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School internationalization, teacher linguistic inequality, and linguistic social justice in the redesign of an online English course for Brazilian Basic Education teachers

Internacionalização escolar, desigualdade linguística docente e justiça social linguística no redesenho de um curso online de inglês para professores da Educação Básica brasileira

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Abstract

This article examines the critical redesign of a face-to-face English course for Brazilian Basic Education teachers into an online course in a context of school internationalization. The study asks how English-mediated institutional demands may produce teacher linguistic inequality and how a course still in the design phase can respond to this problem from the perspective of critical language education and linguistic social justice. The theoretical framework draws on critical Applied Linguistics, studies on English, globalization and inequality, school internationalization, multiliteracies, and language education as social practice.

Methodologically, the article is based on a situated qualitative study of course redesign, considering course materials, educational artifacts, reflective records, research diary entries, and institutional documents. The analysis indicates that the face-to-face course already connected English learning to teachers' professional routines, trajectories, classroom language, oral presentations, and educational reflection. It also formulates principles for online redesign based on access, recognition, institutional responsibility, gradual publicness, and the diagnostic mapping of English-mediated demands.

Keywords: school internationalization; teacher linguistic inequality; critical language education; teacher education; linguistic social justice.

Resumo

Este artigo examina a reelaboração crítica de um curso presencial de inglês para professores da Educação Básica brasileira em uma proposta online situada em contexto de internacionalização escolar. O estudo pergunta como demandas institucionais mediadas pelo

inglês podem produzir desigualdade linguística docente e de que modo um curso ainda em fase de desenho pode responder a esse problema a partir da educação linguística crítica e da justiça social linguística. O arcabouço teórico articula Linguística Aplicada crítica, estudos sobre inglês, globalização e desigualdade, internacionalização escolar, multiletramentos e educação linguística como prática social. Metodologicamente, o artigo se baseia em estudo qualitativo situado de redesenho de curso, considerando materiais didáticos, artefatos educacionais, registros reflexivos, diário de pesquisa e documentos institucionais. A análise indica que o curso presencial já conectava a aprendizagem de inglês a rotinas profissionais, trajetórias docentes, linguagem de sala de aula, apresentações orais e reflexão educacional. Também formula princípios para o redesenho online com base em acesso, reconhecimento, responsabilidade institucional, publicidade gradual e mapeamento diagnóstico de demandas mediadas pelo inglês.

Palavras-chave: internacionalização escolar; desigualdade linguística docente; educação linguística crítica; formação de professores; justiça social linguística.

1. Introduction

Teacher education does not always begin with a planned curriculum. Sometimes it begins with a discomfort: the recognition that teachers are being asked to inhabit institutional spaces increasingly mediated by English, even though their own educational trajectories have not offered them equal conditions to do so. This discomfort becomes especially visible in contexts of school internationalization, where English may move from being one subject among others to becoming a language of work, documentation, professional development, curricular mediation, digital circulation, and institutional legitimacy.

This article starts from that discomfort. It is situated in a Brazilian Basic Education context in which school internationalization began to reorganize institutional routines, documentary circulation, teacher development, and pedagogical expectations. English did not appear only as a foreign language to be taught or learned. It became part of the ways in which teachers were expected to read documents, understand curricular concepts, participate in professional conversations, and engage with educational discourses mediated by international frameworks. The problem, therefore, was not simply that some teachers “knew” English and others “did not.” Such a binary formulation individualizes a problem that is historically and institutionally produced.

I refer to this problem as teacher linguistic inequality: the unequal positioning of teachers before English-mediated demands that become institutionally valued, professionally consequential, and unevenly accessible. The term does not describe teachers as deficient subjects. It draws attention to the conditions under which certain linguistic repertoires become necessary for participation, while institutional responsibility for creating fairer access to those repertoires remains insufficiently addressed.

Internationalization has often been defined, in higher education studies, as a process through which international, intercultural, or global dimensions are integrated into educational purposes and practices (Knight, 2004; de Wit et al., 2015). These definitions are useful starting points, but they need to be recontextualized when the discussion moves to Basic Education. In school contexts, internationalization is lived through curriculum frameworks, documentary circulation, pedagogical terminology, teacher development, assessment criteria, digital platforms, family expectations, and institutional narratives of quality, innovation, and global belonging. This article approaches that process from Applied Linguistics by asking how it reorganizes teachers' conditions of participation when English becomes one of its privileged mediating languages.

This question requires understanding language as social practice and language education as inseparable from power, identity, mobility, and inequality. Critical Applied Linguistics has questioned the neutrality of English as a global resource and has shown how language policies, pedagogies, and ideologies may reproduce unequal social relations (Pennycook, 2001, 2021; Phillipson, 1992; Tollefson, 1991; Kubota, 2016). In the Brazilian field, critical and interdisciplinary approaches have also insisted that language-related problems should not be detached from the social, historical, political, and educational conditions in which they are produced (Moita Lopes, 2006; Cavalcanti, 2013; Jordão, 2014; Duboc & Ferraz, 2018). From this perspective, an English course for teachers cannot be reduced to a remedial response to a presumed lack of proficiency. It must be understood as an educational space in which repertoires, histories, work conditions, institutional expectations, and possibilities for participation are brought into relation.

