Diversity and Language Teaching: Theoretical Reflections and Practical Approaches for Inclusive Education

Diversidade e Ensino de Línguas: Reflexões Teóricas e Práticas para uma Educação Inclusiva

Diversidad y Enseñanza de Lenguas: Reflexiones Teóricas y Prácticas para una Educación Inclusiva

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Abstract: In this article we discuss the importance of diversity and criticality in foreign language teaching, with an emphasis on teacher education and textbook analysis. Based on Critical Applied Linguistics (Pennycook, 2001), Critical Pedagogy (Freire, 1997), and decolonial perspectives, we present the outcome of a workshop held with professors from the University of São Paulo (USP) and the University of Augsburg. The workshop explored the challenges and possibilities of making language education more representative, inclusive, and sensitive to local realities. Topics such as family and gender representations in textbooks, inclusive language, and the treatment of traditionally avoided subjects (such as politics, religion, and sexual identity) were addressed. Based on this experience, the article proposes pedagogical strategies focused on critical analysis of materials, the usage of diverse types of media, and the development of active listening practices that embrace different identities. It concludes that socially engaged language teaching should value the plural voices of learners and educators, fostering a more transformative learning environment.

Key words: Language teaching. diversity. Teacher education. Critical Applied Linguistics. Teaching materials

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Resumo: Este artigo discute a importância da diversidade e da criticidade no ensino de línguas estrangeiras, com ênfase na formação docente e na análise de materiais didáticos. Ancorado na Linguística Aplicada Crítica, na Pedagogia Crítica e em perspectivas decoloniais, o estudo apresenta o relato de uma oficina realizada com docentes da USP e da Universidade de Augsburg, na qual foram debatidos os desafios e possibilidades de tornar o ensino de línguas mais representativo, inclusivo e sensível às realidades locais. A oficina abordou temas como representações familiares e de gênero nos livros didáticos, linguagem inclusiva, e o tratamento de conteúdos tradicionalmente evitados (como política, religião e identidade sexual). A partir dessa experiência, são propostas estratégias pedagógicas voltadas para a análise crítica de materiais, uso de mídias diversificadas e construção de práticas de escuta ativa, capazes de acolher diferentes identidades. Conclui-se que um ensino de línguas socialmente engajado deve valorizar as vozes plurais de aprendizes e docentes, promovendo um espaço de aprendizagem mais transformador.

Palavras-chave: Ensino de línguas. Diversidade. Formação docente. Linguística Aplicada Crítica. Materiais didáticos

Resumen: Este artículo discute la importancia de la diversidad y la criticidad en la enseñanza de lenguas extranjeras, con énfasis en la formación docente y el análisis de materiales didácticos. Basado en la Lingüística Aplicada Crítica, la Pedagogía Crítica y perspectivas decoloniales, el estudio presenta el relato de un taller realizado con docentes de la USP y de la Universidad de Augsburgo, en el que se debatieron los desafíos y posibilidades de hacer la enseñanza de lenguas más representativa, inclusiva y sensible a las realidades locales. El taller abordó temas como las representaciones familiares y de género en los libros de texto, el lenguaje inclusivo y el tratamiento de contenidos tradicionalmente evitados (como política, religión e identidad sexual). A partir de esta experiencia, se proponen estrategias pedagógicas orientadas al análisis crítico de materiales, el uso de medios diversos y la construcción de prácticas de escucha activa, capaces de acoger diferentes identidades. Se concluye que una enseñanza de lenguas socialmente comprometida debe valorar las voces plurales de estudiantes y docentes, promoviendo un espacio de aprendizaje más transformador.

