

**THE MANAGEMENT OF THE BORDER INTERCULTURAL SCHOOLS  
PROGRAM (PEIF) ON THE BORDER OF BRAZIL AND PARAGUAY**

***A GESTÃO DO PROGRAMA ESCOLAS INTERCULTURAIS DE FRONTEIRA (PEIF)  
NA FRONTEIRA DO BRASIL COM O PARAGUAI***

***LA GESTIÓN DEL PROGRAMA DE ESCUELAS INTERCULTURALES  
FRONTERIZAS (PEIF) EN LA FRONTERA DE BRASIL Y PARAGUAY***



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| 1



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**ABSTRACT:** This research aims to analyze the management of the Intercultural Schools of Frontier Program, as an educational policy for teacher training, specific to the border region. In methodological aspects, we sought to evaluate an educational policy and its possible impacts (BAKER, 2000) and in documentary research (CELLARD, 2008) to answer the problem: PEIF management, as a teacher training policy, has reached its goal in education in the border region? To this end, the article was organized into three sections, where the first identifies the locus of research, that is, the dry border between Brazil and Paraguay. The second section shows how the Border Intercultural Schools Program (PEIF) emerged and its main challenges. The third section presents the organization of the partnership established between the Ministry of Education (MEC), Universities and border schools that adhered to the Program. The final considerations show that there are challenges in the policy aimed at border education, however it brought a new meaning to regional specificities.

**KEYWORDS:** Educational policies. Education management. Border.

**RESUMO:** *A presente pesquisa objetiva analisar a gestão do Programa Escolas Interculturais de Fronteira, como uma política educacional de formação de professores, específica para região de fronteira. Em aspectos metodológicos, buscou-se na avaliação de uma política educacional e seus possíveis impactos (BAKER, 2000) e na pesquisa documental (CELLARD, 2008) responder ao problema: A gestão do PEIF, como uma política de formação de professores, atingiu seu objetivo na educação em região de fronteira? Para tanto, organizou-se o artigo em três seções, onde a primeira identifica o locus de pesquisa, ou seja, a fronteira seca do Brasil com o Paraguai. Já a segunda seção evidencia como surgiu o Programa Escolas Interculturais de Fronteira (PEIF) e seus principais desafios. A terceira seção expõe a organização da parceria estabelecida entre Ministério da Educação (MEC), Universidades e escolas de fronteira que aderissem ao Programa. As considerações finais evidenciam que há desafios na política voltada para a educação de fronteira, contudo trouxe um ressignificado para as especificidades regionais.*

**PALAVRAS-CHAVE:** Políticas educacionais. Gestão da educação. Fronteira.

**RESUMEN:** *Esta investigación tiene como objetivo analizar la gestión del Programa Escuelas Interculturales de Frontera, como una política educativa para la formación docente, específica de la región fronteriza. En aspectos metodológicos, se buscó evaluar una política educativa y sus posibles impactos (BAKER, 2000) y en investigación documental (CELLARD, 2008) para dar respuesta al problema: la gestión del PEIF, como política de formación docente, ha alcanzado su objetivo en la educación en la región fronteriza? Para ello, el artículo se organizó en tres secciones, donde la primera identifica el lugar de la investigación, es decir, la frontera seca entre Brasil y Paraguay. La segunda sección muestra cómo surgió el Programa de Escuelas Interculturales Fronterizas (PEIF) y sus principales desafíos. La tercera sección presenta la organización de la alianza establecida entre el Ministerio de Educación (MEC), Universidades y escuelas fronterizas adheridas al Programa. Las consideraciones finales muestran que existen desafíos en la política orientada a la educación fronteriza, sin embargo dio un nuevo significado a las especificidades regionales.*

**PALABRAS CLAVE:** Políticas educativas. Administración de educación. Frontera.

## Introduction

The study of education in a border region focusing on policies and educational management is still recent, because legislation that met local specificities arose with the creation of the Southern Common Market (Mercosur) and, later, of the Mercosur Educational Sector (SEM) within the countries of South America.

The research is a piece of the doctoral thesis concluded on the implementation of the Cross-Cultural Frontier Schools Program (PEIF) as a supranational policy for teacher training on the border of Brazil and Paraguay, dealing specifically with the reality of the State of Mato Grosso do Sul (MS). The spatial delimitation of the research is justified by the fact that the MS presents a single school that executed the Program.

