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Língua, a pescadora de gente: Teacher's perception of Portuguese language and social skills in primary school students of Brazil, Portugal, and Mozambique.

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Abstract: The aim of this study is to understand the relationship between receptive language and two aspects of social skills: peer relationships and prosocial behavior. The target population are students in basic education (aged 8 to 10 years old). Research method is based on an online questionnaire adapted from SDQ:SE (Goodman, 1998). Primary school teachers will respond to: i. what are the social skills of the children with the lowest achievement scores in Portuguese language classes; ii. what are the social skills of the children with the highest achievement scores in Portuguese language classes. Not only the purpose of this study is to shed light to this research area, but also to explore moderator effects in the language-behavior relation.

Foreword

I have always been intrigued by many forms of language use: the seagulls verbal communication, the uncracked songs of whales, the peculiar use of pragmatics by autistic population, and even non-verbal human interaction. Diverse language registers also called my attention: fiction literature, folk music and traditions, the ancient and modern languages decoded and expressed by humans in written sophisticated systems, religion rituals… At first, I had dived into the waters of not only Linguistics but History, Arts, Archaeology and Literature during my bachelor's degree, in which I step behind two millennium in research. But the Classical studies did not full filled my aspiration to explore more what I wanted to understand: people. Then, I found myself tasting the waters of Psychology (and its statistical methods), in this journey, I could apply some insights in the educational field.

In the graduate school, when obsessively searching for empirical studies, I realized researchers around the globe, especially in the most privileged part, the north hemisphere – United States, Norway, Italy, England, Netherlands, Portugal, and Finland – are also aiming to answer the same questions I am curious about: is there a relationship between human behaviour and language? how language can interfere in the production and management of sociability? The ambitious of this master thesis is to tackle possible answers to these questions and foremost to include different users of the Portuguese language in this study. My target was to invite teachers and students to be part of this survey, the focus is within the Primary School.

In the first chapter, I define the two variables used in this study: language and social skills. For the first, I introduce the Lusophone world and the paradox of thinking the Portuguese language as a unity, but also the hazard in deconstructing this unity concept. Moreover, I make some criticism in the educational curricula goals for teaching the Portuguese language at school in three countries: Brazil, Portugal and Mozambique. In this same chapter, I raise the debate about the sociolinguistic bias without ignoring our position in a post-colonial century. For the variable social skills, as the theme is broad, I set only two aspects of it: prosocial behaviour and peer relationship, the key terms will be defined

according to psychological theories. Language assessment is needed when comparing these two variables. Hence, I not only introduce the topic of assessment, but I also interrogate the implications of traditional large-scale language assessments and their place in the education.

In the next chapter, I present the research questions, data, and methods. Surprisingly, in the last chapter, the conclusion, I gained the fuel I was in need to continue this query to a doctoral degree, for unknown doors of research were opened with the present data collection analysis. I ask apologies in advance for any lapse, as all this research plan happened in the middle of the chaotic post-COVID-19 era. I hope all my background and continuous effort could help readers and skilled researchers into consider this study as one small contribution to this prominent area.

"Viu os opusculos em que o pobre Barata nos maltrata? Eu tenho pena de o ter offendido – pois tal não era a minha intenção. – De resto, as queixas que levanta contra mim são infantis. – Ainda não sei se lhe responderei –."

Cartas a três, Carolina Michaëlis de Vasconcellos

DEDICATION

In memoriam of my grandmother Doraci Brancaleon, for she made me who I am with all the strength she inspired me in life and beyond… I would not have made it up this far in the academia, if it was not for her example of extraordinary journey of resilience and perseverance, always rigorizing not only education, but academic excellence for our family. She is my very first example of women empowerment and I aim nothing in this life but to honor her memory with pride and respect for high quality education.

For my dear friend and ex-supervisor Dr. Marcelo Fernandes, his support has been forever useful to shape my identity as a researcher. Even though we are in different research areas, with lucid humbleness and legit intellectuality, he has always been influential in my motivation and future decisions. It is rare to find scholars with this ethos in the academia, I was, I am, and I will be always very grateful to him!

To all the vulnerable populations in Brazil, whose right to high quality education still a fight in days like these: rural children with limited access to school, indigenous children belonging to linguistic minority groups, favela urban children dependable of social and economic circumstances to complete school, language impairment and special needs children, whose lacking proper referral, struggle to find tailored teaching in Brazil. And to adults: to those who drop out of school, to all the illiterate populations that suffer discrimination. To all Mozambican teachers. And to all the Kurdish language speakers, who are marginalized from mother tongue learning in schools. To all Mirandese speakers. To all women.

Lastly, in name of all the main heroes of education in Brazil: teachers in the Brazilian public school system.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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1 INTRODUCTION

Language is not only crucial for the human cognitive development, since childhood (Vygotsky, 1986), but also is presumed to be one critical element of successful social interaction (Aro, Eklund, Nurmi & Poikkeus, 2012). Humans do have an innate capacity to manage linguistic sentences (Chomsky, 2000), but the environment plays an essential role for language learning (Bronfenbrenner, 1960) in addition to social relationships (Vygotsky, 1986). In an individualistic spectrum, language is pragmatic (Bruner, 1983) and it is an essential psychological tool needed to gain mastery over behavior, i.e., self-speech (Vygotsky, 1986). However, what can predict when some individuals have more language abilities than others? What are the complex moderators of the language-behavior relation: gender, age, cross-cultural differences or…?

It is a well-known fact that humans have a notorious language use in comparison with other species, for instance, a child makes use of some capabilities to interact with the self, with *pattern finding* grammar, and to the other with the *intention reading* abilities (Tomasello, 2006). However, in the studies of childhood development, researchers are interested in many aspects of children's lives, but little has been focused on the role of emotions and social outcomes as a mediator and/or predictor of social outcomes (Algoe, Dwyer, Younge, & Oveis, 2020).

Therefore, this study aims to examinate language as a rationale and socioemotional process which cannot be seen as separate from ourselves and the world. The target population is school age children, speakers of the Portuguese language, between second to fourth grade, moreover, the scope to our investigation is the school and its community, such as secondary caregivers, their teachers and peer relationship with other children. Hence, language will be explored in dialogue with social interaction in the dynamics of the school and its agents.

As language is a vast topic to discriminate, the variable used in this study is receptive language (opposite to expressive language). Overall, receptive vocabulary means all the

words one can recognize upon hearing or reading them, although production is attached to it with written and spoken form (Davidson, Vanegas, Hilvert, & Misiunaite, 2017). Nevertheless, not all linguistic elements founded in school curricula, such as writing, reading, speaking, listening comprehension, vocabulary, phonetics, syntax and so on cannot be specifically assessed one by one, although they are not exclusive to the language acquisition (Bruner, 1983).

Furthermore, language will not be officially assessed with standardized large-scale tests, although some argues in favor of its benefit for research purposes (Sointu, 2014). This limitation of the research task has been taken due to the COVID-19 pandemic and its impossibility to access contact teaching in schools and therefore apply validated large scale language assessment tests, such as: PEABODY, Child Communication CheckList-2, Wechsler, TOLD, CELF and/or others tests from this modality generally used to assess language (Guimarães & Oda, 2013; Qi and Davis, 2020; Hollo & Oliver, 2014).

In summary, the definition of language adopted in this study is Portuguese as a mother tongue, receptive language of school children – aged 8 to 10 years old. Due to the global pandemic, the language assessment will be the overall grade/score/gpd data from the last school term of 2021. Hence, the report person will be polyvalent head teachers in basic education, since teachers also have a role in language development, as it can be the *mediator* of the learning (Vygotsky, 1986), just like the parents at home can promote, or not, language abilities (Levickis, 2020).

Another solid justification for this approach is the fact that language assessment tests usually correspond well with teacher perception about language difficulties (Aro et al. 2012). Conversely, large scale assessments have been criticizing for their power to pressure educators, control school curricula and cause stress to students (Yuan and Zhao, 2019). Furthermore, these kinds of assessments meet certain requirements out of the possibilities for our target population: the high costs of money, bureaucracy and high stakes makes it

difficult to manage the everyday life situation of students and therefore it can distort education as a side effect (Emler et al. 2019).

As stated before, the ambition of this research is to examine two variables: language and socioemotional outcomes. The first variable has already been defined, the latter is to be briefly discussed next. After having contact with previous literature and research findings, and, having in mind the limitations of resources and opportunities due to the pandemic, this study considered convenient to adopt an online and open access assessment to measure socioemotional skills: *The Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire* (SDQ:SE, Goodman, 1997).

The SDQ:SE is a non-clinical validated and reliable instrument used by educators, researchers, and different professionals around the world (Sun, 2019; McKean, Mensah, Eadie, Bavin, Bretherton, Cini, & Reilly (2015); Bach, Molina, Amaral, Reyes, Jansen, Silva, Motta, Santos (2019); Helland, Lundervold, Heimann, Posserud (2014); Laasonen et al, 2018). With the support of this questionnaire, the scope of socioemotional skills was narrowed down to two elements: peer relationship problems and prosocial behavior. According to the SDQ:SE official website[1], these two came out of five aspects of social competences – which measures 25 psychological attributes, negative and positive:

1) emotional symptoms (5 items)

2) conduct problems (5 items)

3) hyperactivity/inattention (5 items)

4) peer relationship problems (5 items)

5) prosocial behaviour (5 items)

}

1) to 4) added together to generate a total difficulties score (based on 20 items)

SDQ:SE social competences

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[1] https://www.sdqinfo.org/a0.html accessed in 24.01.2022.

Accordingly, Portuguese receptive language is related to two social components extracted from the 25 items that measure socioemotional skills: peer relationship problems and prosocial behavior. Emotion will not be included. These both cited before are connected to the social competence concept, which is characterized as effectiveness of a child in social interaction with peers and adults (Campbell, Denham, Howarth, Whittaker, Williford, Willough Yudron, & Darling-Churchill, 2016). Social competence is paramount to be added in our study for some reasons.

First, psychological attributes are crucial to understand the timespan of the child's development in his/her social life since peer relationship problems and prosocial behavior is implied in the dynamics of a community of people (Vygotsky, 1986). Second, children's prosocial emotions are shaped first in their interactions with non-peers and later with peers (Hepach & Vaish, 2020). Thus the importance of understanding the quality in the relationship with both. Third, by investigating interactions in the classroom, the social competence element predicts school achievement (Franco, Beja, Candeias, Santos, 2017). Lastly, in this study it is assumed that behavior is not imitated by others (Bandura, 1960) but intrapersonal with possibilities of being learnt (Sroufe, 2005).

2 THEORETICAL BACKGROUNDS

2.1 Research during COVID-19

In this chapter, useful and convenient theories to the scope of this study will take place. But before continuing, a comment is necessary to justify many important decisions on research design. This study has been produced in a particular period of time, hence, it is paramount to set this master thesis in the present research scenario: post-Covid-19. Research has been deeply affected by the new coronavirus, major effects on several fields of the academic world will last long (Weiner and Javier, 2020), and with this study the impact was not different as the other research around the globe.

Therefore, some decisions like: data collection, international partnerships, local teamwork had to be reinvented. In the educational sector researchers also deal with remote teaching and indoor activities, for these are the new measures of the post-corona society. Consequently, this research also stands for this new common era (Wilthagen and Aarts, 2021), in which the new shift in educational field is followed by societal responsibility and individual resilience. As such, the research design was made according to this new panorama.

The concept of language: mother tongue

Before opening the debate about recent empirical studies, or introducing the theoretical framework for the socioemotional development, it is crucial to highlight the concept of language adopted in this study. Regarding language as a topic to be defined, this is certainly an infinite rich discussion which is impossible to master and rule in a brief academic work. Although, some milestones can set an initial framework to rethink the concept of language. In the preserved known literature, dated back from the classics of the western world, Plato in *Cratylus,* and, Herodothus in *Histories, book II, Psammeticus,* make remarks on language theories. In the archaeology, the groundbreaking theory of Denise Schmandt-

Besserat claims the regions of Uruk and the Near East, fourth millenium B.C., as the pioneer in the invention of a writing system (Englund, 1998), though several counterarguments remain in the field of philology and history (Rede, 2017).

As pointed out, language can be thought of as a graphical system, as well as a piece of art, pragmatic communication etc. Among diverse fields of knowledge, such as philosophy, archaeology, anthropology, philology, linguistics, psychology and so on, this study elects the sociolinguistics approaches to elaborate better a definition of language. Several Western scholars have theorized about it, for instance, in the nineteenth century, Ferdinand di Saussure (post-mortem) left influential statements to be cited here: *language is a social phenomena*. Later on, in the present century, the developmental psychologist Michael Tomasello (2003) also concluded that in language acquisition, the interaction process between people is crucial to linguistic development.

Therefore, the notion of language is in relation to an "other" and not only with self. Now let us turn to the definition of first language. Nowadays the world has lost some material and physical boundaries because of globalization. The basic concept of language, such as mother tongue or first language (L1) has been suffering additional meanings and mutations in relation to place, time and community in which the speaker/user is inserted. With the assumption of an individual who manages more than one language (Cummins, 2007), mother tongue is therefore the first language, learnt since birth – this contradicts the Romantic notion of being born *with* a language (Tulasiewicz and Adams, 2005). Let us begin with this idea for now. Next, historical landmarks will be highlighted in the production of understanding the mother tongue concept.

The term mother tongue is popularly widespread, although, in Slavonic languages, father tongue is present in Polish and in old Latvian, for it was assumed *the son should speak* as *he used to do after his old father… in his own country* (Prade, 2020). The first documented evidence in the West of mother tongue dates back to the X century, 1104 – 1108, by Guibert Nogent, in the book *Dei Guesta per Francos.* The term is in Latin: *materno sermone,* which

can be translated as mother tongue; however the conception is quite different from how it is seen nowadays: it refers to a user of all languages, except Latin (De Aquino, 2020). Eventually, the nineteen century, with the romanticism originated in Europe added the notions of nation, people and country to the understanding of mother tongue together with political assumptions (Gal and Irvine, 1995).

In the modern era, linguists have been arguing about the notion of mother tongue related to the meaning of native speakers. What is the difference between them? To be a native speaker refers to one's mother tongue? Are these terms the same or different meaning-wise? On the one hand, for example Rabel-Heymman (1970) explains that mother tongue is primary language in which one will continue to perform better than in any other language. This is a relatively poor explanation. On the other hand, Gaston Miron in *L'homme rapaille* (1970) sharply points out: we need more than a mother tongue to come into our own, we also need a native language.

Drawing on these perspectives, recent studies have been dealing with mother tongue as a different concept apart from native language (Suliman, 2014; Halpern, 2015; Sun, 2019). However, they do not strength the debate on the criticism of these concepts. In the light of recent research, the article of Bloomaert and Rampton (2012) highlights the complexity and fragmentation of our society in which *superdiversity* poses itself to emerge. In line with this, the authors claimed that sociolinguistics have long contested the idealization of native speakers of a language, as it is impossible to reconcile with the facts of linguistic diversity and multilingualism. Instead, nowadays the notion of linguistic repertoire is admitted as this excludes the a-priori idea of *the links between origins, upbringing, proficiency and types of language.*

Although Bloomaert and Rampton (2012) perspectives are very eloquent and remarkable to the criticism of native language, there are limits in this notion of superdiversity, perhaps the authors are considering more the hegemonic language speakers in a post-colonialism era? By adopting a closer examination, there are contradictions in this concept. For

instance, if Haitians whose mother tongue is Creole are remembered in this debate, superdiversity in not fully attributed for this community, because they suffer linguistic neglect in their own land, Haiti - where 90% of the habitants mother tongue is not French (DeGraff, 2017), thus is this superdiversity?

The case of the Kurdish people and the claim for Kurdish territory is also quite representative in terms of challenging the traditional view of mother tongue. In this case, there are more uneven and uncounted political struggles because of language ideologies and supremacy over the Kurdish people. Notwithstanding, they could be considered native speakers of Turkish, or Persian, or Arabic language, but these are not their mother tongue… The Kurdish language teaching has been undermined by the division of its speech area and speakers among five neighboring countries of Turkey, Iran, Iraq, Syria and Armenia, and the adoption, by these states, of policies ranging from deliberate killing of the language or linguicide (Hassanpour, Sheysloismani and Skutnabb-Kangas, 2012).

These communities of the Middle East in Kurdistan are not alone, the linguistic human rights are violated in much of Canada, USA, Ukraine, North Africa, China (Skutnabb-Kangas and Philipson, 2017) and Nepal (Pradhan, 2020). For this study, the case of linguistic human rights in Brazil, Portugal and Mozambique are also in disadvantages when compared with their country's dominant language: the Portuguese. In the following chapters, an overview of the Portuguese language in three continents will be presented, but one question remains until the end of this thesis: are students and teachers aware of their status of majority/minority linguistic groups? More will be discussed further.

At this point, by having these contradictions and tensions of our modern globalized society in mind, especially by taking into account post-colonialist communities, it is time to present the definition of mother tongue most suitable for this study. But before introducing the core key-terms, another particular perspective is necessary to be added here, as this thesis has a focus on education as well. Just as Pradhan (2020) perceives education as an arena for power relations, similarly, Skutnabb-Kangas profoundly realizes stigmas in language

education, and without denying any former colonial relationships and the major stigmas left from it, she conceives the concept of mother tongue. Therefore, the key term for language in this study is according to Skutnabb-Kangas and Philipson (2023):

1. Short definitions of Mother Tongues

CRITERION	DEFINITION
ORIGIN	the language one learned first
IDENTIFICATION a. internal. b. external	a. the language one identifies with b. the language one is identified as a native speaker of by others
COMPETENCE	the language one knows best
FUNCTION	the language one uses most

(Skutnabb-Kangas 1981, 18 in Swedish; in English 1984, 18)

Drawing on all these lines, is interesting to noticed that the scholar deconstructed and reconfigures the language definition: identity is part of the conceptualization of language, but it is not parallel with the idea of territory, nation and with the dominant official language of a country – concepts quite common adopted by geopolitics for instance. Hence, this thesis assumes the mother tongue as a language of identity in the production of the arena of powerful relations, as education is.