Palabras clave: Enseñanza de lenguas. Diversidad. Formación docente. Lingüística Aplicada Crítica. materiales didácticos

1 INTRODUCTION

Language teaching is a social and political process that goes beyond the learning of linguistic and communicative knowledge. More than just acquiring grammatical structures and vocabulary, the teaching of an additional language (AL) involves the construction of identities, the interaction between cultures, and the negotiation of meanings within specific social contexts. Thus, the way a language is taught can either reproduce or challenge power relations, influencing how learners perceive themselves in the world (Monte Mór, 2013). In this sense, a critical approach to AL—one that identifies and questions categories of power and knowledge—is essential to promote the appreciation of linguistic, cultural, and identity diversity, as well as to challenge normative and Eurocentric discourses that have historically shaped teaching materials and pedagogical practices.

Paulo Freire's Critical Pedagogy (1997) significantly contributes to this perspective by emphasizing that teaching should not be a "banking" practice—where knowledge is

deposited into students in a passive manner—but rather a dialogical process that fosters awareness and social transformation. In language teaching, this approach entails questioning how and whose identities are represented in materials and texts, which cultures are valued, and which discourses are silenced. Freirean thought, by proposing education as an act of freedom and resistance, aligns with what Pennycook (2001) defines as Critical Applied Linguistics, a field that seeks to understand language as part of social and political processes, challenging technicist views of language teaching. According to Pennycook (2001), language teaching should be understood as a situated practice, permeated by power relations and inequalities, which must be continuously analyzed and problematized. In both approaches, in addition to critically questioning power relations, it is necessary, through constant dialogue, to seek practical alternatives to achieve empowerment and a sense of belonging in teaching and societal practices.

Diversity in AL teaching must be seen from a broad perspective, considering linguistic, cultural, ethnic-racial, gender, and social class aspects (Gerlach, Lüche, 2024). However, many traditional approaches overlook these variables, perpetuating a homogeneous view of language and its speakers. Candau (2020) highlights that the classroom can be seen both as a space of inclusion and belonging as well as an environment that reinforces exclusions and inequalities. In AL teaching and learning environments, this duality is manifested in how certain dialects, varieties, and cultures are ignored or marginalized. Rajagopalan (2006) argues that the imposition of a single linguistic norm—often based on prestigious varieties—contributes to the exclusion of groups that do not share these norms, reinforcing the hierarchy of speech forms and social subjects.

Given this scenario, AL teaching, especially in the context of teacher education, plays a crucial role in building more inclusive and critical teaching practices. In this regard, Gerlach and Lücke (2024) emphasize that language teachers should not only transmit grammatical rules and isolated knowledge but also act as mediators and facilitators of reflection and dialogue that challenge existing pedagogical practices. According to the authors, teacher education should include discussions on representation, diversity, and the role of language in the construction of social identities. However, teacher trainees often do not receive an adequate theoretical and practical framework to address these issues, which can result in the reproduction of normative and exclusionary approaches.

Beyond teacher education, one of the main challenges in implementing a critical and inclusive approach to language teaching is the predominance of teaching materials that reinforce Eurocentric and exclusionary standards. Studies such as those by Ferreira and Aquino (2024) analyze how German AL textbooks from major German publishers present a restricted view of language and culture, privileging white, heteronormative, and Westernized narratives. This type of material disregards the plurality of speakers of the target language and limits learners' ability to identify with the content. Local projects, such as the Brazilian *Zeitgeist*, offer a decolonial approach by providing alternatives that break away from this logic, proposing teaching materials that reflect local realities and encourage more critical and inclusive language instruction (Aquino, Ferreira, 2023).

Another strategy to foster diversity and criticality in language teaching is the use of different media in the teaching-learning process. Gerlach and Lücke (2024) argue that media such as films, music, social media posts, and multimodal texts are valuable tools for broadening students' cultural perspectives and allowing different discourses to be analyzed and questioned. The use of diverse media enables the discussion of sensitive topics and promotes teaching that is more connected to learners' experiences and identities (Paiva, 2013; Aquino, Oliveira, 2023). Thus, incorporating diverse and authentic materials (not adapted for AL teaching) into language instruction can contribute to a more dynamic, plural, and meaningful learning experience while simultaneously challenging the hegemonic discourses present in traditional textbooks.