The main objective of this article is to analyze the management of the PEIF as an educational policy for teacher training specific to the border region. To this end, in methodological terms, we sought to evaluate an educational policy and its possible impacts (BAKER, 2000) and in the documentary research (CELLARD, 2008) to answer the following central question: Did the management of the PEIF, as a teacher education policy, achieve its objective in education in the border region?

| 3

For Draibe (2007), the organization of South American countries into economic blocs symbolized the beginning of a process of regional integration that culminated in the economic bloc between Brazil, Argentina, Paraguay and Uruguay that resulted in the constitution of Mercosur. This bloc aimed to establish the commitment to integrate values of the rule of law, democracy and human rights, more broadly, in the model of regional economic development established, from that moment based on justice and equity (DRAIBE, 2007).

The integration process went beyond the economic pathways and reached education with the establishment within Mercosur of the Mercosur Educational Sector (SEM), which had the mission of integrating nations through actions that sought an educational rapprochement between neighboring countries (BUENO, 2019). And in this way, the first initiatives focused on border specificities emerged. In this sense, Silva *et al.* (2018) emphasizes that "educational policies have a strategic role in building the identity of a people" (p. 80) and thus reinforces the relevance of specific policies for the border region.

It is worth mentioning that the Program has already had other formats such as the Bilingual Border Schools Program (PEBF), the Bilingual Intercultural Frontier School Project (PEIBF) and finally PEIF. All programs had the same goal: to promote bilingual teaching through teacher exchange. The research was limited to the latter because it is the latest

educational policy specific to the border region in execution, ending its activities in 2015.

The PEIF began its activities in 2012 through the Ministry of Education Ordinance - MEC No. 798/2012 aiming at the work with the continued training of teachers, in the partnership system, between Universities, State and Municipal Departments of Education, as well as schools that would support the Program. The PEIF proposed an exchange between teachers from countries who would adhere to the PEIF which was called CRUCE and presented itself as an innovative resource, being the great differential still in the PEBF in the face of other training. CRUCE took place once or twice a week among teachers of the schools participating in the Program. According to the spatial context of the research, the Brazilian teacher taught classes at the partner school of the neighboring country, in this case Paraguay and vice versa. The objective of this practice proposed by MEC Ordinance No. 798/2012 was the integration of countries via school (STURZA, 2014).

The research is organized into three sections, and in the first one presents the reality of the dry border<sup>1</sup> between Brazil and Paraguay. The second section explains how the PEIF emerged and lists the main organizational challenges. The third section highlights the collaboration and partnership regime established between MEC, universities and schools for the implementation of the Program on Brazil's border with Paraguay. | 4

### **Brazil and Paraguay: the reality of a dry border**

The border reality between Brazil and Paraguay, historically, is marked by territorial dispute that led to the Paraguayan War (1864-1870), the largest international armed conflict that occurred in South America in the 19th century, in which Paraguayans were defeated. It represents a peculiar space with common points that make two or more realities close, such as the freedom to come and go between citizens of different cities or countries, as well as the relationship of interdependence in the provision of service.

It is worth defining the word "frontier" in the light of the thought of Fernandes and Hellmann (2016), which stresses that it means a boundary, a territorial power marking or even an area domain marking. Albuquerque (2010, p. 589, our translation), emphasizes that "borders [...] are flows, but also obstacles, mixtures and separates, integrations and conflicts, domains

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<sup>1</sup> Historically and politically constituted, the Border Strip, is standardized by the Federal Constitution, which delimits the length of 150 km wide, parallel to the Brazilian land dividing line. Corresponding to 27% of the national territory, it comprises 588 municipalities, distributed in 11 Units of the Federation: Acre, Amapá, Amazonas, Mato Grosso, Mato Grosso do Sul, Pará, Paraná, Rio Grande do Sul, Rondônia, Roraima and Santa Catarina. From the population point of view, there is a number of approximately ten million inhabitants in this area (MATO GROSSO DO SUL, 2012, p. 08, our translation).

and subordinations". They represent spaces of power, varied conflicts and different forms of cultural integration. According to Rodrigues (2014), border is a space with peculiar geographical characteristics and that materializes a peaceful relationship between the two countries. And, in this direction, it is reinforced that this study is limited to the reality of Brazil's border with Paraguay, specifically the State of Mato Grosso do Sul (MS) with Paraguay.