2.2 Rethinking the Portuguese language in the Lusophone world: sociohistorical perspectives.

As explained earlier, this study aims to collect data on Portuguese language assessment reported by Primary school teachers via an online questionnaire, and simultaneously, compare these scores with social skills survey extracted from the SDQ:SE (Goodman, 1998). At first, the objective was to be meant to be shared with the school communities in Brazil, therefore targeting the official language in the country: the Portuguese.

However, after data collection, it has been found that other speakers of Portuguese also participated: Primary school teachers in Portugal and Mozambique appeared in the survey – this implies that the online invitation to participate in the research was shared overseas, which is highly positive. Considering this result, the decision is to analyze all the Lusophone participants together with no exclusion of the African and the European speakers. Therefore, a brief comment on the Portuguese linguistic history is needed to better understand theories and results.

For centuries, the Latin language suffered linguistic variations in the region of *Galleacia Magna* - today Galicia in the peninsula Iberia - after the fall of the Roman Empire. In 1296, Don Dinis turned "official" what was "dialects" in the reign (Fiorin, 2017). But since the beginning Portugal lived alongside another language, the galego, just in the XIV and XV centuries, these two languages were separated (Matheus, 2005). At the end of the XV century, the dissemination of the Portuguese language started around the Pacific and Atlantic oceans during the peak of the colonialism period between Spain and Portugal.

Accordingly, all the territories attached to the Portuguese Crown: Brazil, Angola, Mozambique, Guine Bisau, Cape Verde, Goa (India), Macau, San Tome and Principe, East Timor and Guine Equatorial were all the territories which received Portuguese as the official language during the occupation. Each colony cited before had dealt with different linguistic policies and attitudes alongside the Portuguese reign, some countries gained independence earlier, some later. Some remained characterized as monolingual until nowadays – Brazil. While some others reconnected with their native languages before the occupation – Mozambique. Let us now concentrate in the Brazilian colony.

During the XVII and XVIII centuries, Brazilian population was a mix of Europeans – Holland in the northeast –, native aboriginals and Africans due to the slavery, the expert in pre-colonial period José Ribamar Freire argues quoting documents written by the first Jesuits that the colonization project was obstructed by "diabolical languages" and

"barbarians who could not read and write", hence, the solution was *civilizing monolinguism* (Cavalcanti and Maher, 2017). In other words, the implementation of Portuguese as the only official language to be taught in schools, churches and elsewhere.

Before the colonization period, more than 1,300 languages were documented only in what it is known nowadays as Brazilian territory (Rodrigues, 2006), but as a result of the imperialism agenda, linguistic genocide (Skutnabb-Kangas and Philipson, 2017) occurred in Brazil. Today only 188 languages are registered by the National Statistics Survey, the Census (Cavalcanti and Maher, 2017). Not only languages were gone, but also many of their ethnographic indigenous groups.

Although opinions are divergent in terms of aboriginals diminishing. On one hand, Brazilian demographic studies accuses the native civil wars in addition to the French and Holland attacks as a factor of massive killing of the Potiguar's and the Tupiniquim's population[2]. On the other hand, historians consider the desire of the Crown for territorial expansion defined by the movement called *Bandeirismo* as factor for the decrease in the Brazilian amerindians amount (Cidade, 1954). Furthermore, there is also the argument about the miscegenation between the two nations, the former European colonizer and the subordinate natives, as a cause in the decline of entire communities of indigenous people (Schwarcz, 2006). Regardless of the core of these critical perspectives, it is undeniable that several different native's languages disappeared in Brazil during the colonial period.

In the past two decades, Brazilian indigenous languages gained more attention in the light the debate of linguistic rights, as a result of this emergent field, a profound historical achievement can be mentioned as a landmark in 2015: the Guarani language was added to the Portuguese and the Spanish as official language of the MERCOSUL – Common Trade

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[2] IBGE: Brazilian Institute of Statistics, 2002. Accessed in 20.03.2002.
https://brasil500anos.ibge.gov.br/territorio-brasileiro-e-povoamento/historia-indigena/relacoes-entre-nativos-e-colonizadores.html

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of the South[3]. In line with this, the documented research debated intensively the idea of Brazil as a monolingual country, different scholars have been criticized and strongly deconstructed this belief (Freire, 2011; Muller de Oliveira, 2009; Navarro 2012; Cavalcanti and Maher, 2017) although Portuguese remains the official language.

Today, two thirds of minority speakers belong to Amazonian languages, the FUNAI aims to protect the survivor generations of aboriginals in Brazil. Furthermore, there has been an educational shift in pro-multilingualism, universities in U.S.A., Germany and Netherlands have been maintaining language teaching of indigenous Brazilian languages together with universities located in São Paulo, Minas Gerais, Santa Catarina, Pará, Goiás and Rio de Janeiro states (Galucio and Moore, 2016).

In the XIX century, the imperialism sovereign, from 1415 to 1825, as pointed by Lourenço, (1992) had gradually ended in South America, but left some consequences even after Brazilian independence in 1822, though the Republic as a democracy was stablished in 1888. The present century could be considered far away from monolingual among the Lusophone world. Scholars like Eduardo Lourenço (1992), critical on the hemogenic structures left after colonization, argues against the eurocentrism mentality, substantially the myth of Portuguese maritime expeditions heroes' duty to civilize natives Americans. Parallel to this perspective is the sociolinguist bias, and the paradigm of Portugal in the center of not only culture standardization, but as of leader in the uniformization process with the Portuguese language. With respect to sociolinguistic bias, a broad panorama of the Lusophone community is favorable to this discussion.

According to the *Community of Portuguese Language,* the CPLP[4], the following countries have Portuguese as an official language: Portugal, Angola, Mozambique, Cape Verde, San Tome, East Timor, Equatorial Guiné, Guiné-Bissau and Brazil. This implies that any other

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[3] The MERCOSUL displays Guarani language in their official page: https://www.raadh.mercosur.int/gn/ accessed in 11/04/2022.
[4] Official website: https://www.cplp.org/id-4452.aspx - accessed in 23/03/2022

local/national languages are minorities, as they are not recognized, i.e. Creoule and Tupi – any several others. However, in the other ex-colonies, Portuguese is not only the official language but also an additional one in maintenance with other local/national, i.e. the case of East-Timor (Portuguese and Tetum) and Equatorial Guine (French, Spanish and Portuguese).

All of the countries mentioned before shared the Portuguese language nowadays, this is called *Lusofonia*, a community of Lusophone users. Indeed, these nations speak the same language across four continents, but there are linguistic variations in it, as language changes in space, time and according to people – especially gender, according to the ground-breaking studies of the linguist William Labov (1963). However, these varieties of the Portuguese language are not always welcome and appreciated by its users, it is not rare that the multiculturalism facet of the *lusofonia* is followed by discrimination, or more specific, linguistic prejudice.

Sociolinguistic prejudice remains in the European Portuguese beliefs about the Lusophone world, especially about the role of Brazil in Portuguese language variation. Authors such as Cabecinhas and Carvalho (2013) have been failing to promote the values of linguistic tolerance and diversity, as they seem to not fully recognize the concept of Lusophone world. For them, (only the) Brazilian Portuguese variety resembles a threat for the community of "standard" European Portuguese, as it is not "accurate language". This discreet but highly biased judgement appears to be in dialogue with the quotes of the Jesuits in the XVI century, when they describe the native tongues present in Brazil. These poor judgmental pejoratives statements resemble discrimination and adds for xenophobia, and worst, it does not advocate for bilateral relations, once some of the Brazilians scholars response argued against the concept of lusofonia (Faraco, 2012).

Cabecinhas and Carvalho (2013) article is questionable, because it is based heavily on cultural trends, not sociolinguistic studies. A serious weakness is that they did not quote authorities in the Portuguese Language role in the Lusophone world, such as the

comprehensive works of Ivo Castro (Cathedralic professor of Lisbon) or internationally acclaimed Portuguese intellectuals, as José Saramago, winner of NOBEL prize in literature who encourages the concept of unity within the diversity *languages in Portuguese[5]*. Conversely, this shortcoming is in dialogue with Deborah Cameron (2012) theory, she challenges linguistic bias by language use, since for her external factors also influences this kind of prejudice, such as origin and identity (O'Neil and Massini-Cagliari, 2019).

This chapter has introduced very concisely the history of the Portuguese language from its origins in Portugal to the actual community of Lusophone members. The paradox of what it is the best Portuguese language have also been debated. Despite the fact that there are multilateral agreements and cooperation in the Community of Portuguese Language Countries, this does not imply linguistic tolerance. While the academia proceeds in publishing opinions on what it is considered the most accurate Portuguese, discrimination will not be ceased. It is paramount to fight back against sociolinguistic prejudice.

This master thesis will take a step further and include, not exclude, other lusophone members in our data collection analysis, for it is assumed that the power relations of the Ibero-American-African horizons cannot fully dismissed its syncretism and hybridity (Abdala Junior, 2013). Although economic policies are stronger than linguistic policies, (Cohn et al, 2022), it is crucial to adopt an integrationist perspective when it comes to the Lusofonia world, this is what affirms the scholar Ivo Castro (2010). Furthermore, the hegemonic link between language and territory ought to be interrogated as maintained by the cautious historical analysis of Clara Keating (2019).

The Lusophone speaking countries: Mozambique, Brazil and Portugal.

Data collection of this study focused on Lusophone speaking countries presented not only Brazilian participants, but also Primary School teachers located in Portugal and

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[5] Interview found in the documentary *Língua, vidas em português* (2002) by Victor Lopes
http://www.cinept.ubi.pt/pt/filme/4491/Língua+-+Vidas+em+Português accessed in 28.04.2022

Mozambique, a succinct overview of the sociolinguistic variation of the Portuguese language used in these countries is needed. For it would enrich the debate as well as complement the key-terms, although it does not compromise the data analysis, for two main reasons. Firstly, regarding language assessment, teachers were meant to respond to an open-ended question about their records on student's grades. Secondly, the research design cited previously can substitute large scale language assessments. If the research design was meant to be based on standardized large scale language assessments, such as the A.B.F.W., in the case of Brazil, (Andrade et al, 2004) or the A.L.O. in case of Portugal (Sim-sim, 2001), the data collection would not be possible, neither research results, since each Lusophone country would need to have its own test.

2.3 The Lusophone concept: an introduction

"[…] even when the words are the same, they express another reality, another experience […] It may appear to be the same language, but this is deceptive" (Bisset et al, 2021). Just as the Québecóis perception of the French between America and Europe, so too the opening statement in this chapter is that the Portuguese spoken in the three continents are far from the fiction of a homogeneous language. Changes across different non standards varieties of the same language are quite impossible to be track in one single study, especially in terms of authoritative description. The task becomes more complex since there are three continents, however, this section aims to just collect some examples from various strands of literature. By introducing this panorama, boundaries and encounters of local histories shall be realized more in favor of a global history concept (Conrad, 2017). The following is a brief description of the Portuguese language in three lusophone speaking countries: Brazil, Portugal and Mozambique.

2.4 The Portuguese language in Mozambique, Brazil and Portugal

Brazil

The biggest Lusophone country is indeed Brazil, with an extension of land by shore and by continent greater than the any other in the Lusophone community. Due to this geographical massive diversity, Brazilian Portuguese speakers have been changing the language as well. From north to south, the sociolinguistic variation is quite dramatic, just like the pioneer philologist Antenor Nascentes (XIX century) described. As such, and according to the vast research work by the Linguistic Brazilian Project: ALIB (Barbadinho, 2003) Brazil is divided in dialect regions, though some researchers have different methods to rethink the geography of language by satellite and recent statistics (Telles, 2018):

Figure 1 Brazilian sociolinguistic varieties by Barbadinho Neto (2003)

It is an important achievement for the academia to rethink the language by a geographical map, however there are some key-terms limitations, for instance, in the three states of the south: Paraná, Santa Catarina e Rio Grande do Sul, (these states are part but are not all

formed the sulista region of the image above), the phonology and use of the pronoun "tu" occurs more with agreement (Colischon and Monareto Oliveira, 2012).

In the northeast, i.e. Rio Grande do Norte state (but not the whole nordestino dialect region of the map), the appropriation of the [tS] phonetics occurs, for instance in the words: "peito [pejtSU], and in "muito", ['mũjtSU] (Sá, 2011). These are just a few examples, and nothing cited here seems to be enough to present the sociolinguistic panorama of Brazilian Portuguese, however this is only an introduction to newcomers in the topic.

The language claims heterogeneity by lexical items and phonology aspect. However, all of those highlight the shared linguistic standards of the regions simultaneously they do corporate the multi facets of the language users, thus the pluridimensions of Brazilian Portuguese (dos Santos, 2020). If these aspects contribute to form the multilingual project of Brazil, the international comparison on the same language just intensify this statement. Let us turn to one aspect: the grammar.

The Brazilian Portuguese (BP) grammar differs from the European (EP) one, in terms of the personal pronouns and especially indefinite subjects. EP prefers the "se"constructions, with and without agreement, while BP tends to use both the overt personal pronouns (você, a gente) and the "se"construction without agreement. (Barbosa et al, 2003). Not only syntatics, but also the phonology changes: the intonation varies, as well as the vowel reduction phenomena (Abaurre and Galves, 1998).

Mozambique

The country more densely populated among the Lusofonia, and the one in which there is more openness to non-hegemonic language policies is certainly Mozambique. According to the celebrated author Mia Couto (2005) the country passed the phase of colonial injustice, and it is now learning to be more advance in terms of human development, however never ignoring the fact that the colonial period causes delayed.

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The Linguistic Map of Mozambique

Swahili language border

Maputo (capital)
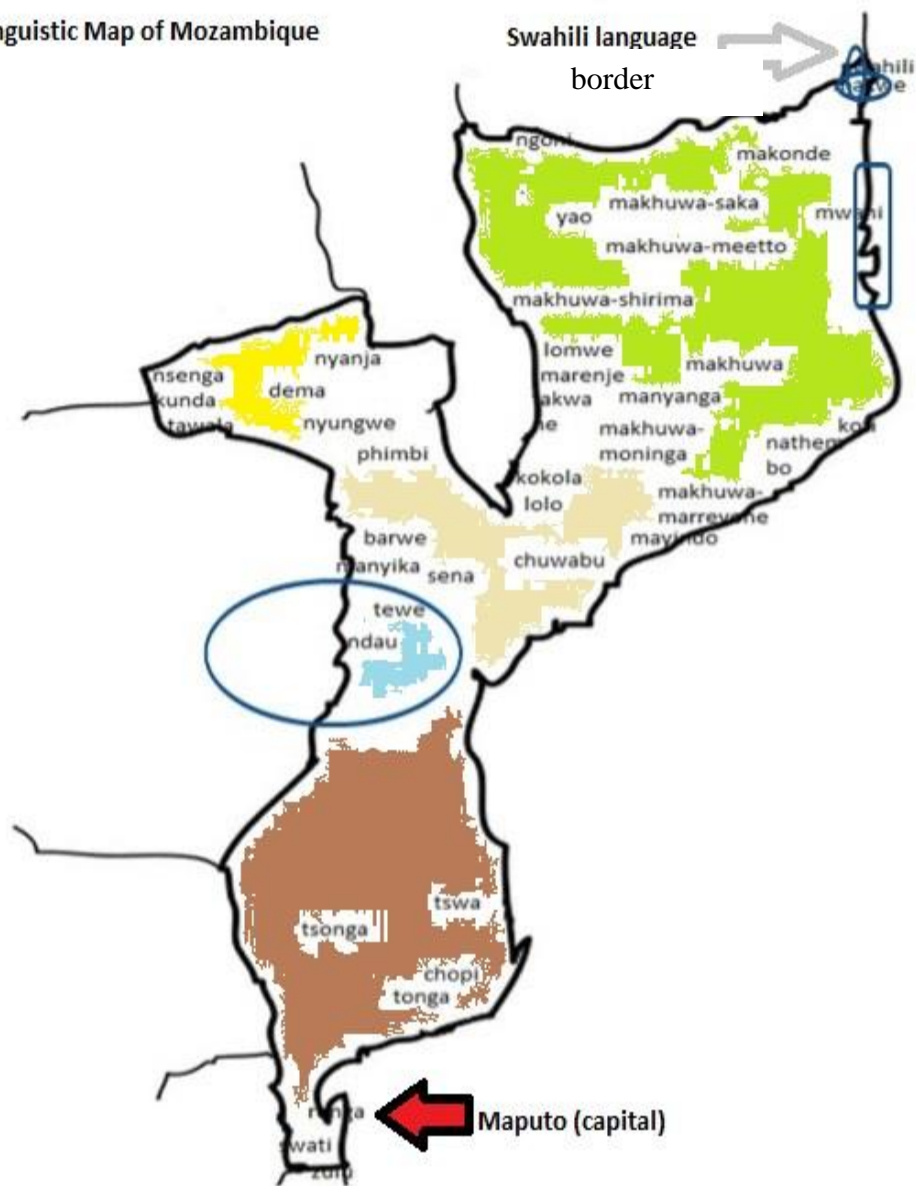
Figure 2 Linguistic map of Mozambique (Rego 2011, adapted)

In Mozambique, the official language is Portuguese, however other national languages co-occur, i.e.: Lomué, Makondê, Shona, Tsonga and Chichecua, according to the Community of Lusophone Speakers, the CLPL. The map above illustrates many national languages. Though, scholars are more precise: there are more than 20 African languages of the Bantu

language group in the country, and together with Portuguese they form the multicultural and multilingual identity of Mozambique (Alvarez, Gonçalves and Avelar, 2018).

Taking a brief overview of some characteristics of the Mozambican Portuguese language, this session will not have the ambition to represent all the multifaced aspects of this variety, but instead to introduce relevant studies for newcomers into the Lusophone world dynamics.

First, it is necessary to recount socio-historical events for it is the foundation of the analysis. Surprisingly in contrast with the reality of the Luso ex-colonies, such as Brazil, which received the Portuguese language decreet under the empire, in Mozambique, the Portuguese language acquired national status after the independence in 1975, thus it has been the language of schools and universities, as well as public institutions, but also the language of the Revolution against the colonizer (Namburete, 2006). Moreover, the post-colonialism era is also the same period in which the Mozambican Portuguese begin to gain a more consistent format (Gonçalves, 2013), even though the colony started since the XV century.