Based on these reflections, this article aims to discuss the importance of critical thinking in teacher education, emphasizing the need for pedagogical practices that value diversity and problematize normative discourses in AL. To this end, it presents a report on a workshop conducted within the scope of the Fapesp/Baylat project, involving educators from the University of São Paulo (USP) and the University of Augsburg (UA). The workshop raised questions about the possibilities and challenges of incorporating more diverse representations in AL classrooms. It also addressed the role of teaching material selection in these discussions and proposed collaborative pathways for constructing a more inclusive, reflective, and welcoming approach to language teaching.

Drawing from this formative experience, which combined theoretical and practical discussions, concrete pedagogical strategies are discussed—such as the use of different types of media, a critical approach to taboo topics, and the encouragement of active listening—that contribute to a dialogical and transformative teaching practice. The adopted

methodology integrates theoretical foundations with practical analysis, establishing connections between the frameworks of Critical Applied Linguistics, Critical Pedagogy, and Decoloniality with the workshop's training context. In the next section, we present a discussion on critical and diversity-oriented approaches to language teaching, followed by an introduction to the structure and results of the workshop, as well as suggestions for working with diversity in AL instruction.

2   DIVERSITY AND LANGUAGE TEACHING

The relationship between language, diversity, and language teaching has been widely debated within Critical Applied Linguistics (Pennycook, 2001), which proposes an educational approach that goes beyond the mere transmission of grammatical and lexical structures, emphasizing the social, political, and cultural implications of this process. The critical approach to language teaching is deeply rooted in poststructuralist and sociocultural theories that challenge the traditional view of language as a fixed and homogeneous code. According to Pennycook (2001), language should be understood as a social and political phenomenon, intrinsically linked to power dynamics and identity. In this sense, linguistic diversity should not be seen merely as something to be tolerated but as a central factor in pedagogical practice. Language teaching, far from being neutral, thus serves as a space for either the reproduction or contestation of ideologies and structural inequalities, directly impacting learners' identity construction.

This conception resonates with Paulo Freire's (1997) thought, which advocates education as a means of social transformation, where learning should foster critical awareness (*conscientização*), allowing students to analyze and intervene in their sociocultural contexts. For Freire, teaching should not be a mechanical act of content transfer but a process of continuous dialogue and transformation, where students and teachers collaboratively construct knowledge by problematizing their realities. Therefore, by promoting a critical perspective, teachers can encourage reflection on how language operates in constructing identities and social inequalities. Diversity in language teaching should be understood in its multiple dimensions, including linguistic variations, ethnic-racial representations, gender, social class, and cultural identity.

According to Candau (2011), a critical educational approach must recognize and value different forms of belonging and identity, combating homogenization processes that have historically excluded diverse sociocultural experiences. In language teaching, this homogenization occurs when there is an exclusive focus on hegemonic linguistic varieties and dominant cultural perspectives, neglecting the plurality of language use and the experiences of its speakers. In this regard, Rajagopalan (2006) argues that the imposition of a single linguistic norm reflects a reductionist perspective that ignores variations fundamental to identity construction. Thus, treating one variety as the "standard" and others as "deviations" creates an exclusionary environment where certain forms of expression are devalued and marginalized. In language learning contexts, this perspective also results in an endless and frustrating pursuit of the ideal knowledge of the target language's structure and pronunciation, potentially leading to feelings of exclusion and demotivation.

The concept of *translanguaging* (García, Wei, 2014) also contributes to this discussion, as it emphasizes the importance of allowing students to use their languages dynamically and integratively rather than restricting them to an artificial monolingual standard. This understanding challenges the notion of proficiency as a fixed and homogeneous goal, fostering a more inclusive and pluralistic approach to language teaching.

However, AL teacher education still does not adequately address these issues, which can lead to the reproduction of exclusionary practices. Gerlach and Lücke (2024) argue that language teachers should be much more than mere transmitters of knowledge; they should represent social transformation. In this sense, teacher reflection is essential for fostering teaching that values plurality and questions inequalities, as failing to critically examine teaching materials can perpetuate not only limited worldviews but also an exclusionary learning environment. Critical pedagogical practice involves recognizing that students should not be viewed as passive recipients of information but as active agents who bring their experiences into the classroom. Thus, teaching should promote dialogical and contextualized learning, allowing learners—and future teachers—to relate content to their realities and experiences.