However, it is relevant to present some specifications of the two countries analyzed. Starting with Brazil, which has about 23,086 km of border, where 15,719 km are bordering countries of the South American continent, with the exception of Chile and Ecuador. In addition to this fact, the Ministry of Health has a territorial extension of 357,145.4 km<sup>2</sup>, which borders the east and north/northeast with five Brazilian states: Goiás, Mato Grosso, Minas Gerais, Paraná and São Paulo. To the south/southwest, there is the international border with the Republics of Paraguay and Bolivia. The MS consists of 79 municipalities and 85 districts. According to the Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics - IBGE (2013) it has an estimated population of 2,587,267 inhabitants. The municipalities located on the border and which are considered twin cities are: Aral Moreira, Bela Vista, Coronel Sapucaia, Corumbá, Ponta Porã, Porto Murtinho, Mundo Novo and Paranhos.

| 5

The Ordinance of the Ministry of National Integration No. 125 (BRASIL, 2014) emphasizes that the border municipality is considered those whose distance does not exceed 150 km from the international border line/strip. Thus, the localities of Amambai, Antonio João, Eldorado and Iguatemi are also considered border municipalities, although it is not the object of this research.

Torchi e Silva (2014) point out that the border strip of the South-Mato Grosso State has 13,640 primary education schools, offering early childhood education, elementary school and high school, both in public and private institutions. This expressive number of educational units draws the author's attention, since

[...] these data make one think about the schools located in this border strip and it is reflected whether this mixture of languages and culture can become the first barrier of access of students to the school and impair their permanence in the institution leading them to school failure (TORCHI; SILVA, 2014, p. 164, our translation).

The Brazilian reality undergoes significant changes, both in the political, economic and educational scenarios. The educational reforms, according to Bueno (2010) and Frigotto and Ciavata (2003), were financed by international organizations that brought changes in policies for education, mainly after the sanction of the Federal Constitution of 1988.

Shiroma *et al.* (2002) recall that, because Brazil is one of the countries with the highest illiteracy rate in the world, it was forced to promote educational policies throughout the 1990s, not only in schools, but, in the family, community and media environment with monitoring of an advisory forum under the coordination of the United Nations Educational Organization, Science and Culture - UNESCO.

In light of the Brazilian reality in the educational sector, it is observed that the international influence in the conception of policies for education was significant. In the economic scenario, Brazil has an average per capita income of US\$ 323.46, a Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of around US\$ 1.6 trillion and an estimated population of 209,146,437 inhabitants, according to data released by IBGE (BRASIL, 2017). Another relevant factor about the country is the economic imbalance, presented by GDP between 1960 and 2017, experienced according to the information below (dollar values):

**Graph 1 - Brazil's GDP Evolution Scale (1960-2017) - US\$**



Source: The World Bank (2016)

Graph 1 shows that Brazil presented an expressive development between 2009 and 2011. However, in the following years there was a sharp drop in GDP, falling between US\$ 8,553,381 and US\$ 13,167,473, respectively. Already 2017, closed with a GDP of US\$ 9,821,408 and there were reflections of this stagnation in all areas, not only in the economy. In education, budget cuts were made in investments, as well as in educational programs. The PEIF, for example, was extinguished in 2015 and there was no continuation of actions in honoring the commitments made under Mercosur and SEM.

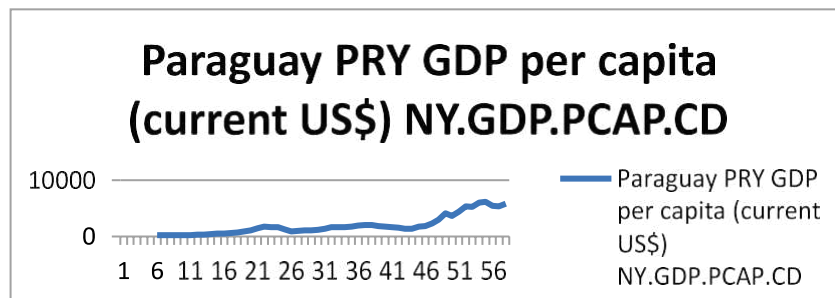
In relation to the specificities of the neighboring country, according to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Brazil, Paraguay has a territorial extension of 406,750 km<sup>2</sup>, of which 3,484 km<sup>2</sup> are bordering Argentina, Bolivia and Brazil. It has an estimated population of 6,725 million, distributed in 17 departments (states), according to data from the World Bank (2016). It is worth mentioning that the post-war period led Paraguay to a competitive weakening over the period. The Paraguayan collapse had its impact, mainly, on the economy and politics vis-



end to other South American countries.