However, the vast national institutionalization does not stand for linguistic genocide. On the contrary, in the present century, less than half of the population of the country speaks Portuguese (39%) and just a minority (6%) has Portuguese as their mother tongue (Gonçalves and Chimbutane, 2008). In fact, the low rate of speakers does not contribute for a non-privileged status, because this is the language of skilled workers and educated people (Timbane, 2018). Authors like Chimbutane (2019) realizes that there is a decline in the population of African language speakers, as Portuguese gained privileged status among its users, thus increasing the number of Portuguese speakers (as L1 language) among Mozambicans.

Second, even though the Portuguese language use is concentrated in urban zones, in comparison with Brazil and Portugal – for instance, the Mirandese in northeast Portugal or the Nheengatu in the Amazon – Mozambicans are not geographically isolated with their

minority language group, for the most part of the country population lives in rural areas, where Portuguese is not the dominant language (Timbane, 2012). In Mozambique, the sense of community and language identity seems to be highly strongly attached to their citizens and their families, for some children start the school with no previous knowledge of Portuguese (Correia, Carvalho, Barbosa, Matheus and Cruz 2011).

Finally, there are complexities and challenges when it comes to the production of understanding about language encounters and barriers in Mozambique. This subchapter should have considered only the Portuguese language in the country, but instead, multiple native languages narratives were taken before.

Drawing on all the previous arguments, the Portuguese language though is official, is not the majority, but it is dominant. Simultaneously, it is not segregated, but legitimized in education. And at the same time, this education which passes on a hegemonic language, is also the same institution that open doors for the teaching of Bantu languages as L1 or L2 – in the next chapter more details will follow. Therefore, among these various sociocultural and historical events, in the end, what really has to be discussed is the Mozambican languages and also the Mozambican Portuguese (Ngunga, 2021).

As declared previously, the Mozambican Portuguese have growth in its own format recently. By adopting a holistic language perspective, it is possible to describe the PM as democratic, because of the influences of subdialects, from oral to literacy, these varieties are embedded in the PM (Gonçalves and Chimbutane, 2008). On the top of this democratic aspect, the PM is also inclusive, scholars as Ngunga (2012) and Timbane (2012) highlight that Mozambican Portuguese has influences of Bantu languages[6].

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[6] Example 1: Khanimambo pela vossa presença. Translation: "Obrigada pela vossa presença".
Example 2: O próximo espectáculo será mahala. Translation: O próximo espectáculo será gratuito".
"Khanimambo" and "mahana" are words from xichangana language.

However, despite all these extraordinary qualitative attributes, the PM is not spoken by the vast majority in Mozambique. It is the Makuwan language which concentrates a high number of users: around 26% of the people in the country in opposite to 10% of MP speakers mostly based in Maputo, the capital (Ngunga, 2021). Moreover, another example of *estrangeirismos*, or foreign language exchange, could be represented for example by the phonetics of the word "game"[7] by the Makuwan, in this case, there is a negative transfer of vowels, from Mozambican Portuguese speakers whose mother tongue is Makuwan (Ngunga, 2012). Nevertheless, the MP has excluded some general cases commonly seen in EP, for instance: gender agreement, personal pronoun position and treatment of the second person pronoun (Gonçalves, 2013). It is indeed a hybrid and dynamic language variety full of spectrums that other language variety, such as the BP, does not share (Ngunga, 2012).

In conclusion, whatever there is to state is not enough regarding the MP and the multilingual Mozambique, as this language variety still is underexplored in the academia, and when studies are launched, the topics are concentrated about the morphosyntax (word order) instead of sociolinguistics aspects (Gonçalves, 2013).

In a succinct overview of the status of the Portuguese language in Mozambique, like this session was, it is crucial to acknowledge the mentioned sociocultural aspect – the people, the language users, the Mozambican different spaces within cities or villages – above all when it comes to the description of the MP, as this is in dialogue with the global history concept (Conrad, 2016).

Portugal

According to the following map[8], Portugal is divided in zones of linguistic dialects, via continent and via two archipelagoes (Açores and Madeira), with this it is possible to inferred the heterogenous distribution of the country especially inland and outland.

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[7] a.coku [∪coku] 'jogo'.

[8] The following maps were extracted from the Camões Institute, an official educational centre of culture and language courses: http://cvc.instituto-camoes.pt/hlp/geografia/mapa06.html accessed in 27/03/2022.

Dialectos portugueses setentrionais

- ☐ Dialectos transmontanos e alto-minhotos
- ■ Dialectos baixo-minhotos-durienses-beirões

Dialectos portugueses centro-meridionais

- ■ Dialectos do centro litoral
- ☐ Dialectos do centro interior e do sul

Dialectos portugueses insulares

- ■ Dialectos do centro litoral
- ■ Dialectos do centro litoral

— Limite de região subdialectal com características peculiares bem diferenciadas

Figure 3 Portugal and the dialects zone

The contributions of Luis Cintra (1962) and De Paiva & Silva (1962) are a milestone when it comes to the register of isoglossic data collection. The map above seems to be anchored in Cintra (1962), as he proposes two major dialects in European Portuguese: the central-southern and the northern dialects. Next, only a few remarks will be cited in this subchapter,

due to the limitation of this study and the realistic assumption that this topic may demand an extra attention when describing dialectal corpora, for it often raises a considerable amount of doubts and difficulties (Martins and Veloso, 2012)[9].

Broadly speaking, the European Portuguese undergoes little influence from any area other than Lisbon, the capital, according to Brissos (2014). Drawing on this, it is assumed that the urban environment of a multicultural city represents in itself the production of new trends in the popular and the erudite use of the language. The Lisbon accent is one of the two national varieties in mainland Portugal, the second being that spoken is in the area of the city of Coimbra (Cruz-Ferreira, 1995). Another significant characteristic of European Portuguese is the dominance of the continent variety in relation to the islands (Brissos, 2014). Though curious similarities occurs: in the archipelago, the nasal "õ" in the verbs of the third person plural (i.g.comerão) are more apparent, though some records in the northeast continent have been also registered (Bazenga, 2012).

In conclusion, the differences between the dialects in Portugal are majorly phonetical (Mateus, 2005). As an example, the study of Brissos (2014) draw data from acoustic Atlas of Portuguese Stressed Vowels (AVOC) to track several sociolinguistic variations across the country. With this data collection, it was observed that in south, Praia da Salema (Algarve), the vowel [a] did not occurred one single time in comparison with standard Portuguese from the rest of the country. Praia de Salerna also had a contrast with the vowel [ʉ]: 52 cases were collected in that littoral region, and none of [ʉ] appeared in other dialect zones. Hence, Salerna Beach stands as one peculiar example of sociolinguistic variation.

Though prejudice remains in the mentality of humans, the language in itself does not bother with identity and origin, as it is fluid, organic, and inclusive (Matheus, 2005). In other words, while the academia is an arena of arguments between language ideologies and bias, regardless of it, the language changes and it incorporates varieties of other languages and

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[9] See the biggest data collection of dialectal European Portuguese, since 1995 this project is run by the University of Porto: the CLUP (https://cl.up.pt/arquivo/) accessed in 26/04/2022.

also other varieties of the same language. In terms of the rapid process of linguistic changes within the varieties of Portuguese, the phonology of rhotics system / r / has been noticed as the major change of the century not only in the European Portuguese but also as well as with Brazilian Portuguese (Veloso, 2015). In terms of the rapid process of linguistic changes within different languages, the South of Portugal could be cited here, as there is some influence of Arabic language in variations of the Algarve (Cintra, 1962). Thus, no matter if Brazilian, or European Portuguese, or even Arabic, the language will assimilate, transformed and be in the mouth of everyday life without complicated thoughts, discrimination attitudes or false beliefs.

This section aimed to point just a few examples that support the diversity of the European Portuguese language across the continent and archipelago. All the arguments cited before should be eloquent enough to rethink and confront the fallacy of a hegemonic and uniform language standard, like Cabecinhas and Rosa (2010) insist in support. Therefore, it is crucial to end this subchapter with the most recent scholastic work about the Portuguese language status among the Lushophone world, from this collection of articles, an influential linguistic researcher, João Veloso sharply claims that *Portugal is not the owner of the language* (Souza and del Elmo, 2020).

2.5 *The Portuguese language teaching in Mozambican, Brazilian and Portuguese Primary schools: monolingualism or multilinguist curricula?*

After considering formal past colonies and colonizer relationships, and, by realizing the presence of minorities language groups in Portugal, it is important to address the Portuguese language teaching by the educational curricula. Equally important is to debate about how each educational curricula are targeting the Portuguese language in basic education, is there a monolinguistic or bilingual/multilingual approach? These questions add to our discussion, for several reasons.

First, monolingual education causes sociocultural drawbacks assimilationist perspectives (Skutnabb-Kangas, 1998). Second, the value of social networks in a monolingual education system is certainly to be debated in front of a monolinguistic curriculum (Chimbutane, 2011). Third, it has been proven that positive outcomes such as cognition and communicative interaction and literacy development not only in the L1 but also in L2 were found in students who received bilingual education (Cummins, 2007). Therefore, considering the fact that the sociocultural outcome is interrogated, the way children see their language identity implies in less language abilities.

In just a subchapter of this study, it seems to be impossible to track three educational curricula followed by recent criticism and empirical studies, as these mentioned countries certainly have differences in language practices between public and private schools and/or among districts, municipalities, at federal levels. Thus, as the aim is to just introduce the main points of the curricula in language, the focus adopted in this study had to be narrowed down to the public school system of Basic Education in Portugal, Brazil and Mozambique.

The Portuguese language teaching in Mozambican Primary schools

In comparison with Brazil, as an ex-Portuguese colony, Mozambique is far ahead in designing educational curricula with focus on multilingualism. The country not only remembered the post-colonialism heritage, but it appreciates the local languages, by adopting the teaching in Bantu, if necessary, in case a student do not have literacy instruction in Portuguese, although teachers ought to speak Portuguese in the classroom (Terra, 2018). This is indeed a multicultural country that applies the sociolinguistic reality of its people into to the classroom by implementing teaching practices with non-hegemonic language learning.

Another word to describe the pedagogical practice for Mozambican schools is resilience, as the country has been under occupation for more than 500 years! Even though the past relationship with the Portuguese Crown has been longer than Brazil, Mozambique it is

certainly an example to implement language policies in school. First of all, a short comment on the basic education is needed before addressing the language teaching. There was only one primary school in the whole country during the XIX century. In 1975, after the independence, the educational system in Mozambique was heavily affected by not only the high illiterate rate in 39% of the population, but also the lack of Portuguese speakers as being L1 (Abdula, 2013). Consequently, several researchers united with decision makers were keen to fight against these rates.

In the 1980's, pilot studies for educational language policy began and it has been expanded until nowadays, with several experiments. The PEBIMO, *Projecto de Escolarização Bilingue em Moçambique* - Project of Bilingual Schooling in Mozambique is an outstanding example to improve the educational success in the country, as the aim is the language teaching in Portuguese and another Mozambican language (Chimbutane and Benson, 2012). This project targeted not only bilingual education but the positive outcomes of it, such as cognition and communicative interaction and literacy development not only in the L1 but also in L2 (Cummins, 2007). The practical implications of PEBIMO indicated low rates of student retention and failures, thus adding positive outcomes of the project for the language curriculum of the country (Chimbutane and Benson, 2012).

The recent article of Terra (2018) informs that according to the curriculum, although Portuguese is spoken in the country, it is a child's right to learn in their mother tongue, contributing to the value associated with and the maintenance of both language and culture, identity, self-esteem and attitude towards school. The Mozambican curriculum for basic education took into consideration the needs of most children (L1 speakers of local African languages and not the Portuguese) in the country and allowed Mozambican languages as auxiliary languages in the learning process. With the curricular change, mother-tongue education was finally incorporated and included in three modalities:

1. Bilingual Education: Mozambican languages (L1)/Portuguese-L2.

2. Monolingual program in Portuguese: L2 with local languages as resource.

3. Monolingual program in Portuguese: L2 and local languages as subjects.

According to the National Curriculum by The Ministry of Education[10], version 2020, the Basic Education offers bilingual and monolingual education. The definition of bilingual education refers to Portuguese in addition to another local language, or/and the Sign Language. As stated by Terra (2018), the key-term for monolingual education is the teaching of Portuguese, as a language of instruction and a subject. Furthermore, the curriculum confirms that language assessment is continuous and smooth, since most of the students are not fluent in Portuguese, the transition phase is extended until the third grade. And to sum up, to date, no register of an hegemonic foreign language, such as English, has been noted in the curriculum of mandatory Basic Education in Mozambican public Primary schools, according to the National Curriculum.

2.6 The Portuguese language teaching in Brazilian Primary schools

In Brazilian schools, the offer for learning languages is based on hegemonic foreign languages, such as English or Spanish. The Portuguese language is taught since kindergarten to the end of High School, it is also a mandatory subject for National Exams and University entrances. In comparison with Mozambique, Brazil is not multilingual. Considering the post-colonialism context, there is no language heritage with indigenous languages. One of the reasons might be the lack of cultural identity with the natives, the most primitive groups in the country. It could be also related to the assumption Brazilian citizens identify themselves, their mother tongue is Portuguese, and no longer Nheengethu or Tupi, as remembers the anthropologist José Ribamar Freire (Teles, 2015).

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[10] Complete version in Portuguese language available online at: https://mept.org.mz/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/PCEP_Maio_2020_Final_1.pdf accessed in 25.03.2022

Thus, no other indigenous national language has been implemented for students in Basic Education whose first language is Portuguese, although the country is not monolingual, as has been debated in the previous sessions. Despite this, there are multiple management objectives of the Basic Education curriculum guided by: the BNCC, the LDB, the PCN, the PNE, Federal acts, and municipal policies, since the first years of Basic Education is administered by several different municipalities of each of 26 Brazilian states (art. 211, CF). In addition, each school has its own PPP, the pedagogical politic project.

According to the BNCC[11], language teaching is offered along all the Basic Education levels, since first to ninth grade. Language curriculum is centered in the modality of orality and literacy. Though there are some projects which resembles multilingualism, like the right for Sign Language (Law 4.857/2002), and the English language teaching at final years of Basic Education, Brazilian minority languages are not offered in Primary School for students whose mother tongue is Portuguese. However, the contrary does exist. Students whose mother tongue is not Portuguese have the right to study it. The indigenous early education is offered in some regions of Brazil for free by the public schools, some references could be pointed as an example: Parque das Tribos in Manaus and Turumã-Açú, both located in Amazon state; CECI Jaraguá and Parelheiros both based in São Paulo state.

The municipal decreet 44.389/2004, from the city of São Paulo, declares that the indigenous groups have the right to have education in their mother tongue. Thus, the CECI, Centers for Indigenous Education were established. Despite this inclusive achievement, the national local languages in Brazil are yet not totally diffused and the population is often unaware of these practices, especially within educational contexts. Besides, local policies such as the ones adopted by municipality level is favorable to multilingualism, however a global curriculum in national level should also take place into these decisions.

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[11] http://basenacionalcomum.mec.gov.br/images/BNCC_EI_EF_110518_versaofinal_site.pdf

Scholars have been arguing about Brazilian education in postcolonialism contexts. Guimarães (2015) accomplishes the query for diversity and inclusion in the Brazilian educational system, by acknowledging the Federal Law 10.639/2003. According to this law, more opportunities will be made to shed light on the past heritage of the country, more focus shall be concentrated in the legacy of the people who immigrated to Brazil during colonialism: black African slavery and indigenous populations. Thus, minority ethnographic groups will be represented in the school curricula whereas by literature, history, social studies and etc. However, most of these arguments refer to the teaching of History and Culture and not specific to minority language education and or multilingualism.

Before ending this chapter, some implications should be made. First of all, although the conquers of the last twenty years are beneficial in terms of breaking the homogenization of education via eurocentrism heritage, and not native legacy, the quest for a national multilingual curriculum is legit. Researchers and leaders of ethnographic minorities groups should be mobilized to request visibility in school curriculum of Brazilian Basic Education, just like in Finland, the teaching of Sàmi (indigenous languages of Lapland) and Roma language are a civil right since 2005 (OPH, 2015).

With these practices, Brazil could stand along with Mozambique and Finland, as an example in minority language education, instead of designing a curriculum that offers only hegemonic language teaching, such as the English language, introduced in the final years of Basic Education. This is not an implication for Brazil context, but other societies have been exploring the benefits of multilingualism in the context of post-colonial realities, see the examples of studies conducted in the United States, Nigeria and Bolivia for instance (Terra, 2018). In other words, the portrait of an ex-colony not confined to be reassured in terms of independence from the colonizer, but to never forget the past, and by doing so, a step aside the future generations in remembrance of its native people.

2.7 The Portuguese language teaching in Portuguese Primary schools

According to the National Portuguese Curriculum[12], the Basic Education is divided in 3 cycles, the first one encompasses students from 6 to 9 years, the second, 10 to 11 years old, the third, 12 to 14 years old. Several bodies are intitled to guide the principles of the National Curriculum[13], including the Ministry of Education and the Lei de Bases do Sistema.

During the first cycle, in Basic Education, students are to learn Portuguese language as a mandatory discipline, however they can as early as 6 years old, elect another optional subject in addition to the rest of compulsories courses of the curriculum. There is no foreign language during the first and second year of the first cycle. Nevertheless, in the next phase, the third year, students are to study the first foreign language, which is English, in addition to Portuguese. In the third cycle, children will have on the top of Portuguese and English two more foreign languages, which could be German, Spanish, or French (decreet 6944-A/2018).

The main goal to learn the Portuguese language is centered in the domains of orality, literacy, and language use – interpretation analysis and reflection, which implies criticism skills for students. Between the year of 2004 and 2018 much has been changing towards linguistic appreciation, but it is still slightly slow. In the curriculum of 2004, one of the curriculum target for language learning seems to not contribute towards linguistic

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[12] When accessed in 01.04.2022, this complete official document neither was accessible in the Government website, neither in the Ministry of Education. The solution was to access parts of the curriculum, available online at http://www.dge.mec.pt/aprendizagens-essenciais-ensino-basico

[13] Lei n.º 46/86, de 14 de outubro - Lei de Bases do Sistema Educativo
Despacho n.º 6478/2017, de 26 de julho - Perfil dos Alunos à Saída da Escolaridade Obrigatória

tolerance, as it states that student's practices shall be more centered in the norms of oral and written language[14].

