entitled Definitions, sign language as a “form of communication and expression in which the linguistic system of a visual-motor nature, with its grammatical structure, constitutes a linguistic system for transmitting ideas and facts, originating from communities of deaf people of Angola” (p. 3141). Furthermore, the Law also recognizes the LGA and other resources of expression associated with it. (Basoni; Witches, 2020, p.1348)

The same document guarantees the incorporation of LGA teaching into teaching programs and plans at different levels of education (basic, secondary and higher) and in teacher training courses. The law also highlights that the LGA cannot be a substitute for the written form of the Portuguese language.

In Mozambique, the Mozambican Sign Language (LSM) is mentioned in a single official document, the Constitution of the Republic of 2004. However, it is a brief quote that does not present characterizations or any more comprehensive guidelines about the use and teaching of LSM, nor about its role in deaf education. In this scenario, the authors point out:

Sign language is mentioned in the context of art. 125th, called People with Disabilities, which highlights the promotion of the creation “of conditions for the learning and development of sign language” (p. 37). It is not specified how this promotion would occur nor by what means LSM learning and development is offered. It is interesting to note that although sign language is mentioned in the 2004 Constitution, Bavo and Coelho (2019), as already mentioned, highlight that the 2007 and 2017 censuses do not present records on the use of LSM in the country. (Basoni; Witches, 2020, p.1350-1351)

Dall'Asen and Gárate (2021) present the Chilean scenario, inserted in the Latin American context, as well as Brazil. Both countries share recognition of sign language as a means of communication for deaf people. According to the authors, Law No. 20,422 of 2010, called “Special Education Policy,” establishes the guidelines for Chilean special education, including the education of deaf people. This legislation recognizes sign language as a means of communication for deaf people, legally ensuring bilingual education. Furthermore, the same legislation recommends the inclusion of everyone in regular classes and schools, similar to Brazil. Additionally, several policies, agreements and agreements aim to establish actions regarding inclusion in the country. In this sense, as observed by the researchers:

That said, Gárate (2019, p. 145) highlights that it is possible to identify numerous Chilean policies, agreements and agreements that “[...] establish lines of action and conceptual conception around the Diversity and Inclusion”. In this sense, regarding the international legal scope, Chile is supported by legislation that is in force at a global level, but such regulations remain only in political spheres. (Dall'asen; Gárate, 2021, p. 26)

Still, according to Dall'Asen and Gárate (2021), despite the legal recognition of the right to bilingual education for deaf people in Chile, in line with assumptions of educational and social inclusion, as well as respect for diversity, there is a lack of theoretical and practical depth of government bodies to implement such principles in schools, as established in legislation.

Final considerations

The integrative review carried out in this study, based on research portals considered the most complete in the Brazilian academic context - Periódico Capes and Portal Scielo - presented a greater number of investigations on the European scenario, totaling ten of them, while only two direct their focus to countries on other continents. The European educational and legislative tradition, combined with attention to linguistic diversity, seems to influence the interest in publishing laws and discussions on linguistic issues involving deaf people in a more forceful way than in other parts of the world. Furthermore, historically, Brazilian researchers have considerable access and dialogue with research developed in Europe, which may also justify the predominance of studies focused on European productions in our findings.

During our research, we found only one study involving another Latin American country that, due to historical, political and cultural similarities, such as the period of colonization, the economic situation and the organization of educational and legislative systems, could offer closer and enriching experiences for our reflection. We observe parallels between reality from Chile and Brazil, which brings us closer together. Therefore, understanding the issues faced by other Latin American countries could be of interest.

Another area that deserves further investigation is that of Portuguese-speaking countries, where, in most cases, deaf students are invited to learn the Portuguese language in written form. Like this, the development of more research in this field can help us to understand better the relationship between the Portuguese language and local sign languages, as well as Portuguese teaching strategies for these deaf communities.

Analysis of the articles reveals that the majority of countries investigated (a total of eight) recognize, in some way, sign language in their territories, including Portugal, Sweden, Spain, Chile, Germany, Italy, France, Angola and Mozambique. However, although researchers identify advances in deaf education resulting from this recognition, there are a number of critical considerations to be made. Most sign languages are treated as a means of communication and expression, as in Brazil, instead of being fully recognized as autonomous languages. This understanding results in an undervaluation of them, which do not receive, in legal terms, the status of official languages.

Furthermore, with the exception of Sweden, in different countries, the legal right to bilingual education is linked to special education policies rather than to the linguistic rights of these citizens. This implies the allocation of sign languages in the general calculation of accessibility instruments and not necessarily as a language of interlocution and constitution of subjects.

Therefore, despite the recognition of sign languages in different contexts and, also considering the Swedish model already highlighted, it is observed that, as in Brazil, in most countries, there is no movement to promote public policies aimed at the perspective linguistic acquisition, teaching and dissemination of LS for deaf communities. Instead, laws and decrees follow an inclusivist perspective, in which the focus is on the participation of these subjects in social practices, treating sign language as just an instrument for this. In this way, they place sign languages within the scope of accessibility, thus reducing these languages to a type of communication code by emphasizing, in the fabric of the law, only their communicative function, disregarding other aspects.

The data leads us to the conclusion that most international policies for the recognition of sign languages, which serve as a basis for the development of bilingual public educational policies for deaf people, do not position these subjects as members of a minority linguistic group, as they wish. Deaf communities. However, policies maintain the view of deaf people as people with disabilities, placing sign language as an accessibility instrument.

Hence, the need to review the intricacies of our history emerges, both nationally and internationally. This is important to dismantle old paradigms about those who do not hear, but have their languages. The objective is to establish new perspectives on their potential as linguistic subjects. The fight to recognize linguistic rights for this population continues.

This change of perspective, which transcends the deep-rooted idea of an organic deficit in the conception of linguistic subjects, becomes urgent. The present study contributes to this movement by presenting an integrative review of academic publications on the topic. In the meantime, we emphasize the need for new investigations that address the education of deaf people based on the conception of linguistic subjects, who are bearers of rights and demand effective linguistic policies.

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