According to the World Bank (2016), the country has an estimated population of about 6,342 million inhabitants in 2009, with a GDP in 2016 of US\$ 27.44 billion and a per capita income of US\$ 9,400. Graph 2 shows the rise of Paraguay, currently considered one of the economically promising countries:

**Graph 2 - Paraguay's GDP Evolution Scale (1960-2017) - US\$**



Source: The World Bank (2016)

Graph 2 shows Paraguay's GDP growth over a 12-year period, which favors its economic development and promising recovery.

However, as can be seen, it closed 2017 with \$5,823,766, a lower GDP than Brazil. But despite the discrepant numbers, regarding the population and incomes, the country seeks improvements in education, as Castro (2013, p. 72, our translation) points out:

The expansion of demand, the growth of the middle class, the educational reform that brought an improvement to the educational levels of the population, the process of urbanization, the greater massive presence of the media are factors that are messing with the Paraguayan white elephant, nothing different from what initially presented as common issues in Latin America.

Paraguay underwent reforms until the 1980s marked by influences in the political and economic environment that made it difficult to develop the changes, thus leaving it among the last to comply with the agreements signed at the international level, since the country presented difficulties in its development and the existing demands in Paraguayan society demanded care (NIBUHR; ENNS, 1999).

The country also went through a long period of military dictatorship, which provoked the struggle of the population for better living conditions (NIBUHR; ENNS, 1999). However, with the end of the military dictatorship, in mid-1989, a movement of empowerment of society for the search for new horizons in the nation emerged in the country and it was during this

period that the first referrals to a democratic transition occurred. In 1994, the process of reform of the Paraguayan educational system began amid global demands for capital reorganization and the constitution of democracy, already in compliance with the agreements signed under Mercosur and SEM.

In 1998, Ley General de Educación No. 1,264 was sanctioned, which supports educational reforms within the national educational system and proposes principles for public and private education, as well as granting education a prominent place for the consolidation of the democratic regime in the nation. This decision-making led to a decrease in social inequality and the emergence of new opportunities for the entire Paraguayan population. It is noteworthy that this Law regulates the principles of an educational system considering education in general, special education, the school system and its teaching modalities (PARAGUAY, 1998). In the field of education, both countries have made investments for the implementation of educational policies, which have been the result of commitments made under Mercosur and SEM since 2004.

Thus, it is evident that both countries, Brazil and Paraguay, faced difficulties and challenges in educational policies to honor the agreements established at Mercosur and SEM meetings. However, even in the midst of the troubled reality, they established laws aimed at bringing the right to bilingual education to the population of each country.

8

### **Creation of the Cross-Cultural Frontier Schools Program - PEIF - and its organizational challenges**

The PEIF had in essence the principles present, initially, in the Protocol of Intentions signed in 1991, which aimed to contribute in the educational sector to achieve political objectives of integration within Mercosur and, later, in the Brasilia Declaration<sup>2</sup> signed in 2003, as well as in the SEM Action Plan, so border schools are entitled intercultural schools. To this end, the program's actions focus on bilingual teaching.

The main objective of the PEIF, in accordance with Article 1, "[...] contribute to the

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<sup>2</sup> The Second Meeting of South American Presidents held in Guayaquil, Ecuador, on July 26 and 27, 2002, symbolized the continuity of a Brazilian diplomatic initiative at the South American Summit in Brasilia, which took place on August 31 and September 1, 2000. Thus, the meeting ended with the signing of two joint declarations, one, concerning the establishment of a South American Peace Zone and the other, related to integration, security and infrastructure for development, the so-called "Joint Declaration of Brasilia for the Strengthening of Regional Integration". The purpose of this declaration is to establish a forum for the purpose of creating collective security policies and thus deepening integration. Faced with the current difficulties for the discussion of new rounds of trade liberalization, we see the creation of an infrastructure connecting the transport, communications and energy network of South American countries as concrete goals for the physical integration of economies (VIZENTINI, 2007).



integral education of students, seeking to develop actions with a view to regional integration through intercultural education in public schools on the border [...] (BRAZIL, 2012). The Program proposes changes in the educational environment, that is, aims to adapt the teaching process to the peculiar reality of border with the expansion of the offer of knowledge, methods, processes and educational contents.