Interestingly, this guideline is stressing the maintenance of the normative use of the language at schools. But the question is: if a student has the purpose to value the norm, the standard, the rule, how about the other varieties of the same language, out of the standard, like Brazilian Portuguese or Mozambican Portuguese? Does this protocol contribute towards non-standards of the same language or discriminate them? How about other uses of different minority language use, such as the case of Mirandese language in northeast Portugal? Are these principles targeting this population too or only speaker with have Portuguese as mother tongue? Indeed, this guideline is alarming for the multilingualism and linguistic tolerance attitudes.

Fortunately, changes happened in the pedagogical values. In year of 2004, the ethical core values desired for the students were: independence, solidarity, initiative and sympathy. Nevertheless, tolerance is not clearly expressed there, could it be included in the notion of solidarity? Conversely, a new guideline in 2018[15] pointed different competences compared to 2004: curiosity, respect, knowledgeable and critical skills. Indeed, those characteristics of respect and critical skills dialogue more with the appreciation of multilingualism and minority language education.

In regard to minority language rights, Portugal seems to be quite behind Mozambique and Finland for instance, as opportunities for minority language education are quite dispersed, vaguely safeguarded, in other words, not continuously taught in schools (Martins and Ferreira, 2019). This debate is not only necessary for interrogating the role of Portugal in

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[14] Progressivamente, pelo uso da Língua, pela valorização de vivências, conhecimentos, referências e interesses, pela reflexão oportuna e integrada sobre o funcionamento da Língua, **o aluno evolui para práticas mais normativizadas da comunicação oral e escrita**. (p.135)**.**
[15] Government of Portugal official website for the document which informs about student profile, 2018 http://www.dge.mec.pt/sites/default/files/Curriculo/Aprendizagens_Essenciais/1_ciclo/portugues_1c_2a_ff.pdf accessed in 01.04.2022

the production of linguistic diffusion in the Lusophone world, but to challenge the concept of Portugal as monolingual. Surprisingly, the country does not have only one official spoken and written language, but also a second localized one: the Mirandese. As Belina (2015) informs, there were speakers of Mirandese since the XIX century, mostly concentrated in the region of the northeast, Miranda do Douro. Matheus (2005) adds that the Mirandese speakers suffered discrimination because their language comes from the Asturian, and not the Portuguese, which looks stranger to ears of native speakers of Portuguese.

Notwithstanding only in 1995 the language gained the recognition of literacy status with the use of its own grammar, thus reassuring the speakers right to have their norm legitimized together with the dominant language. Therefore, Portugal is not monolingual. Even though its population of speakers is around 15.000 (of about 10 million Portuguese speakers in the country) and language policies co-exist with Portuguese language teaching just in Lisbon, Miranda do Porto and Bragança cities, the Mirandese language still faces issues in terms of visibility, legitimation and social acknowledgments by the rest of the country – which truly believes in their monolingual history, argue remarkably Martins and Ferreira (2019). The same authors also reported that Mirandese people suffers isolation and poverty as their native villages do not gain the same attention as Portuguese speaking cities.

In conclusion, the Portuguese language teaching in Portugal, at basic education level is Eurocentric and hegemonic, for some reasons. First, the Mirandese language is not spread nationally alongside the Portuguese language, the teaching offer when available, is local. Second, according to the analysis of the main educational guidelines of the Portuguese curriculum, the teaching of a second language at school is centered in the European and other hegemonic languages of the West Europe, such as the French, German, and English languages – the ones with more economic privileged status, in fact this bilingual education offer could be interpreted as assimilation into hegemonic Whiteness (Flores, 2015). Hence, if the national curriculum supports more the offer of hegemonic languages, at basic education, how the linguistic rights of minorities are being affirmed and socially

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recognized among the rest of the Portuguese population? The need to assert and defend this language should be taken by all its citizens, regardless of their mother tongue identity, as incisively urge Martins and Ferreira (2019).

At this point of the discussion, the criticism turns to be very much emphasized at two levels: national and international. The role of Portugal in the elaboration of the Portuguese language curriculum does not fully supports multiculturalism and linguistic language rights for minorities in a national context. Similarly, in an international level, once the social recognition of Mirandese people is lacking, this attitude implies a questionable responsibility in the production of legitimation of non-hegemonic languages and also non-standards varieties of the Portuguese language. In other words, how the lusophone speakers can claim equality if the pedagogical practices of the Portuguese language at school is produced to be centralized and hegemonic?

Apart from these appraisals cited before, some positive aspects can be seen in the Portuguese language curriculum, for instance: the teaching of orality in multiple levels, different kinds of language assessments, freedom for electing any West-European language when at the third year of the first cycle and etc. However, this is not enough. Tolerance and appreciation to multilingualism in terms of reassuring sociolinguistic rights of minorities must be not only be present in local language policies, but debated at a national level, for this could be well extended for the Lusophone world dynamics. More social recognition and visibility should be paid to the Mirandese community. By following this ideal implications, Ivo Castro (2010) eloquent words make sense *Portugal must have a bilateral language policy (among others) dissolved in multilateral relationships*[16].

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[16] "*Portugal deve possuir uma política linguística, científica e cultural específica, de tipo bilateral. Importa que essas políticas não sejam esbatidas e tornadas ineficazes pela sua diluição em estruturas multilaterais*".

2.8 What role language plays in social competence?

As was pointed out in the introduction of this thesis, there is a social aspect in language use (Vygotsky, 1986; Tomasello, 2009). Psychologists have been demonstrating that by neuropsychological experiments, for instance, the verbal instructions from adults can enable subordinative behaviors in children and moreover the child at the same time learns to acquire this behavior by using his/her own speech, as Luria (1961) theorized. Recently, scholars have been occupied with the same query. The social interaction among humans do predicts language development, for instance, in childhood, receptive, and expressive language in toddler age predicted later social skills at age 8 (Aro et al, 2012). But this is complex relation, as there are also neurocognitive and biological factors involved, thus making this phenomenon available to be interpreted in multiple levels (Hoffman and Muller, 2021). As stated previously, this thesis is particularly interested on the Portuguese language and social skills, the framework to analyzed them is psychosocial. After conceptualizing language in the previous sections of this theoretical chapter, now let us turn to some definitions of social competences. In order to approach these, some psychological theories will follow.

The areas of social psychology and cognitive psychology have in common a minor field of social cognition, which is convenient to allude to in this study. Social cognition can be defined as the human capacity to perceive, think about, interpret, categorize, judge their own social behavior and the ones of others (APA, 2022). In other words, it refers to the ability to infer internal states as well as external states of oneself and another (Conte et al, 2018).

Drawing on this, there is an ambiguous interpretation of this definition from the APA Dictionary of Psychology: in this process of perceiving, one's and the other's social behavior, humans can also be influenced by emotions of oneself and the other. The various strands within the literature also affirms that is problematic to categorize socioemotional competence, because its boundaries are not well established, since some domains are

interwoven and reciprocally influence each other (Campbell, Denham, Howarth, Jones, Whittaker, Williford, Willoughby, Yudron, & Darling-Churchill, 2016). Hence, by way of illustration, one conceptual model from Campbell and colleagues (2016) is showed in figure 3 bellow:
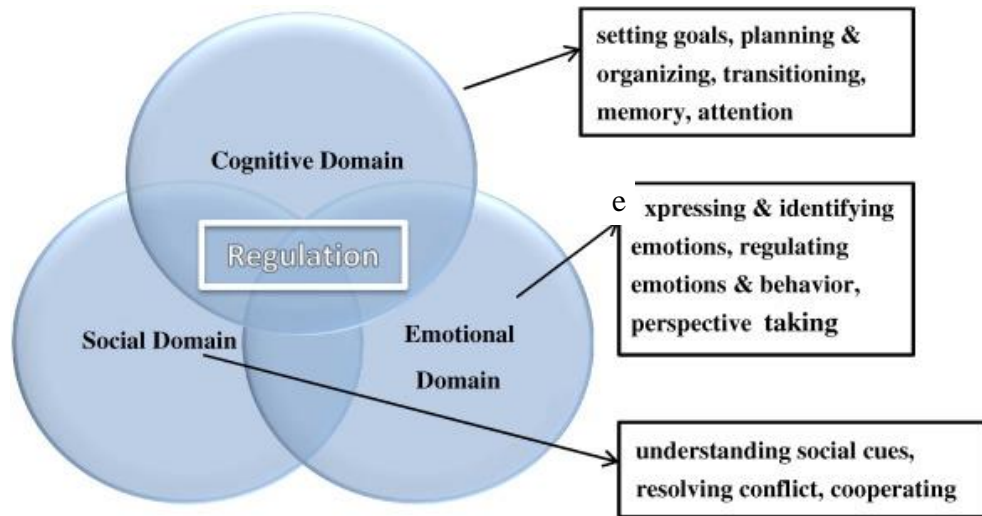
Figure 4 Socioemotional cognitive domains by Campbell et al (2016)

According to the cited authors, the cognitive domain is embedded in the management of social and emotional competences. From this theoretical explanation, it can be concluded, for instance, that one makes plans (cognitively) to cooperate with the other (socially), while expressing their own feelings about it (emotionally). Let us exemplify it within the school social domain, including negative and positive characteristics. E.g., students pay attention (cognitively) to others violent behavior (socially negative) while expressing their own feelings about it, such as anger (negative emotions) or happiness (positive emotions). Another example related to the findings of this study is cooperation, based in the social domain. In a classroom, students observe (cognitively) their peer in need for a material (perspective taking skill from the emotional domain), and as a result they share their objects, like pens and pencils (socially positive attitude).

2.9 Social skills: Prosocial behavior and peer relationship

As the scope of this study is sociability, due to our research questions based on prosocial behavior and peer relationships (elements from the social domain), it is paramount to narrow the discussion to the key terms of it. Before proceeding to the terminology for prosocial behavior, let us consider the opposite of it. The definition for antisocial behavior is quite obscure and not straightforward. The dictionary of American Psychology (APA, 2002) refers as it is the sharply deviation from social norm – which implies prosocial behavior, however this assumption is controversial. Malti and Krettenauer (2013) advert about the limits of this axiology, in other words, prosocial and antisocial behaviors seem to be at opposite ends of a single axis dimension, but they are conceptually distinct and have unique correlates. Anyhow, one main characteristic has been specified: antisocial behavior is also *the violation of other's people life* (APA, 2022). Therefore, this implies violent acts and criminal offenses as an extreme antisocial behavior example.

Despite this paradox in understanding the notion of antisocial behavior, scholars have been theorizing about it, Clarke (2011) suggested that to be an antisocial is frequently associated with the individual inability to deal with emotions. And as a result, negative reactions such as aggression (Malti and Krettenauer, 2013) might occur. The implications of antisocial behavior are not mutually exclusive, since several agents play a role in this externalized behavior, i.e. neuropsychological disorders, ADHD (Petherick and Sinnamon, 2017), language abilities (Petersen and LeBleau, 2020), childhood maltreatment in addition to gender (Byrd and Maluck, 2014) and even intergroup related bias, for instance, in ethnicity: African Americans (Dunham, 2011).

By contrast, prosocial behavior assumes many forms of positive behavior, including helping, cooperating, sharing, informing, and conforming, thus acting on behalf of others with altruism (Brownell, 2016), and soon after humans are born expressions of altruism begin to appear in young children as early as after their first birthday, which reflects the human species natural tendency towards altruism (Hepach and Tomasello, 2020).

How humans acquire such a positive social skill remains an open debate. The link between learning to be prosocial throughout parenting (Zarra-Nezhad; Viljaranta; Sajaniemi; Aunola, and Lerkkanen, 2020) or without external influences of socialization (Brownell, 2016) since as early as infants of three months (Hamlin and Wynn, 2011) still is a rich research topic in the academia. Similarly, it is still debated if the motivation to help is guided by inner satisfaction of seeing others getting help they need instead of socialization goals with other peers (Hepach and Tomasello, 2020). And here it comes the second element of social domain to be explored in this master thesis: the peer relationship, specifically in the role of language in social competence.

The link between sociability and positive emotions is highly evident. Aknin and colleagues (2015) explain that prosocial behavior, like sharing candies, leads to positive emotions, such as sympathy – empathic concern. However, it is yet a puzzle whereas young children engage in prosocial behavior due to their own needs or the needs of others, Hepach and Tomasello (2019) concluded that preschoolers genuinely show positive emotions in engaging in prosocial behavior, and more, they help because it is fair, not because it is needed. From this line of research, it is possible again to see that the social and emotional competence domains are interwoven and reciprocally influence each other, but the role of language in the production of good quality in social relationships is yet to be more deeply explored.

As the research focus is children, the findings of Qi et al (2019) is particularly relevant regarding education. Their results indicated that language skills and behavior problems are remediated by the classroom emotional support provided by teachers, in this case the relationship between these two variables were inversed, which means behavior predicted language when mediated by the influence of a teacher in SEL classes. Even though teachers are at the core of educational environments, children social circle could also play a role in the language development.

Children's difficulties in using language could be related to the response in the stimuli from the environment, the school. In some cases, developmental psychologists characterized it as social withdrawn – in childhood, social withdrawn is related to the experience of having poor relationship with peers (Jagiellowicz; Zarinafsar, and Acevedo, 2020). Often these linguistic issues may lead to frustration and anger resulting in increased problems with social behavior and fewer opportunities to interact with peers (Hartas, 2012). In line with this and returning to the conception of antisocial behavior opposite to prosocial behavior, Helland et al (2014) claims that pragmatic language deficits underlie antisocial behavior in about two-thirds of the population of their sample - around 40 preadolescents.

Drawing on these views, it is again possible to infer that language is embed in the production of emotions, and at the same time, these emotions guide intensively the quality of human engagement in social relationships. In dialogue, Menting, Pol and Koot (2011) presented concise results of Primary school students: firstly, changes in the quality of social relationship mediated the association between vocabulary and externalizing behavior problems; secondly, there are stronger associations between peer rejection and later externalizing behavior problems. One could even assume that new words are learnt when good friends are made in the school environment.

Returning to the topic of social interaction, theories on the subject are diverse: funcionalist, constructivist, self-efficacy theory, information processing perspective, etc. Nevertheless, it seems that Michael Tomasello tackled most of the debate in one statement: *language can only be acquired by social interaction with other human beings* (1992). In the same direction as Chomsky, who argues that language is biological, Bruner (1983) confirms the biological and cultural use of language.

Empirical studies have also dialogue with classical theories. Even at the emergent state, which is early years, social cognition skills are related to language abilities (Imuta, Kana; Slaughter; Selcuk, Bilge and Ruffman, 2016; Rieffe and Wiefferik, 2017) and more: simple biomechanical attitudes like scrolling behavior or gaze timing on a new foreign language

exposure predicts how well one may perform in reading abilities (Gooding and Sharifi, 2021).

Therefore, the link between external states and internal processes do exists. And, the materials for assessing these competences translate well their relationship, since they are interconnected, social and emotional skills can be assessed together in one single instrument, such as the one adopted in this study: the SDQ:SE (Goodman, 1997). Nevertheless, the emotional ability was not included in the data analysis, for the time scope of this research is quite limited to pursue multiple variables.

Many are the reasons for investigating more the social domain within language learning at school. First, the socioemotional competence is one of the key aspect to children development of cognitive skills and vice versa (Stengelin, Hepach and Haun, 2020). Second, social-emotional skills is a significant determinant of children readiness and later school success (Shimamura, 2018). Third, sociocultural studies of relationships have not only broadened our conceptions of the quality and the influence of relationships, but challenge us to consider how our constructions of children social world shape the way we view teacher student interaction (Davis, 2005).

Even though this thesis will not further the discussion about emotions, one rapid comment is needed. The debate about emotions is as controversial as language acquisition: can we learn them by stimuli or is it only a biological utterance? *The James-Lange* theory (1884-1885) presents emotions as based within the body mainly, while the *Cannon-Bard* theory (1927) perceives stimuli first and next physical responses to it. Recent empirical studies in the field have challenged those theories in several ways (Hepach & Tomasello, 2020) and it seems unfair and too complex to adopt only one answer to this debate. However, this study would like to acknowledge the academic contribution of Marta Arnold (1960) and Alan Sroufe (1996) to the discussion, since both scientists offered a theory that has links in the brain and lifespan development, as demonstrated by Pakarinen et al (2018).

2.10 Language modality: Oral or written language?

However, is there a particular period in which children's lives should be especially studied? The answer to this question requires limits and settings for the concept of language ability: either based on orality either literacy. Most of the studies to date have been focusing to analyze typical children at early years and also first graders in relation to literacy, i.e., from 6 to 7 years old. Virinkoski and colleagues (2018) as well as Pakarinen et al (2018) defend a precocious stage for identification of written language skills, for instance reading, so implications for the future can be diminished if detected as soon as the child is introduced to the alphabet. In contrast, some researchers recommend an earlier period for analysis of other language faculties, such as orality, in early childhood, i.e. 4 to 5.5 years old (Hepach et al, 2016) and 2 to 3 years old (Conte et al, 2018).

The debate about orality and literacy as language assessment components is not recent, as its origins is from the Greeks and the Babylonians dispute of the first written system of the western world, some researchers are not convinced of the pioneer invention (Lord, 2018; Elmer, 2013; West 2007), thus no consensus yet. From a bark craftsman *aedos* oral singings to the multidigit technological society of nowadays, much has change and it seems unfair for this master thesis to enter in this quest with authoritarian voice. However, the discussion is also broad and controversial for our analysis at school level.

One possible way to develop language learning is at school, but which variety should be privileged by teachers for language assessment: orality or literacy? This debate is also not modern, it goes beyond educational criticism, linguistics also reflect upon the query (Olson, 1977). It appears that orality is not part of the greatest target for educational purposes, but literacy (Boucher, 2021). In fact, it is through literacy support that language difficulties can be detected at school (Virinkoski et al 2018), although it is quite impossible to think the mastery of crafting literacy or the state of technology writing without oral mental habits (Ong, 2013; Linell, 2019).

It is highly likely that the approach to this discussion is far out of the aim of this study, in addition, one event was responsible to shape the present investigation: the coronavirus pandemic, as stated before. Hence, oral language as part of school curricula or informal assessments will not be present in the questionnaire send to teachers. Thus, oral language ability although it can bring many insights to the understanding of language outcomes (Friche, 2011), it will not be included in the language questionnaire sent to Primary school teachers.