Another approach that can contribute to developing critical practices that promote significant changes in different social spheres lies in the concept of decoloniality. Decolonial thought advocates breaking away from colonial power structures that strongly

shape societies. According to Mignolo (2017), the coloniality of power is the primary tool for subjugating peoples and legitimizing the subalternization of knowledge. This perspective highlights the entanglement between colonial power and knowledge, thus extending to the sphere of education. For Candau (2011), it is essential to emphasize the need to denaturalize coloniality processes to develop more critical language education. In the teaching of German as an AL, this perspective applies to teacher education projects and the reception and creation of teaching materials.

One of the greatest challenges in implementing a critical and decolonial approach to language teaching is the predominance of didactic materials that reinforce Eurocentric and socially homogeneous standards. Global German textbooks frequently present a limited and homogenizing view of culture and identity, neglecting the pluricentric and sociocultural aspects of the language as well as local demands (Aquino, Ferreira, 2022; Uphoff, Arantes, 2023). Ferreira and Aquino (2024) have identified that many of these materials make diverse social groups invisible, reinforcing predominantly white, heteronormative representations and Eurocentric clichés. This bias restricts students' ability to identify themselves with the content and reinforces cultural ideals that may exclude their realities.

To address this issue, the *Zeitgeist* project was developed to create teaching materials for German language instruction in Brazilian academic contexts from a decolonial perspective, promoting content more aligned with local demands and representations. By prioritizing socially relevant themes and representing diverse identities, the project seeks to challenge the normativity imposed by traditional materials and encourage critical and reflective learning. In the next section, we will present a contextualized example of this project's work.

Beyond analyzing textbooks, one of the most effective strategies for broadening cultural and linguistic perspectives in language teaching is the use of diverse types of media. Gerlach and Lücke (2024) argue that films, music, social media posts, and multimodal texts can be powerful tools for stimulating discussions on diversity and inclusion. The usage of these authentic materials allows students to engage with multiple linguistic and cultural varieties, providing a more dynamic learning experience relevant to diverse interests and experiences. Additionally, contemporary media offer a safe space for discussing sensitive topics such as racial inequality, gender diversity, and human rights, fostering a more critical awareness of the discourses circulating in society. Thus,

incorporating diverse media into AL teaching not only challenges stereotypical representations but also increases student participation, making learning more meaningful.

Therefore, inclusive language teaching requires a continuous commitment to diversity through approaches and materials that encourage the critical analysis of the discourses shaping interactions inside and outside the classroom. AL learning is not limited to acquiring formal structures; rather, it becomes one mean to understand, question, and transform the social and cultural relationships that shape the contemporary world. In the next section, we present a discussion of this topic based on a workshop held at USP with educators from Brazil and Germany, whose discussions resulted in reflections on the possibilities and challenges of fostering greater diversity inclusion in language teaching.

3 DESCRIPTION OF THE WORKSHOP EXPERIENCE

The workshop "Education and Diversity: Critical and Inclusive Practices in Language Teaching" was held during the event *Diversity, Multilingualism, and Contact: Linguistic, Sociocultural, and Didactic Perspectives*, organized by the Fapesp/Baylat project from March 24 to 28, 2025. The activity included the participation of seven faculty members from USP and UA. It was conducted trilingually (Portuguese, German, and English), adapting to the theme and theoretical framework under discussion. The central aim was to foster a collaborative critical reflection on the inclusion—or exclusion—of diversity in various language teaching contexts, based on theoretical perspectives from Critical Pedagogy (Freire, 1997), Critical Applied Linguistics (Pennycook, 2001), Decoloniality (Mignolo, 2011), and Diversity in Language Teaching, particularly regarding the German language (Gerlach & Lücke, 2024). In this context, diversity encompasses the inclusion of various identities, perspectives, and experiences, such as:

- Linguistic diversity, including plurilingualism and linguistic varieties;
- Gender and sexual orientation diversity;
- Cultural diversity, , including beliefs, experiences, and values;
- Ethnic-racial diversity;
- Socioeconomic diversity;
- Diversity of special needs, such as ADHD, dyslexia, and autism.