When considering teaching in two languages, in Spanish and Portuguese, the PEIF presents three basic principles that distinguish it from other training of teachers in service, starting with the intercultural work to be outlined in schools, as provided for in ORDINANCE MEC No. 798 of June 19, 2012:

[...] I - Interculturality, which recognizes borders as a locus of diversity and that positively evaluates the diverse formative cultures of Mercosur, promoting the culture of peace, mutual knowledge and the citizens of the various member countries. This convivenciality takes place with the joint work of teachers from the two countries in each of the Intercultural Schools (CRUZE principle), twin or close (BRASIL, 2012, our translation).

Torchi e Silva (2016) show that within the PEIF cultural diversity must be understood and valued so that the school community understands the richness of the presence of a second language in its daily life. Thus, the work with interculturality becomes relevant for respecting differences and promoting cultural encounters.

Therefore, the work of the PEIF must go through the classroom and reach intercultural aspects that need to be demystified and seen as a reality full of riches typical of border regions, that is, without prejudice, because the culture present at the border is peculiar to the rest of a country by integrating two distinct peoples into the same space. To exemplify, Pereira (2002) points out that Paraguayan children are psychologically abused regarding the use of language and their culture, because Brazilian teachers have difficulties in considering the complex reality experienced at the border, that is, many reproduce "the formalism that is required of higher education bodies, disregarding the cultural diversity present in the classroom" (PEREIRA, 2002, p. 49-50, our translation).

When relating the language, Article 2, item II, of the said Ordinance is presented, plus a basic principle:

II - Bilingualism, which provides for teaching to be carried out in two languages, Spanish and Portuguese, with a regular workload or tending to the peer, with a balanced distribution of the knowledge or disciplines taught in each of the languages. It also provides for respect for the subject of learning, the presence in the school of other regional languages, according to the demand (BRASIL, 2012, our translation).

On the above, according to Colaça (2015), it is worth mentioning that the Republic of Paraguay has been considered bilingual, with Guarani and Spanish as official languages by the Constitution of that country since 1992. And, the PEIF provides in its Ordinance for bilingual teaching among Mercosur countries. It is noteworthy that in the specific case of this study, the relationship established was between Brazil and Paraguay.

The reality, present among border countries, leads to another explicit basic principle in article 2(III) of Ordinance MEC No. 798/2012, which deals with "III - Common and collective construction of the Political-Pedagogical Plan of Twin Schools, respecting the school traditions of the countries involved and including the specific cultural demands of the frontier in the curriculum" (BRASIL, 2012, our translation).

LDB No. 9,394/96, in line with the provisions of the Federal Constitution of 1988, article 210, reports that "minimum content will be fixed for elementary school, in order to ensure common basic training and respect for cultural and artistic values, national and regional". And, the pedagogical proposal of the schools involved with the PEIF needs to make adjustments to contemplate the changes envisaged during the implementation of the Program, but without losing sight of the expressed in the LDB (BRASIL, 1996).

| 10

Considering the frontier reality, the author also points out that rethinking the Pedagogical Proposal (PP) of a school in order to adapt to the proposal of the PEIF implies promoting changes in all segments of the school, from the manager to the other employees, always with the participation of the school community (FERNANDES, 2013).

Another point to be highlighted about the PP is the changes that came with the changes in schools to suit the MEC Ordinance No. 798/2012, that is, the changes in the way of seeing and considering the student in the document and in the classroom. The PPs of educational institutions usually meet a standard established by the Departments of Education when considering the number of students without analyzing the local reality, but the program proposal provides for the opposite of this practice.