2.11 Language Assessment: Why and How?

Having defined what is meant by language, as well as social competence, the following section will discuss the problematization of language assessment, especially in basic education. The first critique is that the debate about assessment should not be confined to the academia, but also it must be extended to newcomers in the school environment of all subjects, in all levels of education: since kindergarten to higher education.

In a world dominated by homogenous standard large-scale assessments, i.e. the PISA, or even uniform university entrance exams, such as IELTS or TOEFL, and, among schools following high stake examinations like the *International Baccalaureate*, the I.B., it is crucial to reflect why evaluations are needed and how it could measure in a humanistic perspective, without categorizing people by meritocracy only? And the ones who benefit from praisable evaluative results do also have a social privileged position in the society? The limitations to these answers are related to the mentality and philosophy of each educational institution and/or educational system in the world – which confirms political interests behind it. A summary of some of the most groundbreaking theories on assessment will follow.

The major criticism is certainly from Black and William (1998) as well as Black et al (2004) with the influential article *Working inside the black box*, in which targeting mostly teachers, the authors make suggestions for improvements in how teacher's beliefs should

change on types of assessment at school: the definition and preference of formative assessment (assessment as learning) over summative assessments (assessment of learning) gained importance and outstanding reputation for the following scholars: Harlen (2005) and Newton and Baird (2016).

Two decades later, Hopfenbeck (2018) revised the impact Paul Black and Dylan William made on the current generations of educational experts, she concluded that thanks to their work, practices of self-assessment and feedbacks made theories of pedagogy moved forward, and more: "all of these practices can only be understood within the social, cultural and political context", in other words, the emphasis was stronger upon the reality of students from a working class family in relation to students from middle class or high class. Are they inserted in the same background? How is feasible to adjust the assessment to their needs, especially regarding their home situation? This is the key to advance practices and policies on assessment cultures.

In dialogue with this perspective, Harley and Qualter (2018) creatively pointed the student sensory abilities as an additional component to be evaluated, instead of only the cognitive skill. Teachers could explore vision as being blended to memory in an interdisciplinary evaluation, for instance. About the same topic, Atjonen (2014) contributed heavily in the academia, for she criticized the model of attributing unambiguous grades based on the common knowledge of being a pupil at school, for her, being unique has not yet been taken into account in regards for planning examinations.

This is not to deny the usefulness of a large-scale language tests, and their measurements of reliability and validity, even though they are far out of the formative assessment purposes (Harlen, 2005). However, this type of exams do maintain the high-stake ideology of you get what you pay for (Atjonen, 2014). The USA, with its whole extension of territory and richness of multiethnicity, are slowly abandoning the educational policy of high-stake large assessments. In the public system, at national level, k-12 schools – last phase of primary school – have been incorporating the PACE, a less standardized large-scale

assessment (Kelly et al, 2020). The results are quite positive in terms of student well-being because there is more focus on local communities and school collaboration.

Reflecting upon this scenario, this master thesis will follow not a standardized high-stake language evaluation, but an informal one. Since there is the need to adapt (language assessment data has to be collected to be used for statistical tests, teachers will report their evaluation records based on the topic Portuguese language. Each student grade will be replaced as the measurement required for language assessment data. This numerical data representing the variable language will be later be linked with the variable representing social skills: the battery of questions of the SDQ (Goodman, 1997).

Thus, as stated before, this study will count on teacher report of their assessment data to be a substitute of the large-scale language assessment. With this strategy, convenient for pandemic times, but not so strongly grounded for its uniformity in psychometrics, it is believed that a step is taken towards a reduced level of standardized multiple-choice assessments.

The focus of the research period

Returning to the point of the limitation of this study, especially about the timeline of research focus, it seems very likely that a considerable amount of literature to date has been failing to acknowledge middle childhood, since several studies revealed that the focus is centered in the early years and infancy, as mentioned before. The common rationale presented in the previous materials is that during infancy, humans achieve crucial milestones in language development and social cognition (Conte et al, 2018; Campbell et al, 2016). Although classical psychological trends (Piaget, 1988 and Kohlberg, 1963) claim the peak maturity of language development as starting from 11 years old, similarly, empirical studies also dialogue with the fact that middle childhood is particularly important

for more complex components of social cognition skills (Lomgobbardi et al, 2019; Ornaghi et al, 2014).

After having in mind this literature gap found in middle childhood, a pertinent question need to be asked: why not to relocate attention to second graders (and beyond)? Does the previous studies overlook first graders only because children are being alphabetize formally? In relation to literacy skills, most countries have compulsory education at the age of six, from the first year of primary school, in other words they do alphabetize students in primary school, although some countries have their own pedagogical and political guidelines for the transition period, the so-called pre-primary education (OCDE, 2017). But the report of this data alone does not imply consolidation of a habit, the mastery of writing and reading, major components of literacy skills – among others, such as letter recognition and phonetics (Aro et al, 2010).

If this is the reason why several researchers prefer first graders, it is recommended to consider that first year in Primary school could be highly stressful for children (Jõgi et al, 2021). Furthermore, some countries do have an educational system in which there is an extended period for learning and getting acquainted with the writing system, as such, students could start as early as 5 years old, i.e.: Chile, Greece, Croatia, Colombia and the Netherlands (OCDE, 2017). By contrast, in other parts of the globe there is a delayed in starting primary school, such as Czech Republic and Slovenia. It could be inferred that due to this delay, there is a high demand for an accelerated process in mastering the written system, as there is no transition grade, year or class. Therefore, these arguments could support the approach for middle childhood as a justification for defense.

Empirical studies on language and social skills

Going back to the general scope of this study, several countries in the north hemisphere have been studying associations between language and social skills among school children population. A growing number of empirical studies are presenting results from longitudinal

research that documents different social and emotional co-variables in relation to language outcomes, for instance: by assessing behavioral problems and written American-English language (Petersen & LeBeau, 2020); or by assessing receptive Finnish language and parents report on the child self-regulation skills (Aro et al 2010); and also using more complexity, by observing early years children and their peer relationships in addition to Italian vocabulary assessments followed by emotion knowledge and ToM: theory of mind battery tests (Conte et al 2018). Together these studies cited to date demonstrate that language and socioemotional skills are very closely connected.

Challenges in exploring language and sociability

Researchers around the world puzzled in front of these two very human and complex variables: which one of them determinates what? Does language affect sociability? Does sociability affect language? or both wise? In the present research scenario, some studies presented them embed and isolated (Hollo and Oliver, 2014; Helland et al, 2014; Conte et al, 2018). However, the discussion related to this subject is part of the methods of analyses since statistical approaches are needed to deepen the discussion.

Nevertheless, some challenges to explore this relationship persist. The direction of the relationship between language and socio-emotional outcomes are not straightforward (Pakarinen et al 2018), and the way these areas interact which each other are not yet understood (Hollo & Oliver, 2014). This complex relation at the child level could be bidirectional and/or not bidirectional at the same time (Cashiola et al, 2020), in other words, these findings with children from the social and academic project Head Start in United States contained a bidirectional relationship between listening and behavior; but not a bidirectional relationship between vocabulary and behavior. This implies that sophisticated research theories and practice are needed to advance studies in this area.

Boundaries between educational and health research could be noticeable when dealing with these two variables. An explanation is that these frequent results often lead to

neuropsychologic implications, as clinical researchers also found that language difficulties could also be assessed as language disorders.

The study conducted by Helland et al (2014) in Norway with school children from second to fourth grade indicated that behavioral difficulties can also demonstrate language impairment in up to 71% of the cases. According to the authors, these problems are more often reported among autism spectrum children: limited vocabulary, phonological, comprehension and pragmatic language deficits. Similar work has been concluded by Hollo & Oliver (2014), their meta-analysis confirmed that formal recognized behavior problems – either by educational, either by mental health professionals – are linked with language impairment, and worst: these symptoms are often undetected. Thus, in our data analysis, these research results will be addressed as a possibility to dialogue with special needs students.

Factors affecting language and social skills: gender, age, socioeconomic status, ethnicity, report person, ToM (theory of mind).

This study is also keen to define especial co-variables as an additional factor of explanation of research results. In other words, in addition to all these socio-emotional variables to investigate language outcomes and vice-versa, some scholars are investing in a third element to expand the discussion and the understanding of the research in this field. This extra variable could be gender of the child, socioeconomic background of the family, the report person of the behavioral difficulties (teacher or guardians), peer relationships and non-peer relationships: teacher and family. Each of these components will be discussed briefly so that lately our justification can be made.

Language and social skills can be explained by socioeconomical status. In an attempt to speculate reasons to explain the negative relationship between these two variables, researchers assessed the socio-economical background of the participants. The method conducted by Qi et al. (2020) with pre-school children in U.S.A. found a strong

relationship between low-income families and language-behavior problems. Just as the American researchers, Brazilian sociologists also concluded that children between four to six years old who are at vulnerable risk, are also more predisposed to have less Portuguese language output than families with a high economic status (Carvalho et al. 2016).

Gender is a key co-variable present in all studies consulted in this thesis. However, gender differences is a possible path to describe negative or positive relationship between language and social functioning. Petersen & LeBeau (2020) concluded that language ability and externalized behavior associations were due to gender specific rates: stronger associations between these later mentioned two variables are higher for boys. In dialogue with this finding, Gigi et al (2020) tested whereas gender plays an interaction in the prediction of the relation of language and behavior. And there is indeed. For girls, more expressive vocabulary predicted less withdrawal in school, and boys expressive vocabulary was negatively associated with hyperactivity.

However, all these findings could suffer significant variation dependent on the person who reports and assess the child behavior and emotional state, for instance, while Menting et al (2011) supports the statement of no bias in teacher judgement of school children behavior, Gigi et al (2020) recommends teacher training to avoid that, since teacher spends more time managing behavior in the classroom than teaching language. In our analysis, at school, teachers are one of the responsible agents for introducing the child to the multidimensional concept of language, therefore the outcome of social skills could be improved by several agents, such as parents, other peers and finally teachers of language, since this relationship between language abilities and socioemotional expressions exists (Gibson et al, 2021).

If teacher could affect the dynamics, guardians too. Petersen & LeBeau (2020) found that whereas mother reported was less significant when teacher reported expressive behavior,

such as aggression. Therefore, the same cited authors collected data from both teachers and parents of the child in their analyzes.

Teachers not only are determinant in assessing the child cognitive and socioemotional domain, but they are influencers in shaping, enhancing, or impacting negatively the relationship with the child, thus affecting the learning of positive behavior. According to Pietarinen et al. (2014), teachers instructional support and behavior in addition to school climate contributes for well-being and achievement at school. Similarly, Siekkinen et al (2013) has shown that teacher is an active agent to influence the social outcomes of children at early years, as well as literacy skills.

These findings dialogue with Bronfenbrenner (1979) theory of human development. In these micro and macro systems of social relationships, the child also has peers. Via a longitudinal study, Menting et al. (2011) explored a peer relation in interpreting the dynamics of language and social outcome in Netherlands. The cited authors concluded that peer rejection mediated Dutch vocabulary scores and externalizing problems (i.e. aggression) in students from second to fourth grade.

Gender differences as a co-variable used in this study

Turning now to the influence of these previous studies to this master thesis, the election of the results found in Petersen and LeBeau (2020); Menting et al (2011); Findley-Van Nostrand & Ojanen (2018) and Longobardi et al (2019) are particularly important. The mentioned works concentrated in the inclusion of peer relationship and prosocial behavior as a subscale for the social domain. They also considered gender as a co-variable to support the explanation of results obtained with parents and teachers report. Eventually, researchers such as Longobardi and colleagues and Menting and co-workers focused in middle childhood. Hence, this study will also follow the selection of these variables in our research design: gender differences, teacher report and middle childhood focus; and therefore proceed to examined how these last findings could dialogue with our findings.

2.12 The Brazilian panorama for the research objectives

At first, this survey was design to reach Portuguese language teachers in Brazil. After data collection, teachers located in Portugal and Mozambique also joined this study. It would be interesting to explore these two additional locations overseas for the future. Notwithstanding, the present study aimed to contribute to the Brazilian research literature in several ways: geographically, ethnographically and via collecting data with a practice well appreciated in the academia *action research* for the underrepresented populations (Mertens, 2019; McNiff, 2016). Since the main target group is located in Brazil, differences within the country should also be part of the focus of this research: the sociodemographic variety of individuals mostly from north to south, areas where the most dramatic socioeconomic difference is concentrated (Pinto, 2022).

As such, one of the goals of this dissertation is to include more parts of Brazil in this research topic, thus far, however surprisingly research data regarding this topic of language and social skills has been overlooked in the Brazilian influential economic states and their metropolitan cities, for instance: Sao Paulo (Stivanin et al 2017); Juiz de Fora (Rodrigues et al 2018, Rabelo et al, 2011); Rio de Janeiro (da Silva and Alves, 2021) or in countryside villages located in privileged economic states, such as Santa Catarina (da Rocha and Abões, 2019).

In contrast to this urban tendency, and, also high-income state focus, Mertens (2016) claims that researchers should be engaged in turning the gaze to the less privileged, the underrepresented groups of society. In Brazil, these areas are far from the elite cities center schools, it is in the extreme north and northeast states, the poorest regions (OCDE, 2020). Hence, our data collection will be aimed to be spread all over the country, via an online questionnaire shared with social media, for it enhances possibility to reach the most vulnerable national locations inside and outside the high-income Brazilian states.

Next, as previously discussed, it is a goal for this master thesis to target middle childhood, not first graders, because school research was strongly focused particularly in first graders (da Silva and Rodrigues, 2018), and early years (Araujo et al, 2010). Furthermore, if there are some cumulative age linguistic deteriorments at the gene of a child, it starts after age 6 (Halpern, 2015). Thus, better opportunities to track these issues are potentially concentrated out of first grade. Lastly, although social skills are beneficial for both students and teachers, the awareness of such topic should be more explored in teacher training and in school curricula for students (Talvio et al 2015) since it represents many benefits for children (Stivanin et al 2017).

3 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The research questions are the following:

1. What are the gender differences of the highest-scoring students of Portuguese classes and the lowest-scoring students? It was hypothesized that if gender affects language outcomes, girls achieve higher than boys in their assessment scores report by teachers (Petersen & LeBeau, 2020).

2. What is the association of student language outcomes and social skills (peer relationship and prosocial behavior) among the lowest-scoring students of Portuguese language? If there is a positive relationship between language and behavior, then the student with the highest achievement scores in Portuguese language has also more social skills; and vice versa.

3. What is the association of student language outcomes and social skills (peer relationship and prosocial behavior) among the highest-scoring students of Portuguese language? If there is a positive relationship between language and behavior, then the student with the highest achievement scores in Portuguese language has also more social skills; and vice versa.

This study follows the recommendations of good research practice by Cummings (2014) and Kirk (1996), as such previous registration was completed in October 2021 in the *Open Sciences* project. In this platform, the registration of the variables, hypotheses and objectives of this research are all recorded before the data collection analysis, see more information in the weblink https://osf.io/k9bxj/ .

4 RESEARCH DATA AND METHOD

4.1 Participants and ethical considerations

By the end of the survey period, anonymous data had been collected from 64 Primary School teachers (N=64). Each teacher reported two students, one with the highest score, the other with the lowest score in Portuguese language classes, thus, teacher ratio is 1:2 students. All participants were reached publicly via social media channels, such as Facebook and LinkedIn, or, privately via WhatsApp. A public link to the survey was sent online. Furthermore, several emails were sent directly to not only schools, but educational bodies. It is speculated that the international sample joined the survey by using the public link sent to Facebook groups and/or LinkedIn. There are no identifiable labels to research participants, no contact information of any of them – student/teacher - was collected.

Ethical considerations

This study was approved by the Philosophical Faculty at the University of Eastern Finland in September 2021 by the Privacy Notice for Scientific Research link here. Furthermore, this research has followed the guidelines provided by the Finnish National Board on Research Integrity (TENK), accordingly, the research project did not collect any identifying information from the participants (such as student/teacher name, addresses of them, and/or email). Therefore, there was no need for ethical review statement from human rights ethics committee (2012, p. 23). The guidelines of the data protection act of the European Union were followed and attached to the questionnaire sent to teachers link here. No identifiable data was collected, neither for the students, neither for the teachers. There was a voluntary open-ended item about teacher location, such as country/state. As the present study considered sex related differences as a covariant (Petersen & LeBeau, 2020) in the association between language ability and social outcomes, the gender of the students was asked in the survey: for those with the highest and lowest score in Portuguese language classes.

Participants location (nationally and internationally)

From the total sample of participants N=64, only 48 reported their location, 1 participant did not clarify their location by answering "yes", the missing values are N=16. The location of the teachers are: Minas Gerais state (14); Sao Paulo state (13); Bahia state (4); Rio de Janeiro state (3); Rondonia state (3); Ceará state (2); Santa Catarina state (2); Espirito Santo state (2); Mato Grosso state (1); Mato Grosso do Sul state (1). However, it was not considered at first that the weblink for the online questionnaire was going to be shared also with overseas territories: Mozambique and Portugal surprisingly participated in the survey.