The face-to-face course revisited here emerged from a private Basic Education school undergoing a process of internationalization. This location must be acknowledged carefully.

Private schools often operate within educational markets marked by distinction, competitiveness, and institutional branding, yet teachers who work in such institutions are not automatically protected from linguistic inequality. The course was created as a formative response to concrete needs perceived in that context, and its materials connected English to teachers' professional lives in ways that can be critically reread.

Revisiting this experience also makes visible the limits of responding to a linguistic-political problem through a face-to-face format constrained by time, presence, institutional rhythms, and unequal possibilities of participation. The move toward an online course is therefore understood as course redesign as an educational process. In the tradition of multiliteracies, design involves transforming available resources into new possibilities for meaning-making and participation (The New London Group, 1996; Cope & Kalantzis, 2000).

The article is guided by the following research question: How can the redesign of a face-to-face English course for Basic Education teachers respond critically to teacher linguistic inequality in a context of school internationalization? Methodologically, it draws on a situated qualitative study of course redesign as an educational process, considering course documents, teaching materials, educational artifacts, reflective records, research diary entries, and institutional documents.

The contribution of the article is to reframe school internationalization as a problem for Applied Linguistics by showing that it is constituted through language demands, language ideologies, and unequal access to valued repertoires. It develops teacher linguistic inequality as an analytical category and argues that online course redesign can operate as a critical educational response when guided by principles of critical language education, access, recognition, institutional responsibility, and linguistic social justice.

2. School internationalization as a linguistic and political process

School internationalization is often described through the vocabulary of curriculum, innovation, interculturality, global citizenship, institutional partnerships, and educational quality. These terms name real movements through which schools seek to reposition themselves in relation to transnational educational agendas and broader imaginaries of what it means to educate students for a globalized world. Yet, when school internationalization is

examined from the perspective of Applied Linguistics, another layer becomes visible: internationalization is also made of language practices. It is enacted through documents, meetings, assessment criteria, acronyms, rubrics, training sessions, digital platforms, pedagogical concepts, and narratives of institutional belonging. It is something teachers are asked to read, hear, speak, translate, interpret, document, and perform.

The linguistic dimension of internationalization is often obscured by institutional accounts that emphasize innovation, quality, interculturality, or global readiness. In higher education, internationalization has been associated with the integration of international, intercultural, and global dimensions into educational purposes and practices (Knight, 2004; de Wit et al., 2015). These formulations prevent internationalization from becoming a mere label, but they need to be displaced when brought into Basic Education. Schools are not universities in miniature; their internationalization is lived in curriculum frameworks, documents, pedagogical terminology, teacher development, assessment criteria, digital systems, family expectations, and narratives of global belonging.

In Brazil, this movement has also begun to receive more explicit policy and academic attention. The National Parameters for the Internationalization of Basic Education describe internationalization as a process to be considered from the early stages of students' education and propose guidelines for schools, teachers, managers, students, and families (Ministério da Educação, 2022). Recent Brazilian research has examined the conceptual and normative frameworks through which internationalization has entered Basic Education, including the BNCC, the National Parameters, documents on plurilingual education, and records of internationalization practices in Brazilian schools (Morosini et al., 2025). These documents show that internationalization is no longer restricted to higher education debates. At the same time, they make more urgent the question addressed here: how do such processes reorganize teachers' linguistic conditions of participation?

This question becomes particularly relevant in the Brazilian private school sector, where internationalization may operate as a marker of quality, prestige, future mobility, and social advantage. A critical reading cannot ignore these market logics, but reducing every internationalization project to neoliberal branding would also be insufficient. Schools, teachers, and students interpret, adapt, resist, and resignify global agendas within situated institutional histories.

The context discussed here is marked by this ambivalence. It involves relative institutional privilege, expectations of distinction, and forms of educational consumption that often make internationalization desirable. However, institutional privilege does not eliminate linguistic inequality among teachers. On the contrary, it may make such inequality more difficult to name, because teachers who work in socially valued institutions may be presumed to have access to the linguistic resources those institutions increasingly demand. The paradox is that teachers may be professionally experienced, pedagogically competent, and institutionally recognized, while still being placed in vulnerable positions when English becomes a tacit condition for participation.

In internationalized school contexts, English may become part of an institutional language regime. It may organize access to documents, training opportunities, digital platforms, pedagogical discussions, curriculum planning, and professional recognition. If language policies are not only official texts, but also practices, mechanisms, and ideologies that shape what people can do with language in institutions (Tollefson, 1991; Shohamy, 2006), then school internationalization can be read as a form of language policy in practice. Even when no explicit policy states that all teachers must use English, teachers may gradually learn that certain forms of participation require at least partial access to English-mediated repertoires.