Therefore, reporting in the PP the particularities present in the border demonstrates the need for change also in the pedagogical practice of the "Twin Schools", as stated in article 2 iii of the Ordinance in question. To understand the meaning of the term "twin school" or "mirror school", it is important to use the concept of "twin city" established by Article 1, of the Ordinance of the Ministry of National Integration No. 125/2014, for those municipalities that border dry with another country:

Twin cities will be considered the municipalities cut by the border line, whether this drought or river, articulated or not by infrastructure work, which present great potential for economic and cultural integration, and may or may not present a conurbation or semi-conurbation with a locality of the neighboring country, as well as "condensed" manifestations of the problems characteristic of the border, which acquire greater density there, with direct effects on regional development and citizenship.

Art. 2 - Twin cities will not be considered those that individually have a population of less than 2,000 (two thousand) inhabitants.

The term "twin school" also applies to cities located within the perimeter of 150 kilometers, as it is considered a border strip. To conceptualize the term "border or border strip", we use the Plan for Development and Integration of the Southern Border Strip of Mato Grosso (BRASIL, 2014, our translation).

On the forms of financing of the Program, Lorenzoni (2013) points out that the PEIF was funded with resources from the Annual Budget Law (LOA) and with research grants for teachers, as well as for the managers of the participating schools. From 2014, the proposal to expand the Program had as priority the number of schools participating in the More Education Program (SME)<sup>3</sup> and Innovative High School<sup>4</sup>, and, therefore, municipal schools began to integrate the training. Torchi e Silva (2014) report that for the border school to join the program it is necessary to register online in the MEC system and, therefore, the school should be part of the SME.

| 11

As for the cost for the implementation of PEIF in schools, Borges (2014) argues that schools that have joined the More Education Program received an additional resource from the Direct Money in Schools Program (PDDE) linked to the National Fund for the Development of Education (FNDE) subordinated to MEC and university, to promote the formation of the PEIF and develop actions that would qualify the integral training of students in the school environment. It should be reported that, in the case of this research, the university responsible for continuing education was the Federal University of Grande Dourados (UFGD).

For Lorenzoni (2013), in general terms, the PEIF was linked to the Secretariat of Basic Education (SEB) of MEC and 11 municipalities joined the Program throughout Brazil, totaling

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<sup>3</sup> The Program was created by MEC Ordinance No. 1,144/2016 and governed by FNDE Resolution No. 17/2007 and regulated by Decree No. 7,083/10. Represents a MEC strategy to expand comprehensive education in state and municipal education networks, expanding the school day to at least seven hours a day, through the performance of optional activities in macrofields; pedagogical accompaniment; environmental education; sport and leisure; human rights in education; culture and arts; digital culture; health promotion; communication and use of media; research in the field of nature sciences and economic education.

<sup>4</sup> It was established by Ordinance No. 971 of October 9, 2009, in the context of the implementation of actions aimed at the Education Development Plan (PDE). The objective of the Program is to support and strengthen the State and District Education Systems in the development of innovative curricular proposals in high schools, providing technical and financial support, depending on the dissemination of the culture of a dynamic, flexible curriculum that meets the expectations and needs of students and the demands of today's society.

the participation of 17 schools with about 7,500 students enrolled in the initial years of elementary school, target audience of the Program. In this universe, 250 professors were trained by ten universities throughout Brazil. In 2014, the Program intended to expand care to 108 schools in 36 municipalities involving about 2,100 teachers receiving continuing education by 15 universities (BORGES, 2014).

The PEIF provided, in its organizational structure, training for university professors, which would be the multipliers in each state participating in the Program, enabling them to bring continued training to basic education teachers of each municipality that has been adhering to the PEIF. According to MEC Ordinance No. 798/2012, Article 8, it is up to universities to train educators to act in the Program.

### **MEC, universities and schools: teamwork in PEIF management**

There is a regime of collaboration and partnership between MEC, universities and schools, because the Federal Government was represented in each city located in the border strip through a federal university, which carried out the continuous training with the teachers working in the schools participating in the PEIF.

| 12

The responsibility attributed to the MEC on the PEIF was limited to the articulation between universities, State and Municipal Departments of Education, as well as border schools that adhered to the Program, as expressed in Article 4, of ORDINANCE MEC No. 798/2012.