Table 1. Location of teachers (national and overseas)

	N	%
Minas Gerais, Brazil	14	21,9
São Paulo, Brazil	13	20,3
Bahia, Brazil	4	6,3
Rio de Janeiro, Brazil	3	4,7
Rondônia, Brazil	3	4,7
Ceará, Brazil	2	3,1
Santa Catarina, Brazil	2	3,1
Espírito Santo, Brazil	2	3,1
Portugal	1	1,6
Mato Grosso, Brazil	1	1,6
Mato Grosso do Sul, Brazil	1	1,6
Mozambique	1	1,6
Missing values	16	16
Total	64	100,0

Gender of the highest-scoring students and lowest-scoring students in Portuguese language classes in Primary school

The gender of the students was asked in relation to their last language assessment scores as a covariant. Compared with girls (N=19), boys (N=43) had lowest scores in language abilities. Moreover, the sample also included a percentage of unknown gender (N=2).
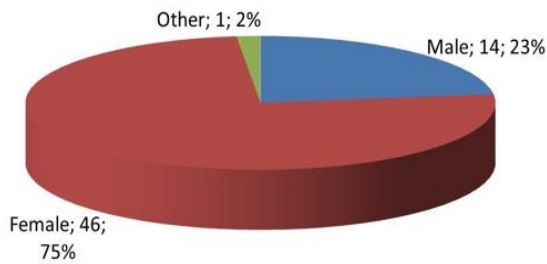
Figure 4 Frequencies Chart: Gender of the students with the highest recent achievement
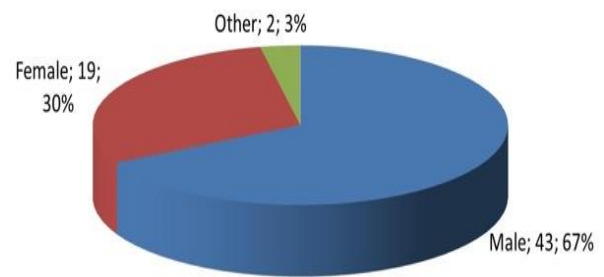
Figure 5 Frequencies Chart: Gender of this student with the lowest recent achievement

4.2 Measures

There were several difficulties to measure two variables like social skills and language during COVID-19 global pandemic. The solution adopted was a tailored online questionnaire to be sent to Primary school teachers using WEBROPOL platform (Appendix 1 Questionnaire in Portuguese Language sent to teachers). Each teacher was expected to report two students: one with the highest score and the other with the lowest score in the Portuguese language classes. These reports were not in a homogenous scale, but instead, according to the student most recent evaluation – this was the most convenient decision due to the interruption of study cycles in the middle of the pandemic.

The questionnaire with 28 questions was divided in two parts, see appendix for more details. The first part focuses on the variable language. It contained 6 questions about the teaching assessment of the Portuguese language: assessment strategies, latest scores of the student with the highest achievement, lowest score of the student with the lowest achievement, and lastly the gender of these two students. The rest of the questions were extracted from the Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire, the SDE:SE, version Portuguese language, Brazilian standard.

Furthermore, one qualitative question was inserted at the end of the survey, in which teachers could openly discuss about the difficulty in teaching the Portuguese language for

66

the student with the lowest score. Before ending the questionnaire, teachers were also expected to report their location. All data collection was meant to be taken before the end of the school term of 2021, which is December (in Brazilian academic calendar). The data was collected from 30/09/2021 to 08/12/2021.

4.3 Descriptive Statistics

In terms of descriptive statistics for the characterization variables, the tables and graphics presented illustrate the frequency distribution of observed values. The quantitative and Likert scale variables were analyzed using the categories presented, calculating some relevant descriptive statistical data, addressed by Muijs (2011) as the mean (M) values (on a scale from 1 to 3, a value greater than 2 is higher than the scale middle point), the standard deviation (SD) representing the absolute dispersion, the variation coefficient (VC) representing the relative dispersion and minimum (Min) and maximum (Max) values.

Furthermore, this study will report not only the measures cited before but also the confidence intervals that are determined with a confidence level of 95%. Confidence intervals are a tool of statistical inference, allowing inferences about the range of values that are observed for the population from the sample data. The confidence intervals are composed by the lower limit (LL) and upper limit (UL) of the confidence interval, with a confidence level of 95%, allowing the inference of the range of values that are observed for the population (Cumming, 2014). The value of 95% for the confidence level is associated with a complementary value of 5%, which is a reference value used in the social sciences and psychology to test hypotheses, meaning that the inference is established with a probability of error of less than 5%.

4.4 Inferential Statistics

The statistical tests are used to determine whether the differences observed in the sample are statistically significant, if the findings can be inferred for the population. The value of

5% is a reference commonly used in social sciences to test hypotheses, meaning that the inference is made with a probability of error less than 5%. In every test used, the result is the significance test by the statical probability value (p-value), if less than 5% (0.05), the null hypothesis is rejected, if it exceeds the reference value of 5%, the null hypothesis cannot be rejected (Muijs, 2011).

Although the solemn report of the p-value is highly criticized (Cumming, 2014), this study will refer to the findings with two additional measures for the good practices in research: the CI and Effect Size (Kirk, 2001). On one hand, the effect size will be interpreted according to Cohen (1992), on the other hand, the confidence interval is crucial given that we can never be certain what the exact value in the population is, the CI indicates a higher and lower bound within the language-behaviour relationship can fluctuate than only the NHTS (Muijs, 2011).

4.5 Statistical tests: Wilcoxon's Signed and Mann-Whitney U tests

Since there are ordinal variables, such language scores, and qualitative ones, such as gender, hence, the use of nonparametric tests were used: Wilcoxon's Signed Test and Mann Whitney U test for dependent samples (Muijs, 2011). The analysis of the assumptions that allow choosing between the use of parametric or non-parametric tests can still be found in Muijs (2011). In addition, to analyse a Likert scale variable in two classes of a qualitative variable, such as gender, the non-parametric Mann-Whitney test is used for calculating the social skills variables. All the tests were run in SPSS software.

4.6 Assessment of Portuguese language in Primary School

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, language will be measured by teacher assessments, instead of high-stake and/or large-scale language assessments. Before discussing further, it is crucial to detail the kinds of language assessment each teacher had used for the last school term of 2021.

Table 2. Kinds of Portuguese language assessment reported by teachers

	N	%
Individual work	27	45,8
Group/pair work	11	18,6
Exam	13	22,0
Other	8	13,6
Total	59	100,0

There are 5 missing answers.
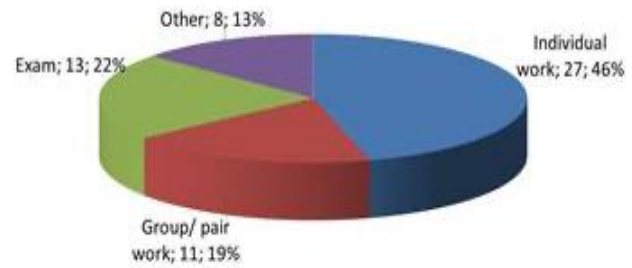
Figure 5 Kinds of language assessment

There were 59 responses to the question of language assessment, out of 64 participants, missing values (N=5). Of the 59 completed answers, 27 teachers reported an individual essay as main language assessment type. The rest of the teachers applied in the last school term: Exams (N=13), Group and/or pair work (N=11); and other methodologies (N=8). In addition, there was an open-ended question about the specificity of the "other methodologies for assessment", when asked about this item, from 8 teachers answers about other methodologies, only 5 indicated the following:

- *"Google Forms",*
- *"extra assessment",*
- *"Printed and complementary activity",*
- *"The classroom assessment (2ⁿᵈ grade) is ongoing. We do not have exams, (because) participation, contribution, engagement with the topics covered (thought the school year) are constantly evaluated*" – this participant answer had to be edited in brackets because it is not fully clear.
- And lastly: *"The student's grade is the sum of everything he presents: participation in the classes, questions asked, etc...".*

Table 3. Highest scoring-students in Portuguese language classes

	N	%
Missing answers	6	9,4
30	1	1,6
25	1	1,6
24 out of 25	1	1,6
23	1	1,6
22	1	1,6
20 out of 25	1	1,6
15,75	1	1,6
15	1	1,6
10	20	31,3
9,9	1	1,6
9,5	5	7,8
between 9.0 and 9.4	1	1,6
9,25	1	1,6
9	9	14,1
8	3	4,7
7	1	1,6
5	1	1,6
Collaborative production worth 1.5 points. Student grade: 1.5	1	1,6
Concept A	1	1,6
E	1	1,6
Mariana	1	1,6
The evaluation is by objectives: it refers to the performance in the activities proposed in the Learning scripts: autonomy to carry out; resourcefulness in reading and interpretation, ability to produce conventional orthographic writing, use of cursive, use of grammatical elements such as paragraph, punctuation, e	1	1,6
The student with the highest score is usually the one who manages to develop almost all or all of the activities I propose.	1	1,6
We do not work with grade, but it meets the objectives of the municipal curriculum.	1	1,6
We work with concepts. A is the highest.	1	1,6
Total	64	100,0

In the sample, there are different scales to measure the student's highest achievement with all answers being listed. The most frequent answer is "10" by 31,3% of the teachers, followed by "9" from 14,1% of the teachers, and scores between "9" and "9,9" from 12,5%, with all other listed answers.

Table 4. Social outcomes of the highest scoring-students in Portuguese language classes

	Not true		Somewhat true		Certainly true	
	N	**%**	**N**	**%**	**N**	**%**
Often volunteer to help others	1	1,7%	17	28,3%	42	70,0%
Kind to younger kids			18	28,1%	46	71,9%
Has at least one good friend;			8	12,5%	56	87,5%
Shares readily with other children (toys, pencils)	3	4,8%	18	28,6%	42	66,7%
Rather solitary, tends to play alone	37	58,7%	17	27,0%	9	14,3%
Considerate of other people's feelings	1	1,6%	14	22,2%	48	76,2%
Often fights with other children or frightens them	52	82,5%	7	11,1%	4	6,3%
Generally liked by other children;	3	4,7%	16	25,0%	45	70,3%
Generally obedient and does what adults ask of him			12	18,8%	52	81,3%
Gets on better with adults than with other children	18	28,1%	32	50,0%	14	21,9%
Picked on or bullied by other children	39	60,9%	18	28,1%	7	10,9%

In the sample, from the teachers valid answers, regarding the student with the highest score in Portuguese language, for the statements about the two aspects: peer relationship and prosocial behavior were reported by teachers on a 3 point Likert scale (0-2).

The questions with most significant aspect of social skills among the highest achievers of Portuguese language were: "Often volunteer to help others", 70,0% answered "certainly true". For: "Kind to younger kids" 71,9% answered "certainly true", and for the question "Generally obedient and does what adults ask of him", 18,8% answered "somewhat true" and 81,3% answered "certainly true". According to these results, it can be concluded that students with highest scores in Portuguese language also help more, are kind to their peers and are also more obedient to adults.

Table 5. Scores of the lowest scoring-students in Portuguese language classes

	N	%
Missing answers	6	9,4
0	1	1,6
0,5	1	1,6
0,5 to 2,0	1	1,6
1	1	1,6
2	9	14,1
3	5	7,8
3,5	3	4,7
4	11	17,2
4	1	1,6
5.0	1	1,6
5	3	4,7
5,5	2	3,1
6	4	6,3
7	2	3,1
8 out of 25	1	1,6
9	1	1,6
10 out of 25	1	1,6
15	1	1,6
16	1	1,6
24	1	1,6
C (meaning: regular concept, because we are in a pandemic but the student is part of the pedagogical reinforcement offered by the school and we have frequent meetings)	1	1,6
Collaborative work of new value of 1.5. Student grade: 0.25	1	1,6
Gabriel	1	1,6
Generally, the student with a low grade had some kind of understanding or social or emotional problem.	1	1,6
R (meaning recuperacao in Portuguese, which could be understood as the same as zero)	1	1,6
The evaluation is by objective. She is not literate and has a lot of learning difficulties.	1	1,6
The knowledge is under construction to achieve the objectives of the curriculum of the municipal network.	1	1,6
Total	64	100,0

In the sample, there are different scales to measure the students achievement, with all answers being listed. The most frequent answer is "4" by 18,8% of the teachers, followed by "2" from 14,1%, "3" from 7,8%,"6" from 6,4% and "3,5" from 4,7% of the teachers, with all other listed answers.

Despite some answers were not clear, for instance, "Gabriel" is a name not a numerical value as well as "Mariana", but as the samples are dependent, hence, this does not affect the data analysis.

Table 3. Social skills of the student with the lowest score in Portuguese language

	Not true		Somewhat true		Certainly true	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Rather solitary, tends to play alone	37	58,7%	18	28,6%	8	12,7%
Often fights with other children or frightens them	33	52,4%	14	22,2%	16	25,4%
Gets on better with adults than with other children	30	48,4%	27	43,5%	5	8,1%
Often volunteer to help others	28	46,7%	16	26,7%	16	26,7%
Generally obedient and does what adults ask of him	21	33,3%	20	31,7%	22	34,9%
Picked on or bullied by other children	20	32,8%	28	45,9%	13	21,3%
Kind to younger kids	15	23,8%	24	38,1%	24	38,1%
Shares readily with other children (toys, pencils)	11	17,5%	18	28,6%	34	54,0%
Generally liked by other children;	9	14,3%	24	38,1%	30	47,6%
Considerate of other people's feelings	7	11,1%	24	38,1%	32	50,8%
Has at least one good friend;	5	7,8%	18	28,1%	41	64,1%

In the sample, from the teachers valid answers, regarding the student with the lowest score in Portuguese language, for the statement for the statements about the two aspects of social skills: peer relationship and prosocial behavior were reported by teachers on a 3 point Likert scale (0-2). It was observed that the most significant aspects of social skills among the lowest achievers of Portuguese language were based on the questions: "Often volunteer to help others", 46,7% answered "not true", 26,7% answered "somewhat true" and 26,7%

answered "certainly true". Thus, students who have lower scores in Portuguese volunteer less than the ones who have higher scores.

However, on the other hand, for the statement "Has at least one good friend", 7,8% answered "not true", 28,1% answered "somewhat true" and 64,1% answered "certainly true". And regarding empathy, for the statement "Considerate of other people's feelings", 11,1% answered "not true", 38,1% answered "somewhat true" and 50,8% answer "certainly true". Therefore, it means that lowest achievers help other people less, but they apparently are considerate of people feelings, and have one friend.

4.7 Measurements of reliability

The internal consistency analysis, or in other words, the reliability analysis, allows to study the properties of measurement scales and its items, according to Muijs (2011). The SAGE Research Methods Encyclopedia explains that the Cronbach alpha is a measure of internal reliability or consistency of the items in an instrument and/or index. Although with some critics in the academia (Beland and Cousineau, 2018; Cho 2021), the Cronbach's Alpha – or simply α (Cronbach, 1951) – is yet the most widely used model of internal consistency within the social sciences (Taber, 2017).

Frey (2018) declares that while there are several methods for examining internal consistency, all methods share two common characteristics. First, they all involve the analysis of data obtained from a single test administered once to a group of examinees. Second, they all involve dividing the targeted test into two or more parts, which are then treated as if they were tests themselves.

Regarding the interpretation of alpha values, it seems that there is no consensus in defying qualitative descriptors of the coefficient of internal consistency (Taber, 2017). However, overall, the values ranging from 0.70 to 0.95 is regarded as acceptable, and the lower the

alpha value is, the lower inter-relatedness questions there are in the questionnaires as well as low number of questions and/or heterogenous constructs (Tavakol and Dennick, 2011).

4.8 Social Skills scales of Reliability

The scale is a Likert type scale, with three possible answers from "Not true" to "Certainly true", with 11 items in each of the two dimensions.

Table 4. Items belonging to each of the Scale Dimensions from the SDQ:SE

DIMENSIONS	ITEMS
Regarding the student with the highest score in Portuguese language	Has at least one good friend;
	Shares readily with other children (toys, pencils)
	IR: Rather solitary, tends to play alone
	Considerate of other people's feelings
	IR: Often fights with other children or frightens them
	Generally liked by other children;
	Generally obedient and does what adults ask of him
	IR: Gets on better with adults than with other children
	IR: Picked on or bullied by other children
Regarding the student with the lowest score in Portuguese language	Has at least one good friend;
	Shares readily with other children (toys, pencils)
	IR: Rather solitary, tends to play alone
	Considerate of other people's feelings
	IR: Often fights with other children or frightens them
	Generally liked by other children;
	Generally obedient and does what adults ask of him
	IR: Gets on better with adults than with other children
	IR: Picked on or bullied by other children

IR: Inverted Recoded Scale because the items are formulated in a negative form

Table 8. Item-total correlation and effect of the elimination of each item: Scale Dimensions

		Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
Regarding the student with the highest score in Portuguese language	Often volunteer to help others	.413	.790
	Kind to younger kids	.561	.778
	Has at least one good friend;	.397	.793
	Shares readily with other children (toys, pencils)	.671	.762
	IR: Rather solitary, tends to play alone	.517	.780
	Considerate of other people's feelings	.666	.767
	IR: Often fights with other children or frightens them	.355	.796
	Generally liked by other children;	.660	.763
	Generally obedient and does what adults ask of him	.146	.810
	IR: Gets on better with adults than with other children	.417	.793
	IR: Picked on or bullied by other children	.363	.799
Regarding the student with the lowest score in Portuguese language	Often volunteer to help others	.455	.792
	Kind to younger kids	.552	.781
	Has at least one good friend;	.528	.785
	Shares readily with other children (toys, pencils)	.688	.766
	IR: Rather solitary, tends to play alone	.276	.808
	Considerate of other people's feelings	.700	.767
	IR: Often fights with other children or frightens them	.497	.787
	Generally liked by other children;	.640	.773
	Generally obedient and does what adults ask of him	.498	.787
	IR: Gets on better with adults than with other children	.083	.822
	IR: Picked on or bullied by other children	.239	.812

The additional tests in the previous table indicate that there are no items correlated negatively with the dimensions or that its elimination significantly increases the value of Alpha.

Table 9. Internal consistency statistics: Scale Dimensions

Dimension	Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
Regarding the student with the highest score in written Portuguese language	0.801	11
Regarding the student with the lowest score in written Portuguese language	0.806	11

The value of Cronbach's alpha is higher than the value of 0,80 for both dimensions, so the constructions are adequately measured.

5 RESEARCH RESULTS

5.1 Results about the qualitative open-ended question about teaching difficulties

In this chapter, the results of the research questions 01, 02 and 03 will be presented. But before starting the questions with quantitative data analysis, let us discuss about one qualitative question. Not all participants answered the last open-end and non-mandatory question about teaching difficulties, the item in Portuguese language can be translated to English to: *Teachers, what else would you like to comment about language teaching difficulties to this student – the low achiever?* From 64 participants, only 22 teachers left a commentary. Of 22 answers collected, only 20 were properly understandable in clear language.

Next, the focus shall be in these 20 voluntary comments. The first major complaint among 20 comments was about lack of support. Of 20 answers, 8 confirmed that the biggest problem for teaching the Portuguese language is the lack of support from the family at home in addition to the lack of extra support from the family in regards to afford a private tutor.