Based on this foundation, discussions focused on the impact of thematic choices and teaching materials on the teaching-learning process, particularly addressing recurring gaps in inclusive work found in traditional textbooks, such as:

- A Eurocentric and standardized focus on language, emphasizing perfect pronunciation and grammar akin to native speakers;
- Limited representations of female roles and LGBTQIA+ identities, not only regarding their presence but also in the roles assigned to them in society;
- Little or no ethnic-racial diversity, where diversity is often present only as a background element rather than as well-developed characters;
- Homogenization of political, social, and economic contexts, where culture is frequently tied to national territories.

During the workshop, two widely used textbooks for teaching German as an additional language, especially in academic contexts, were analyzed: *DaF kompakt neu* (Braun et al., 2016) and *Akademie Deutsch* (Schmoll et al., 2022). The analysis highlighted the representation of German cities from a touristic perspective (such as Carnival in Cologne or Oktoberfest in Munich) and images of families composed of white, heterosexual, middle-class couples. This limited representation reinforces stereotypes and contributes to student detachment from the material, especially in the Brazilian context, as discussed by Ferreira and Aquino (2024). The following images contextualize this discussion:

Image 1: Representation of cities and families

Source: Braun et al. (2016); Schmohl et al. (2022)

In contrast, an example of locally developed material from the *Zeitgeist* textbook was presented. This book, currently in development, adopts a critical and decolonial approach to teaching German in Brazilian academic settings. The activity used to stimulate the discussion wasa text written by a student from UFRJ, addressing family diversity based on her personal experience (Image 2). The material aims to expand identity representation possibilities, fostering greater engagement and identification among Brazilian students by incorporating local voices. The *Zeitgeist* project seeks to break away from the normative standards present in international textbooks by including local voices and biographies, promoting greater engagement and identification among Brazilian students.

Image 2: Exemple from the Zeitgeist project

Source: Zeitgeist (forthcoming)

To provoke reflection and discussion on diversity in teaching and instructional materials, the workshop facilitator posed several questions throughout the session, such as: "How does diversity appear in your context?" and "In what ways does diversity (or its absence) manifest in didactic choices?" Participants' responses revealed common concerns:

- At USP, the socioeconomic diversity of students was highlighted, along with the growing demand for strategies that consider neurodiversity;
- In the German context, the discussion focused on the importance of critical teacher education regarding the cultural and linguistic diversity brought by migrant families, although the rigid school curriculum poses challenges for adaptation;
- In both scenarios, the importance of creating space for gender discussions was emphasized, welcoming students with empathy through practices such as using preferred pronouns and names, as well as applying diagnostic questionnaires at the beginning of the semester. These allow students to safely present their preferences, special needs, suggestions, and difficulties to instructors.
- It was also discussed that teacher training materials often shift the responsibility of addressing textbook gaps onto teachers. However, this task is complex and depends on both professional training and institutional conditions. While learning to

work with gaps and potentially developing original materials is crucial, teacher education should include strategies for critically questioning and adapting materials, along with peer support and curricular guidelines.

- A point of consensus was that diversity work should be based less on prescriptions of right and wrong and more on openness to dialogue and active listening.