It is up to the Brazilian Ministry of Education, through the Secretariat of Basic Education and the International Advisory Council to promote institutional articulation and technical cooperation between the Ministries of Education of the member countries, State and Municipal Departments of Education, universities and the National Council of Education and the State and Municipal Councils of Education, as well as to guarantee financial resources to training institutions and schools, achieving the objectives of the Program (BRASIL, 2012, our translation).

Article 8, of Ordinance MEC No. 798/2012, informs that it is incumbent upon the university and the realization of teacher training to teachers who work in the Program. The training promoted by higher education institutions (HEIs) accredited to the PEIF could receive the support of twin cities or in a border strip. The continuing training to be promoted by the HEIs should be delineated from the sociolinguistic survey, made by linguists from universities, to trace the local sociolinguistic profile and, thus, outline the strategies of action.

In Brazil, in Mato Grosso do Sul, the municipalities of Amambai, Aral Moreira, Coronel Sapucaia, Mundo Novo, Paranhos and Ponta Porã participated in the continuing training for

teachers with the city polo for the meetings the last city mentioned. It should be explained that there was a division of responsibilities between the two federal universities of the State, the Federal University of Mato Grosso do Sul (UFMS) and the Federal University of Grande Dourados (UFGD), for the realization of continuing training for professionals of the schools participating in the PEIF. Below are the municipalities participating in the training and the respective training institutions (Chart 1):

**Table 1 - PEIF configuration in Mato Grosso do Sul (2014)**

<b>Municipality</b>	<b>Classification</b>	<b>Border Countries</b>	<b>Training University</b>
Amambai	Border Line	Paraguay	UFGD
Aral Moreira	Border Line	Paraguay	UFGD
Bela Vista	Twin City	Paraguay	UFMS
Coronel Sapucaia	Border Line	Paraguay	UFGD
Corumbá	Twin City	Bolivia	UFMS
Mundo Novo	Twin City	Paraguay	UFGD
Paranhos	Twin City	Paraguay	UFGD
Ponta Porã	Twin City	Paraguay	UFGD

Source: Assis (2016)

In 2012, the scope of the Program beyond the Brazil-Paraguay border was expanded, which had been occurring since 2009. The Brazil-Bolivia border was adhered, precisely in Corumbá (Brazil) and Puerto Quijarro (Bolivia). In this last locality, continuing education was under the responsibility of the Federal University of Mato Grosso do Sul (UFMS) in partnership with MEC and the Municipal Secretariat of Corumbá (ASSIS, 2016). See Table 2 with the cities participating in the PEIF under the responsibility of UFGD as a training unit and their respective participating schools:

**Table 2 - PEIF Participants under the responsibility of UFGD**

<b>Municipality</b>	<b>Schools</b>
Aral Moreira	Escola Municipal Adroaldo Da Cruz
	Escola Polo Municipal Indígena Arandu Renda Guarani Kaiowa
	Escola Municipal Mauricio Rodrigues de Paula
Coronel Sapucaia	Escola Municipal Fernando de Souza Romanin
	Escola Municipal Ruy Espíndola
Mundo Novo	Escola Polo Municipal Carlos Chagas e Extensão Jose Honorato da Silva

Source: Data provided by the PEIF/UFGD Coordination (2014)

Borges (2014) draws attention to the fact that with the realization of continuing education and the exchange of teachers, we sought to develop an intercultural pedagogical project that had interculturality as its starting point, with an integral intercultural curriculum as a focus.

However, the PEIF did not realize CRUCE and with Paraguay's departure from Mercosur in 2013<sup>5</sup>, it became impossible to exchange between Brazilian and Paraguayan schools and the consequent shutdown of the country from the PEIF. And with the addition of municipal schools in 2014 continued training for teachers only among Brazilian schools. Indeed, the PEIF, as a specific educational policy for the border region, focused on promoting teaching based on the local reality.

Therefore, the PEIF represented an opportunity for continued training for border teachers, through joint actions, as well as of common interest for both countries. It also proposed the breaking of 'pre' concepts and social conflicts through integration, where exchanges between Brazilian and Paraguayan teachers initiated in the PEBF promoted understanding, as well as respect for culture and intercultural education. But the failure to carry out CRUCE on this border during the term of the PEIF symbolized a failure in the implementation of this supranational policy between Brazil and Paraguay.