With 6 comments, the second major issue can be best described as a special needs concern about the student; since "the lack of attention" was predominant in all participants answers in addition to details like "needs an instructor to read for him/her" or "needs tailored instruction".

The rest of the comments are spread around: the responsibility of the government/municipality in offering proper teaching materials (2); the online learning (1); the appraisals of some students behavior, such as "effort" (4) and lastly the social vulnerability of the student in focus (1).

5.2 Research Question 1: Is there a gender difference in the language scores of boys and girls?

This analysis has the support of the hypotheses "1. If gender affects language outcomes, girls achieve higher than boys in their assessment scores report by teachers".

The confidence intervals for the rates of the gender of the student with the highest and the lowest recent score are presented in the following table.

Table 5. Confidence Intervals, with a confidence level of 95%, for the gender of the student with the highest and the lowest recent score

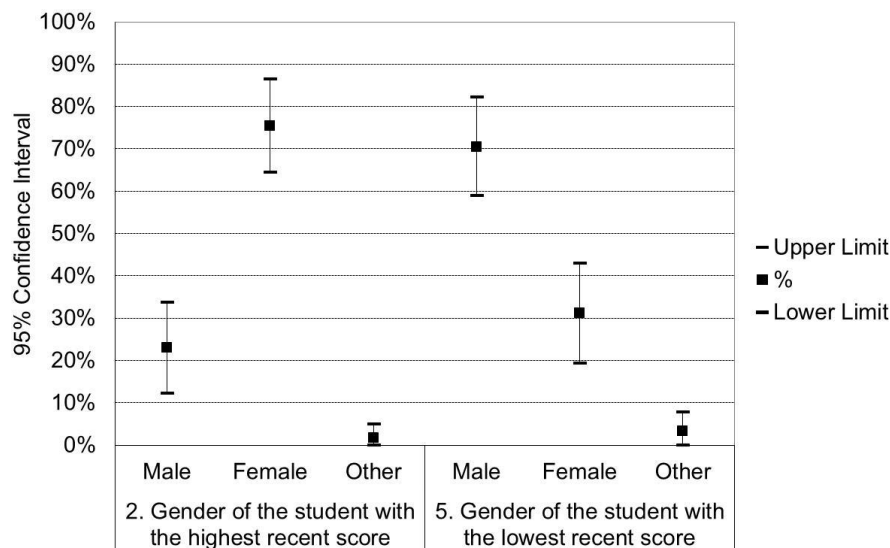| | | % | CI a 95% | |
			Lower Lim	Upper Lim
Gender of the	Male	23,0%	12,2%	33,7%
student with the	Female	75,4%	64,4%	86,4%
highest recent score	Other	1,6%	0,0%	4,9%
Gender of the	Male	70,5%	58,9%	82,1%
student with the	Female	31,1%	19,3%	43,0%
lowest recent score	Other	3,3%	0,0%	7,8%

Figure 6 Confidence Intervals, with a confidence level of 95%, for the gender of the student with the highest and the lowest recent score in Portuguese language

The inference for the gender of the student with the highest recent score in the population is that the "female" is clearly prevalent [64,4%; 86,4%] compared to "male" [12,2%; 33,7%] with also the residual presence of "other gender".

The inference for the gender of the student with the lowest recent score in the population is that the "male" is clearly prevalent [58,9%; 82,1%] compared to "female" [19,3%; 43,0%] with also the residual presence of "other gender".

For the gender difference in the scores of boys and girls, we can conclude that the female gender prevails in the highest scores and the male gender prevails in the lowest scores. Regarding the hypotheses "1. If gender affects language outcomes, girls achieve higher than boys in their assessment scores report by teachers", we can conclude that it is verified in this population.

5.3 Research Question 2: What is the association of language and social skills among the lowest scoring-students of Portuguese language? and

Research Question 3: What is the association of language and social skills among the highest scoring-students of Portuguese language?

This master thesis set three research questions plus one qualitative open-ended question about teaching difficulties. Notwithstanding, the most important research questions in terms of evaluating the data population with the theories exposed before are Research Question 2 and Research Question 3, which will be discussed now. The next analysis also allows to study not only the Research Question 2 but also the hypotheses "2. If there is a positive relationship between language and behaviour, then the student with the highest achievement scores in Portuguese language has also more social skills; and vice versa". The following table presents the frequencies in each category for the students with the highest and with the lowest score in Portuguese language.

Table 6. Comparison between the student with the highest and with the lowest score in Portuguese language

	Score	Not true		Somewhat true		Certainly true	
		N	**%**	**N**	**%**	**N**	**%**
Often volunteer to help others	Highest	1	1,7	17	28,8	41	69,5
	Lowest	27	45,8	16	27,1	16	27,1
Kind to younger kids	Highest	0	0,0	18	28,6	45	71,4
	Lowest	15	23,8	24	38,1	24	38,1
Has at least one good friend;	Highest	0	0,0	8	12,5	56	87,5
	Lowest	5	7,8	18	28,1	41	64,1
Shares readily with other children (toys, pencils)	Highest	3	4,8	18	29,0	41	66,1
	Lowest	11	17,7	18	29,0	33	53,2
Rather solitary, tends to play alone	Highest	36	58,1	17	27,4	9	14,5
	Lowest	36	58,1	18	29,0	8	12,9
Considerate of other people's feelings	Highest	1	1,6	13	21,0	48	77,4
	Lowest	6	9,7	24	38,7	32	51,6
Often fights with other children or frightens them	Highest	51	82,3	7	11,3	4	6,5
	Lowest	32	51,6	14	22,6	16	25,8
Generally liked by other children;	Highest	3	4,8	16	25,4	44	69,8
	Lowest	9	14,3	24	38,1	30	47,6
Generally obedient and does what adults ask of him	Highest	0	0,0	11	17,5	52	82,5
	Lowest	21	33,3	20	31,7	22	34,9
Gets on better with adults than with other children	Highest	18	29,0	31	50,0	13	21,0
	Lowest	30	48,4	27	43,5	5	8,1
Picked on or bullied by other children	Highest	37	60,7	17	27,9	7	11,5
	Lowest	20	32,8	28	45,9	13	21,3

5.4 Comparison between highest-scoring students and the lowest-scoring students

The following graphics and tables demonstrate with statistical tests the comparison between the students with highest and lowest scores in Portuguese language classes.
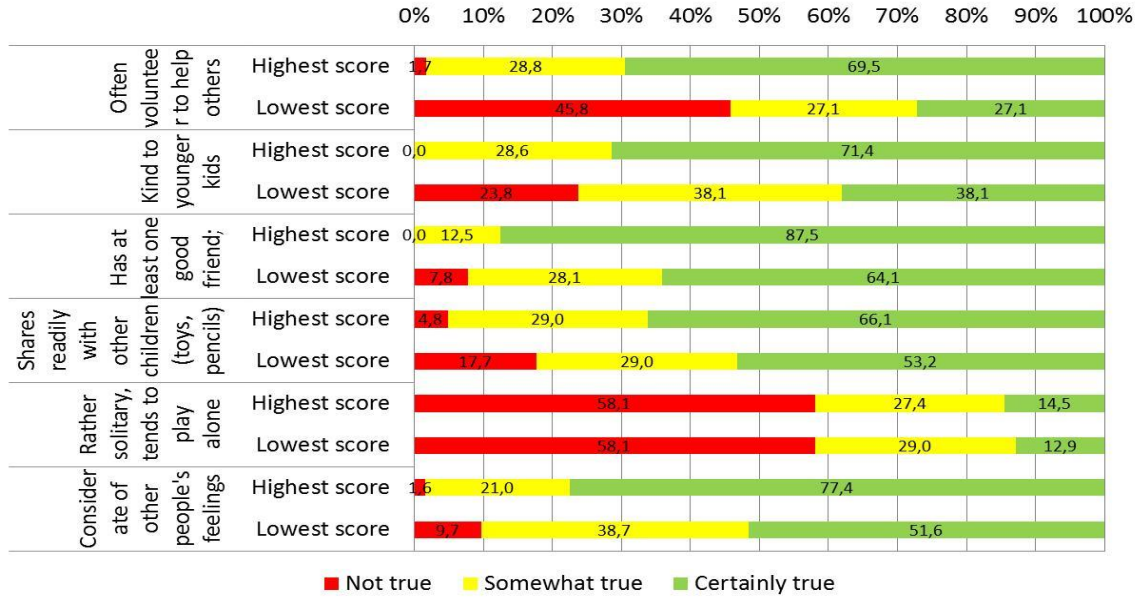

Figure 7 Bar chart with the social skills items and the Portuguese language scores (Highest and Lowest)
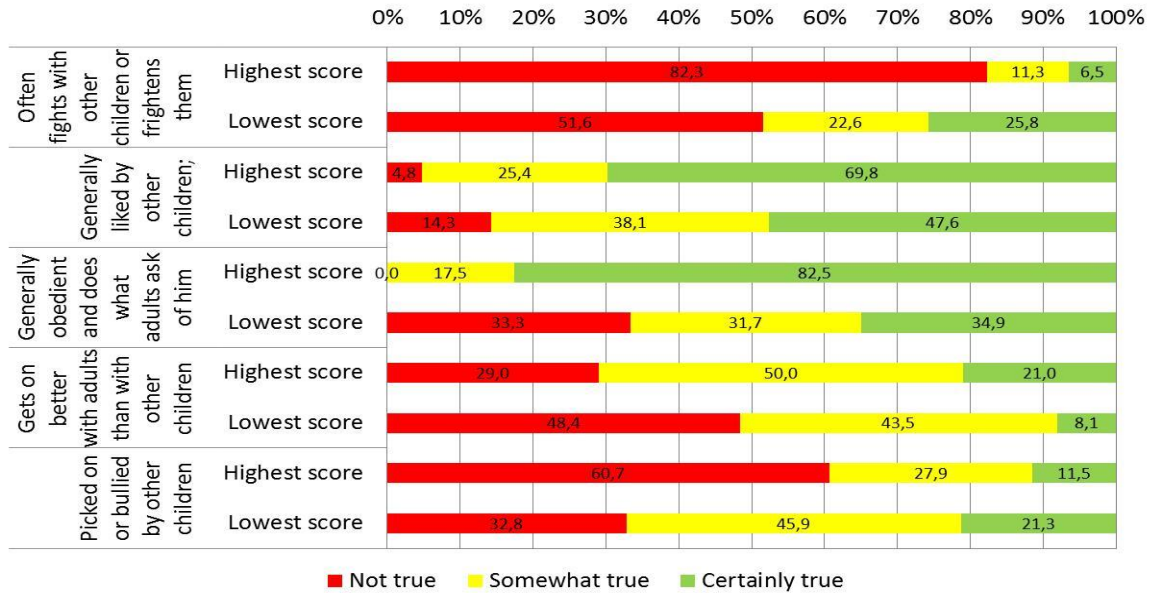

Figure 8 Bar chart with the social skills items and the Portuguese language scores (Highest and Lowest)

In the sample, for the questions "Often volunteer to help others", "Kind to younger kids", "Has at least one good friend", "Shares readily with other children (toys, pencils)", "Considerate of other people's feelings", "Generally liked by other children", "Generally obedient and does what adults ask of him" and "Gets on better with adults than with other children" there is an higher frequency of truth responses for the student with the highest score.

For the questions "Often fights with other children or frightens them" and "Picked on or bullied by other children" there is a lower frequency of truth responses for the student with the highest score. And for the question "Rather solitary, tends to play alone" there are similar frequencies of the responses for the student with the highest and the lowest score.

Table 12. Statistical tests followed by the effect size report

	Score	N	M	DP	Negative/ Positive Mean Ranks	Sum of Ranks	Z	p	Effect size
Often volunteer to help others	Highest	59	2,68	,507	20,89	794,00	-5,36	*** 0,000	0,698
	Lowest	59	1,81	,840	13,00	26,00			
Kind to younger kids	Highest	63	2,71	,455	17,89	554,50	-4,66	*** 0,000	0,587
	Lowest	63	2,14	,780	13,50	40,50			
Has at least one good friend;	Highest	64	2,88	,333	12,53	238,00	-3,23	** 0,001	0,404
	Lowest	64	2,56	,639	9,50	38,00			
Shares readily with other children (toys, pencils)	Highest	62	2,61	,583	13,13	249,50	-2,50	* 0,012	0,318
	Lowest	62	2,35	,770	12,58	75,50			
Rather solitary, tends to play alone	Highest	62	1,56	,738	13,73	206,00	-0,07	0,943	0,009
	Lowest	62	1,55	,717	15,38	200,00			
Considerate of other people's feelings	Highest	62	2,76	,468	12,10	254,00	-3,89	*** 0,000	0,494
	Lowest	62	2,42	,666	11,00	22,00			
Often fights with other children or frightens them	Highest	62	1,24	,564	6,00	12,00	-3,95	*** 0,000	0,502
	Lowest	62	1,74	,848	12,57	264,00			
Generally liked by other children;	Highest	63	2,65	,572	12,88	270,50	-3,10	** 0,002	0,391
	Lowest	63	2,33	,718	13,63	54,50			
Generally obedient and does what adults ask of him	Highest	63	2,83	,383	18,74	656,00	-5,23	*** 0,000	0,659
	Lowest	63	2,02	,833	10,00	10,00			
Gets on better with adults than with other children	Highest	62	1,92	,708	16,75	335,00	-2,63	** 0,008	0,334
	Lowest	62	1,60	,639	11,11	100,00			
Picked on or bullied by other children	Highest	61	1,51	,698	15,43	108,00	-2,86	** 0,004	0,366
	Lowest	61	1,89	,733	16,17	388,00			

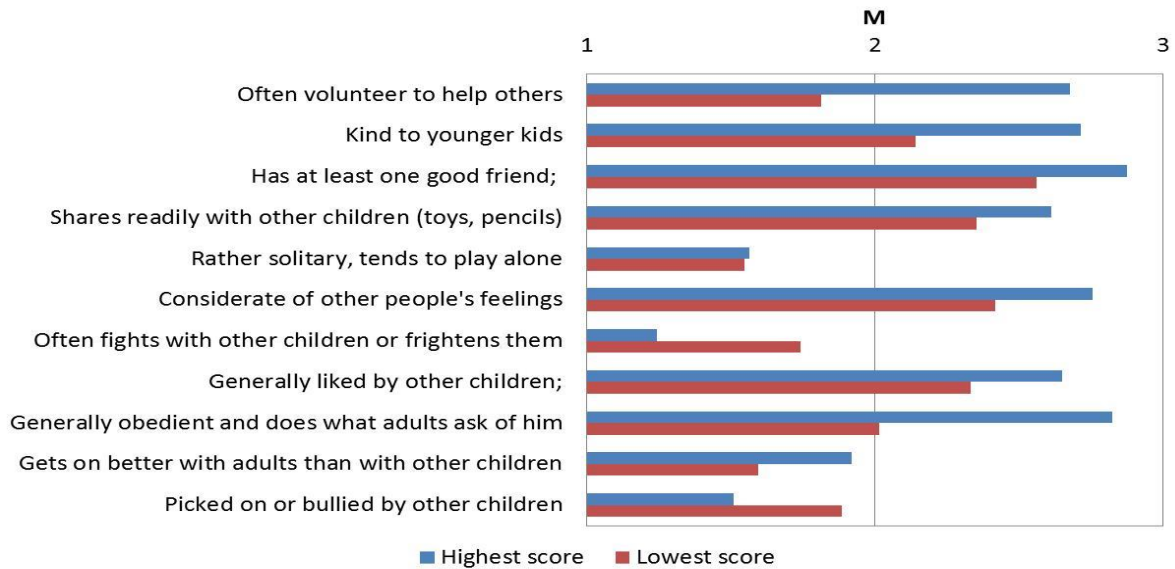*** $p < 0,001$ ** $p < 0,01$ * $p < 0,05$

Figure 9 Mean Chart: Comparison between the student with the highest and with the lowest score in Portuguese language based on their social skills

"Often volunteer to help others" occurs more for students with Highest scores (M=2,68) compared to students with Lowest scores (M=1,81) and the differences are statistically significant (Z=-5,36, p<0,001);

"Kind to younger kids" occurs more for students with Highest scores (M=2,71) compared to students with Lowest scores (M=2,14) and the differences are significant (Z=-4,66, p<0,001);

"Has at least one good friend" occurs more for students with Highest scores (M=2,88) compared to students with Lowest scores (M=2,56) and the differences are significant (Z=-3,23, p=0,001);

 "Shares readily with other children (toys, pencils)" occurs more for students with Highest scores (M=2,61) compared to students with Lowest scores (M=2,35) and the differences are significant (Z=-2,50, p=0,012);

"Considerate of other people's feelings" occurs more for students with Highest scores (M=2,76) compared to students with Lowest scores (M=2,42) and the differences are significant (Z=-3,89, p<0,001);

"Generally liked by other children" occurs more for students with Highest scores (M=2,65) compared to students with Lowest scores (M=2,33) and the differences are significant (Z=-3,10, p=0,002); "Generally obedient and does what adults ask of him" occurs more for students with Highest scores (M=2,83) compared to students with Lowest scores (M=2,02) and the differences are significant (Z=-5,23, p<0,001);

"Gets on better with adults than with other children" occurs more for students with Highest scores (M=1,92) compared to students with Lowest scores (M=1,60) and the differences are significant (Z=-2,63, p=0,008).

"Often fights with other children or frightens them" occurs less for students with Highest scores (M=1,24) compared to students with Lowest scores (M=1,74) and the differences are significant (Z=-3,95, p<0,001); "Picked on or bullied by other children" occurs less for students with Highest scores (M=1,51) compared to students with Lowest scores (M=1,89) and the differences are significant (Z=-2,86, p=0,004).

In the sample, "Rather solitary, tends to play alone" occurs in similar ways for students with Highest scores (M=1,56) and Lowest scores (M=1,55) and the differences are not statistically significant (Z=-0,07, p=0,943).

Regarding the investigation questions of what is the association of language social skills among the highest and the lowest achievers students of Portuguese language, we can conclude that "Often volunteer to help others", "Kind to younger kids", "Has at least one good friend", "Shares readily with other children (toys, pencils)", "Considerate of other people's feelings", "Generally liked by other children", "Generally obedient and does what adults ask of him" and "Gets on better with adults than with other children" occurs

significantly more for students with Highest scores; as well as for "Often fights with other children or frightens them" and "Picked on or bullied by other children" occurs significantly more for students with Highest scores;

Lastly, "Rather solitary, tends to play alone" presents no significant differences between the two groups of students.