Another key topic debated was the PARSNIP acronym (Politics, Alcohol, Religion, Sex, Narcotics, Isms, Pork), which represents subjects commonly censored by educational publishers to avoid controversy and ensure global marketability. However, critics such as Thornbury (2013) argue that avoiding such topics can lead to decontextualized and superficial language teaching, as language does not exist in isolation from social reality. Reflections on the challenges and possibilities of addressing politics, alcohol, religion, and sex were presented:

- Politics: A highly divisive topic but essential to foster citizenship and critical discourse analysis. Potential approaches include discussions on immigration and political cartoons or comics.
- Alcohol: Sensitive in some cultures and religions; it can be addressed in the context of health and lifestyle. Suggested activities include analyzing alcohol advertisements (such as beer ads) across different countries from a translingual and cultural perspective.
- Religion: A socially and culturally significant topic; it can be explored through traditions, celebrations, and shared values. It could be interesting to address the topic through the history of religions.
- Sex: A topic that can cause discomfort; it should be addressed with care, focusing on relationships, personal identity, and family structures. Like other topics, it can be explored through linguistic aspects, such as describing emotions, feelings, and identities. Social media can serve as a powerful tool for discussing this subject.

The discussion emphasized that these taboo topics should not be mandatory but should also not be systematically avoided. When addressed, they should align with students' interests and willingness, providing space for collaboration, listening, and reflection. The goal is to understand students' needs and boundaries while fostering a critical and inclusive perspective. Thus, critical teaching with the PARSNIP approach can enable didactic strategies that include such topics responsibly, aligning with students' needs and interests.

Finally, the workshop revisited the contributions of Paulo Freire's critical pedagogy to teacher education: the importance of questioning norms, the possibility of transformation, and the appreciation of multiple voices and experiences in the classroom. Working with different languages, topics, and biographies challenges the pursuit of an ideal linguistic and cultural knowledge, shifting the focus of language teaching towards a formative process that involves identities, emotions, and political awareness. In this sense, the classroom becomes a space to discuss crossroads, interpreting, and learning from others to build collective and multifaceted paths toward more humane and representative language teaching and learning.

The analysis presented in this section highlights the tension between the need for neutrality in teaching materials and the urgency of more critical and contextualized language education. The discussion on PARSNIP illustrates how the systematic exclusion of certain topics can hinder the formation of more engaged learners. Thus, by revisiting the principles of linguistic diversity and the critical approach previously presented, it is essential for both teachers and students to actively question the implications of thematic censorship in language teaching. A more inclusive and reflective perspective would enable students to develop a broader understanding of language's role in society, fostering the formation of critical and socially engaged individuals.

4 STRATEGIES TO FOSTER CRITICAL REFLECTION IN LANGUAGE TEACHING

Adopting a critical perspective in language teaching requires that both teachers and students understand language as a social and ideological phenomenon. Critical Applied Linguistics (Pennycook, 2001) and Critical Pedagogy (Freire, 1997) point to the need to question the discourses conveyed through teaching materials, as well as to reflect on who is represented (or silenced) in pedagogical narratives. In the Brazilian context, Candau (2020) reinforces the urgency of incorporating diversity as a foundational principle of educational practices.

Many German as an additional language textbooks follow Eurocentric models, promoting normative views on culture, family, and gender relations. Regarding family, most textbooks present the topic from a traditional, heteronormative, and nuclear perspective. This view ignores family configurations such as same-sex, single-parent, or

multigenerational families. Furthermore, the very understanding of what constitutes a family can vary. More inclusive activities could involve discussions or presentations by students about what they consider their family to be and who it consists of. These results could then be compared to textbook portrayals, prompting reflection on the presence or absence of certain family configurations.

Another critical point is the exclusive use of binary (male/female) linguistic norms, in contrast with the growing movement toward neutral and inclusive forms, such as *Studierende* (instead of *Studenten*) and the use of the *Gendersternchen* (e.g., *Lehrer*innen*). A relevant activity could involve researching inclusive language guides (such as those from Freie Universität Berlin) and media debates in Germany about the use of gender-neutral language, encouraging reflection on the impact of gender binarism in language teaching. Through the use of multiple languages (translanguaging), in which students feel more comfortable, a debate on the adoption of inclusive language can be fostered, based on prior readings of articles and news texts, as well as social media posts and videos.