<sup>5</sup> On June 22, 2012, then-Paraguayan President Fernando Lugo was removed from office. Since the impeachment process, Paraguay has undergone a suspension process as a member of Mercosur. After Paraguay's suspension, Mercosur elected Venezuela as a permanent member of the regional bloc (FRIZZERA, 2013, p. 156).



## Final considerations

The PEIF sought, through continuing education, to present to the educator a methodological proposal in which the "student represents the center of the educational process", something already discussed in the pedagogical field, regardless of his nationality and development conditions.<sup>6</sup>

It is also worth mentioning that the PEIF in its essence provided for the integration of the MEC, through universities, with schools and teachers, in which the proposal of MEC Ordinance No. 798/2012 provided for a continuous training with which the frontier teacher had the opportunity to review his practice and his posture in the classroom in the face of the peculiar reality of the border.

The Program outlined new directions for border education with the realization of continuing education under the responsibility of universities, even not performing CRUCE on Brazil's border with Paraguay brought a new organizational perspective with the arrival of the university to foster the continued training of teachers. As Assisi (2016) emphasized, the frontier teacher sees his reality and, therefore, seeks in continuing education a possibility of improving his practice in the classroom.

From this perspective, it is worth answering the initial question: Has the management of the PEIF, as a teacher education policy, achieved its objective in education in a border region? The PEIF, as the last program representing a specific policy for the border, achieved its objective in parts, because in the last version did not occur the CRUCE, besides not achieving the support of all schools located in the twin cities or in the border strip. And, its discontinuity denotes the lack of commitment of the rulers of Mercosur member countries to the specificities of education in border regions.

However, there are many challenges in this process and the first of these is the 'pre' concept existing among peers, that is, among teachers for students, in the promotion of education in border municipalities and evidenced in the schools participating in the PEIF. For Pereira (2014), the ideal in an intercultural education is covered by the social conflicts present in the border environment.

Thus, the discrepancies between the teaching taught in Brazil and Paraguay cause discomfort among the teachers of the border and, thus, the 'pre' concept is established. For this reason, the PEIF represents a challenge in seeking to overcome this limitation present in the

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<sup>6</sup> The teacher in this case represents the figure of a "facilitator" of the student's educational process, that is, the student becomes an apprentice being considered a subject to the extent that he is self-determines. Thus, the center of the learning process as proposed by the French law of 1989 (BOUTIN, 2017) is gained.

educational environment.

The CRUCE was considered challenging by educators taking into account the social conflicts masked by the 'pre' concept already mentioned, but also because it represents a society distinct from the others due to the intertwining of the cultures of two countries, Brazil and Paraguay.

According to Pereira (2014), border education itself is challenging, because in addition to Brazilian students, the city's schools receive Paraguayan children, who have official documents from Brazil (such as birth records) and Paraguay, thus becoming citizens with dual nationality. And therefore, they acquire the right to education like any individual in the exercise of their citizenship.

Another challenging point of border education is related to language, as Alvarez (2016) points out when he conceptualizes linguistic hybridism, popularly known as "portunhol", which is nothing more than the mixture in the orality of the Portuguese language with Spanish, then occurring a linguistic binarism and, therefore, the "cultural walls" are delimited in an attempt to overlap one culture by the other.

It should be made explicit that the PEIF provides for language teaching and not foreign language teaching. In the case of reality between Brazil and Paraguay, the teaching of the Portuguese language, Guarani and Spanish, that is, it is not a bilingual work, but multilingual, which the school needs to provide during the reformulation of the PPP and the university must work in continuing education for the teachers involved. | 16

For this reason, it is challenging to work with the language at the border. So much so that when Alvarez (2016) mentions the need for educational policies that address border specificity as well as the continued training of teachers, I ratify that such concern should not only be for graduates in Letters, but aimed at all licensed professionals who are at work in basic frontier education.

However, the discontinuity of the program in 2015 marked the end of a specific policy for the border region. Because it is a project instituted by the Federal Government, its formal completion should have taken place, but there was no repeal of its Ordinance. Thus, its resumption becomes challenging, as it requires investments by the Government and the rapprochement with border schools. Therefore, the biggest challenge lies in overcoming the economic crisis scenario experienced in Brazil.

Finally, there are many factors that compromise access to education with quality and social responsibility on the part of the governments. Thus, the gap in the current educational policy regarding local specificities, such as education in the border region, is evident.

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