To sum up, regarding the hypotheses "2. If there is a positive relationship between language and behaviour, then the student with the highest achievement scores in Portuguese language has also more social skills; and vice versa", we can conclude that it is verified for all social items except for "Rather solitary, tends to play alone".

5.6 Effect size analysis of language and social skills

Regarding the report of the *effects of magnitude* (Kirk, 1996), the effect size observed for the sample in addition to the following statements are: "often volunteer to help others" (d=0.698); "generally obedient and does what adults asks of him" (d=0.659); "kind to younger kids" (d=0,587); and lastly "considerate of other people feelings" (d=0,494).

According to Cohen (1969) the effect size found in the table could be interpreted as: between medium and large effect, since 0.5 is the medium effect and 0.8 is a large effect. It is possible to conclude that the statement "helping others" and language output has the highest effect size (d= 0.7). The rest of the statements have a small effect, since they occur in the scale of 0.0 and 0.3 (Cohen d=0.2).

6 CONCLUSION

The present study examined three research questions within teacher report of Portuguese language assessments of students in Primary school children from 08 to 10 years old. First, let us focus in the first research question: *Research Question 1 Which assessment practices do teachers use to assess Portuguese language skills?* The teacher assessment rates were mainly individual work (46%) followed by exam (22%) and finally group work (21%). The peer group work is strongly connected to the topic of sociability, but this does not justify other items of the SDQ:SE, especially regarding the item "kind to adults" of the questionnaire.

It was observed in the open-ended questions that among other teacher difficulties, answers highlighted aspects of possible language impairments in lowest achievers of Portuguese language (the need to read out loud, tailored assessment, extra tutoring were pointed out by teachers). This observation when assessing students' difficulties is in dialogue with Virinkoski and colleagues (2018), they claimed that teachers rate of assessment corresponds well with high-scale language assessment tests. It might be that among those reported problems there are also unidentified symptoms of language impairment, such as aphasia, dyslexia, ADHD, or autism spectrum disorder – children with these disorders present co-existing problems related to language (Helland et al, 2014).

Second, it was investigated whereas there is a gender difference in the performance of language abilities reported by teachers. It was concluded that female students (73%) achieve higher than male students, this is in dialogue with similar studies, such as Davis and Qi (2020); Petersen and LeBeau (2020); Gigi et al (2021). Nevertheless, regarding gender, it was also computed an additional unknown gender status in the data collection, which represents 1.6% of the students.

Third, two research questions were tested with additional support of two hypothesis: *RQ2(a) What is the association of language and social skills – prosocial behaviour and peer relationship – among the lowest achiever's students of Portuguese language? RQ3(b) What is the association of language and social skills – prosocial behaviour and peer relationship – among the highest achiever's students of Portuguese language?* If there is a positive relationship between language and behaviour, then the student with the highest achievement scores in Portuguese language has also more social skills; and vice versa.

Results from statistical tests suggest that students with the highest achievement do have more friends; share more objects with others; are more obedient to adults and they are also more empathetical than the lowest achievers. These results were not reported by Conte et al (2018), they claimed that language abilities mainly accounted for sharing with peers, but not helping. In our sample, highest achievers do help more (effect size d=0.698).

In summary, findings of the present study are centered in the data collection analysis: (1) The female gender do perform higher than male gender in Portuguese language abilities. (2) There is a relationship between language and sociability. With the support of the SDQ:SE questionnaire, it was confirmed that those Primary school students who performed higher in language, they are also the ones who: i. volunteer to help others; ii. are kind to younger kids; iii. considerate of other people feelings; iv. are generally obedient to adults.

However, priority should be given to the conclusion of students with more language abilities share more and are more obedient to adults, since effect size is moderate to high in both statements extracted from SDQ:SE (Goodman, 1998). Therefore, it can be inferred that students who are better in language, show more empathy. (3) Teacher difficulties to teach Portuguese language are strongly connected to either a matter of special needs and/or lack of family support.

6.1 Strengths and Weakness of the present study

One of the biggest qualitative descriptions to classify the strength of this master thesis is the word ethnographic and linguistic inclusion. This is seen in two aspects: nationally (within regions of Brazil) and internationally (with the participation of Portuguese language teachers located in Mozambique and Portugal). Let us discuss the national aspect first. It is a well-known fact that the territory of Brazil is extensive from north to south, east and west. Furthermore, the Brazilian coast has different occupation history than the inner land.

Moreover, social inequality appears more in the northern parts of the country (OCDE, 2020), this vulnerable population was the target of the present study, because research is not a product confined to represent elite society (Mcniff, 2014) or privileged ethnicities (Mertens, 2012). Although the sample is not entirely nationally representative, since some other states were missing, such as Amapá, Maranhão and Acre, it is yet indeed diverse and inclusive, since some Brazilian states, which are more socioeconomic disadvantaged and underrepresented in academic research with the same topic (Almeida et al 2019; Da Rocha et al, 2020) participated in the survey: Rondonia, Bahia and Ceará.

Although the international sample is not high, the aspect of diversity remains, as the presence of international teachers highlights focus on other Lusophone communities that felt the need to join this research purpose. It was a benefit to add Mozambican teachers in our sample, as well as Portuguese teachers. Mozambique and Brazil shared a history of occupation for the Portuguese Crown, however the African country has much more language policies on multilingualism and minority language education in the public system.

Portugal has controversial attitudes in regard to sociolinguistic beliefs on the Portuguese language and its status in the Lusophone community. However, it is positive that teachers joined a survey written in Brazilian Portuguese standard, and not European Portuguese standard, as this attitude is favorable towards tolerance instead of sociolinguistic prejudice of the American norm of the language.

Notwithstanding there are factors that may have limited the results of the current study. First, the beginning sample was much bigger than the final one: 96 participants started the survey, but only 64 finished it. Moreover, the missing data in the open ended non mandatory question on teaching difficulties among lowest achievers of Portuguese language. Only 22 out of 64 teachers volunteered to respond.

Another problem of this study was the construction of the questionnaire sent to teachers. Instead of open-ended questions, statements in the format of multiple questions should have been used, as this helps in data analysis, and it supports interpretation of results. In addition, some participants did not use clear language when reporting their teaching difficulties, from these 22 answers, 2 were not written in understandable language, thus making the interpretation complicated and obscured, the solution was to used them with some amendments.

Second, there is an issue in with the scale for teacher assessment practices, it was not uniform and based on the classical numerical system of 0 to 10. This issue relates to the fact that data was collected from private and public schools, thus making it heterogenous in terms of numerical assessment grades, for instance letter E stands for 0 (minimum score in assessment).

Third, one bias might exist in the analysis of an item of the questionnaire sent to teachers. It was observed that the question of teacher assessment practices and the results of this item (the group work rate, 18.6%) implies controversial and unilateral interpretations. In other words, among group and/or peer work rate, are there the lowest or highest achievers? And

what was the student contribution for lowest score and highest scores? Should not the rest of the students be reported in the teacher response instead of only one? For instance, the student with the lowest score was part of the peer work, therefore two students – or more – are part of the teacher feedback in the questionnaire, and not only one. The same applies for group work, all should be present in the following teacher response.

Notwithstanding, it is paramount to remember the period of this research. In COVID-19 times, the major implication is death by contamination of the new coronavirus. There are weaknesses of this study but several lifes were spare by online teaching and remote research. Thus, in the middle of the present scenario, how research can rely on the same traditional high stakes battery tests for measuring language? Some of these implications cited here might relate to the uncertainty period of our pandemic. Not only research was recreated, but teachers were also affected, as they had to reinvented assessment practices and even with this state of emergency in several communities of the globe, data collection yet persisted. Hence, a benefit of the present study is the appreciation of teacher assessment practices over high-stake battery language tests, without them this research and so many others would not be possible.

Before ending the session of implications of this study, a comment is needed on the statistical findings. LeBrun (2011) advices that is not always necessary to have conclusive results to conclude. The general findings based on reliability, effect size and confidence interval were positive, but not sufficient informative, due to the irregular scales of language assessment. The Cronbach alpha was measured and it came with a numerical value of 0.80, illustrative examples from the science education literature demonstrate that alpha may be *acceptable* even when there are recognised problems with the scales concerned (Taber, 2018).

If this happens in science teaching and it is alleviated, language teaching could also join the same grant, as there were problems in the scales of language assessment items of the present study. However, this was not observed in the effect size interpretation of Cohen d,

"often volunteer to help others" (d=0.698); "generally obedient and does what adults asks of him" (d=0.659); "kind to younger kids" (d=0,587); and lastly "considerate of other people feelings" (d=0,494).

6.2 Suggestions for further research

The present study advances understanding of how Portuguese language abilities in Primary School is related to prosocial behavior and peer relationship in students from 8 to 10 years old. These findings also present an opportunity to tackle further the difference between language difficulties and language impairment at school: can teachers help within the recognition of these aspects? How many lowest language achievers have language impairment? Are these same the ones who have poor social skills? How teachers can mitigate language difficulties with the support of teaching topics about sociability? This could be a landmark when it comes to the reflection of well-being and achievement at school. What if teachers step back and plan a lesson on empathy, so that, later on, language outcomes improve? By teaching and training students with social skills awareness, higher is the possibility to raise readiness to language classes (Gibson et al, 2021).

Attention should be driven not to teacher training, as Virinkoski et al (2018) suggested, but to more reliable and yet flexible assessment tools for teachers, this should be provided by headmasters and coordinators of schools as well as for the researchers in this area of online teaching. Tough the strength of this statement is diminished when considering the present research scenario affected by the pandemic of COVID-19. Life is more important than anything. All research areas ought to consider that.

Regardless of the present moment, teachers should be always valued in designing assessment practices as well as their perceptions as main observers of the child behavior at school. Professionals like clinicians, speech therapists, psychologists and so on are the ones who manage high-stake language battery tests, this teamwork is important, however they

demand time, big investment in money, and bureaucratical procedures. All of these elements were out of the possibilities of this study, therefore, thanks to all 64 teachers, this research was made, though they did not answer to all questions in the survey.

For the future, more academic engagement should occur in order to open paths to data collection. Though, observations of the researchers, like myself, might have add beneficial insights to data analysis, as such the implementation of a mixed methods research design, instead of a pure quantitative one for the future – Conte and colleagues (2018) have returned informative findings with similar variables: language, emotion recognition and Theory of Mind using a mixed methods design.

Prospective research shall be internationally cooperative and collaborative, it could consider other parts of Brazil and why not include more Lusophone participants, such as Angola, for instance? The criticism about the European Portuguese standard should be always in the light of thinking the language standard ideologies and bias, as pointed by O'Neil and Massini (2019).

According to Paulo Freire (1987) in education, 'the goal should never be to restrict students to their own vernacular. Educators should understand the value of mastering the standard dominant language of the wider society.' Drawing on this, the teaching of Portuguese as mother tongue and as non-mother tongue (case of Mirandese speakers or Bantu language speakers) should be always considered to these populations. Furthermore, special attention ought to be presented and comparative especially in the subfield of minority language education and their groups: children who speaks Portuguese but has a minority language as a mother tongue, such as the case of Brazil and Mozambique indigenous populations. For that, partnerships with peripheral schools should be made.

Another interesting suggestion for further studies might be cross cultural differences within social skills, like the study of Stengelin et al (2020) with Namibian and German children expressions of prosocial behavior. If the sample of international Portuguese language teachers were higher, the sociability results might have been slightly different in some areas

of the globe, for instance, has empathy the same expression in Portuguese children compared with Brazilian ones? Does bilingual children – especially the ones whose mother tongue is indigenous language, but also are speakers of Portuguese – demonstrate higher language abilities than monolingual children whose mother tongue is Portuguese? How about a comparison between Mozambican children and Brazilian children, both from aboriginal heritage, are there similarities or differences in language outcomes? All of these questions lead to ethnographic co-variables, an emergent path with promising opportunities than the co-variable gender for instance, already used in this study.

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Appendices

Appendix 1 Questionnaire in Portuguese language sent to teachers

PART I

Introduction of the study with data protection attachments. First question about the rate of Portuguese language assessments in the previous academic term: individual assessment, group and/or peer work, exams, other. Next question is about the gender of the student with the highest score in Portuguese language. The last question refers to the report of this score.

Língua portuguesa e sociabilidade

Caros professores de português,

Olá! Meu nome é Grace. Este questionário - totalmente anônimo - faz parte de um projeto de pesquisa de pós-graduação em Educação, estou interessada na relação entre a linguagem escrita e habilidades sociais. Devido às restrições da pandemia do COVID-19, é mais adequado que os professores respondam a este questionário (SDQ:SE 1998 adaptado), em vez de pais ou alunos.

- **Quem?** Professores com notas oriundas de avaliações recentes de seus alunos com _idades entre 08-10 anos._
- **Como funciona?** Um professor escolherá dois alunos (de uma sala de aula qualquer): o de maior nota e o de menor nota em português.
- **Quanto tempo?** cerca de 4 minutos.

Ao enviar este formulário, você concorda que os dados fornecidos serão processados de acordo com a política de privacidade deste projeto de pesquisa, que se baseia nas diretrizes da política de privacidade da University of Eastern Finland e na proteção de dados da UE (para mais info clique aqui LINK).

Professor (a), qual foi o método de avaliação mais recente?

○ trabalho individual

○ trabalho em grupo/dupla

○ prova

○ outro: explique [   ]

Qual o gênero do estudante com nota mais ALTA?

○ masculino

○ feminino

○ outro

Acerca do estudante com MAIOR nota em língua portuguesa, por favor indique essa nota:

[   ]

Part II

Questions extracted from the SDQ:SE Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire regarding the students with highest score in Portuguese:

Acerca do estudante com MAIOR nota em língua portuguesa, por favor selecione:

	FALSO	NEUTRO	VERDADEIRO.
Frequentemente se oferece para ajudar outras pessoas (pais, professores, outras crianças)	O	O	O
É gentil com crianças mais novas	O	O	O
Tem pelo menos um bom amigo ou amiga	O	O	O
Tem boa vontade em compartilhar doces, brinquedos, lápis ... com outras crianças	O	O	O
É solitário, prefere brincar sozinho	O	O	O
Tem consideração pelos sentimentos de outras pessoas	O	O	O
Frequentemente briga com outras crianças ou as amendronta	O	O	O
Em geral, é querido por outras crianças	O	O	O
Geralmente é obediente e faz normalmente o que os adultos lhe pedem	O	O	O
Se dá melhor com adultos do que com outras crianças	O	O	O
Outras crianças 'pegam no pé' ou atormentam-no	O	O	O

Part III

Questions about gender, followed by items extracted from the SDQ:SE *Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire* in regard to the students with lowest score in Portuguese:

Qual o gênero do estudante com nota mais BAIXA?
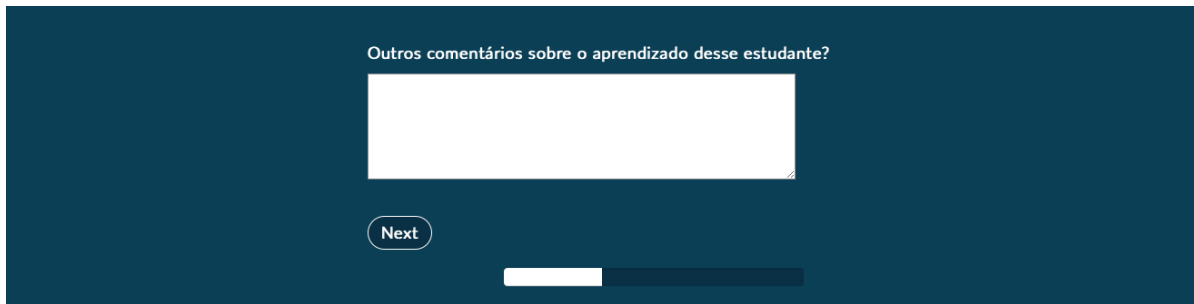
○ masculino
○ feminino
○ outro

Acerca do estudante com MENOR nota em língua portuguesa, por favor indique essa nota:

Acerca do estudante com MENOR nota em língua portuguesa, por favor selecione:

	FALSO	NEUTRO	VERDADEIRO.
Frequentemente se oferece para ajudar outras pessoas (pais, professores, outras crianças)	○	○	○
É gentil com crianças mais novas	○	○	○
Tem pelo menos um bom amigo ou amiga	○	○	○
Tem boa vontade em compartilhar doces, brinquedos, lápis ... com outras crianças	○	○	○
É solitário, prefere brincar sozinho	○	○	○
Tem consideração pelos sentimentos de outras pessoas	○	○	○
Frequentemente briga com outras crianças ou as amendronta	○	○	○
Em geral, é querido por outras crianças	○	○	○
Geralmente é obediente e faz normalmente o que os adultos lhe pedem	○	○	○
Se dá melhor com adultos do que com outras crianças	○	○	○
Outras crianças 'pegam no pé' ou atormentam-no	○	○	○

Part IV

Open ended non-mandatory question about the difficulties teachers had in regard to the students with lowest score in Portuguese language:
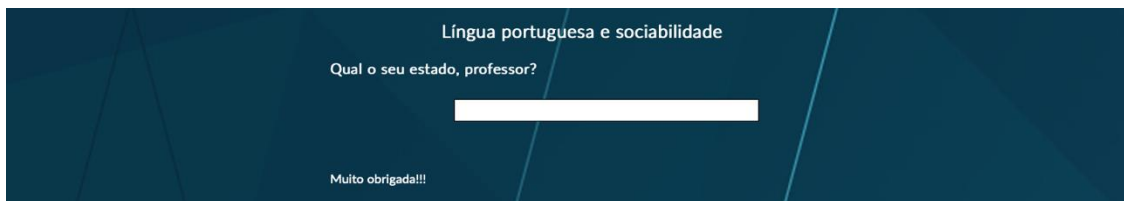
Outros comentários sobre o aprendizado desse estudante?

Next

Part V

Final item. Open ended non-mandatory question about the location of the teachers:

Língua portuguesa e sociabilidade

Qual o seu estado, professor?

Muito obrigada!!!