In general, working with authentic materials and texts—such as music, videos, podcasts, and social media posts—is encouraged, as it can broaden students' linguistic and cultural repertoires and allow for the discussion of contemporary issues from multiple perspectives. Students may also be invited (and guided) to produce original texts and materials based on their own interests and realities. Teaching practices can also be redefined through simple strategies, such as asking for students' preferred names and pronouns, involving them in instructional decisions, or holding discussions in multiple languages (not only the target language). Essential to this process is the inclusion of actions that demonstrate empathy, strengthen bonds, and help create a more democratic and inclusive classroom environment.

5 CONCLUSION

Foreign language teaching, when analyzed through the lens of Critical Applied Linguistics (Pennycook, 2001) and Critical Pedagogy (Freire, 1997), emerges as a fundamental space for questioning normative discourses and valuing linguistic, cultural, and identity diversity. This article aimed to discuss the importance of critical thinking in teacher education and propose concrete strategies to foster this approach in language

teaching, based both in theoretical reflections and practical experiences. The study demonstrated that, despite the recognized relevance of diversity in education, many teaching materials still reinforce homogeneous, Eurocentric, and exclusionary perspectives, limiting students' possibilities for identification and engagement.

The workshop held with language educators revealed that most teachers acknowledge the need for a more inclusive approach but face challenges related to the lack of specific training and adequate resources to address these issues in the classroom. The critical analysis of teaching materials during the workshop enabled participants to identify exclusionary patterns and propose adaptations to make the content more representative of students' realities. Moreover, the workshop experience highlighted the importance of using diverse media—such as literary texts, videos, music, and social networks—as a way to broaden cultural and linguistic perspectives in language education. These strategies proved effective in stimulating critical thinking and allowing teachers and students to question the discourses conveyed by traditional materials.

Among the issues discussed, sensitive topics often avoided in textbooks—such as politics, religion, alcohol, and sexuality—stood out. When addressed with sensitivity and respect for students' realities, these topics can expand space for dialogue and reflection in the classroom. Similarly, discussions on inclusive language and family representations contributed to increased awareness of the multiple identities present among learners and the need to create materials and practices that embrace them. The formative practices developed during the workshop also underscored the importance of active listening, welcoming attitudes, and openness to dialogue as foundations for an inclusive pedagogy. By valuing students' voices and life paths, language teaching becomes more humane, connected, and transformative.

The impact of these experiences on teacher education also deserves emphasis. Developing the ability to question teaching materials, adapt content, and incorporate new pedagogical approaches is essential to building more inclusive teaching. Pre-service teachers who engage in critical analysis and reflection on diversity become better prepared to face pedagogical challenges and create a learning environment that values different identities and cultural perspectives. Additionally, by experimenting with various strategies in their own training, these future educators become more capable of adapting their practices to different institutional contexts, whether in traditional schools, universities, or language courses.

Based on these reflections, it is possible to affirm that foreign language teaching can—and should—be a space for the development of critical and socially engaged awareness. The pedagogical practices discussed throughout this article demonstrate that it is possible to integrate diversity into language teaching without compromising the acquisition of the target language, making the process more meaningful for students. Introducing contemporary literary texts, analyzing digital media, and questioning the discourses present in teaching materials are effective strategies for broadening students' perspectives and encouraging more dialogical and reflective teaching.

For such changes to occur broadly, however, continuous investment in teacher education is necessary. Educational institutions must provide support for teachers to develop more critical pedagogical practices through courses, workshops, and study groups focused on inclusive language teaching. Furthermore, publishers and material developers should be encouraged to produce resources that reflect diverse sociocultural and linguistic realities, ensuring that classroom materials mirror the diversity present in contemporary societies.

Finally, this study reinforces that language teaching, by recognizing the plurality of experiences, emotions, and forms of expression, contributes not only to students' linguistic competence but also to their civic, critical, and engaged development. Truly inclusive teaching is that which, instead of adapting individuals to the curriculum, adapts the curriculum to the diversity of individuals.

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