Such demands do not affect all teachers in the same way. Some teachers may have had access to private language education, international experiences, bilingual schooling, or professional opportunities in which English was already part of their repertoire. Others may have built their careers through trajectories in which English remained peripheral, inaccessible, or associated with failure, fear, embarrassment, or interrupted learning. The question is how institutional demands encounter unequal histories of language learning.

This positioning may appear in small institutional moments: help needed to understand a document, acronyms circulating without mediation, pedagogical concepts presented in English, digital platforms that presume familiarity with specific terminology, or expectations that teachers explain international curriculum language to families. None of these situations may be intended as exclusionary. Yet together they produce a field of differentiated participation in which English becomes institutional capital, while its unequal distribution risks being treated as an individual matter.

This is where teacher linguistic inequality becomes analytically useful. The category helps ask how teachers' professional participation is reorganized when a particular linguistic repertoire gains institutional value without equivalent attention to the historical conditions of access to that repertoire. The issue, therefore, is not only teaching English to teachers. It is rethinking what kind of language education becomes ethically and politically necessary when English starts to mediate professional belonging.

A critical approach does not require rejecting English from school internationalization. Such a rejection would ignore the material conditions through which many teachers are currently expected to work and might deny access to repertoires that can expand possibilities of participation, authorship, and professional mobility. However, it does require resisting the naturalization of English as a transparent sign of quality, competence, or international readiness. If English is framed merely as adaptation to institutional demands, it may reinforce hierarchies. If it is framed as a situated repertoire for professional participation and critical reflection, it may become part of a broader struggle for linguistic social justice.

School internationalization, then, becomes an educational problem. Once English-mediated demands are recognized as part of teachers' working conditions, a course for teachers can no longer be designed as generic language instruction. It needs to ask what teachers actually do with language, what forms of participation are expected from them, and what forms of mediation may make participation more equitable. Internationalization is therefore not a background condition, but one of the forces that produces the need for the course.

3. Teacher linguistic inequality, critical language education, and linguistic social justice

If school internationalization is understood as a linguistic and political process, the central educational question is not simply whether teachers should learn English. The question is what kind of language education becomes necessary when English starts to mediate professional participation in unequal ways. A course for teachers in an internationalized school context may easily be framed as a remedial response to a language gap: teachers are imagined as lacking a resource that the institution already presumes as necessary, and the course is expected to help them adapt more efficiently. This article proposes a different starting point. The course must be understood as a space in which teachers' linguistic

repertoires, professional histories, institutional expectations, and unequal access to English become objects of critical educational work.

Teacher linguistic inequality, as proposed here, does not refer simply to differences in English proficiency. Such differences are real and educationally relevant, but they do not explain, by themselves, how inequality is produced. Inequality emerges when certain linguistic repertoires become institutionally valued and professionally consequential while access to them remains unevenly distributed. A teacher may be pedagogically experienced, knowledgeable in their field, committed to students, and institutionally recognized, while still being positioned as less able to participate when English becomes necessary for reading documents, engaging with professional development, understanding curricular terminology, mediating concepts, or circulating through internationalized school discourses.

This formulation draws on critical approaches in Applied Linguistics that refuse to isolate language from social life. Work on English, globalization, language policy, and inequality has shown that language is implicated in the distribution of opportunities, legitimacy, and recognition (Kubota, 2016; Pennycook, 2001, 2021; Phillipson, 1992; Piller, 2016; Tollefson, 1991). English may enable circulation, access, and professional mobility, but it may also reproduce hierarchies when its institutional value is naturalized and its unequal distribution is individualized.

In the Brazilian field, critical and interdisciplinary perspectives in Applied Linguistics have insisted that language education cannot be separated from ethical, political, and epistemological questions (Moita Lopes, 2006; Cavalcanti, 2013; Jordão, 2014; Duboc & Ferraz, 2018). This discussion is important for teacher education in English, since the issue is not only which methods should be used, but what commitments sustain language teaching in unequal contexts (Menezes de Souza, 2011). Rocha et al. (2017) also help situate critical language education as a field concerned with literacy, meaning-making, social participation, and the politics of language education. These perspectives shift language education away from a technical model of competence and toward an ethical commitment to participation, democratic meaning-making, and knowledge production in unequal contexts.

This concern has also been developed in discussions on English in the BNCC and in-service teacher education as a space marked by uncertainty, emergence, and situated professional

knowledge (Francini, 2024, 2025). Here, that discussion is extended to a context in which English becomes linked to school internationalization and to the professional conditions under which teachers are expected to participate. The online redesign is therefore not conceived as a technical solution, but as an educational process through which teachers may participate more critically in English-mediated institutional spaces.

Critical language education is understood here as an orientation that allows teachers to appropriate English-mediated repertoires needed for institutional participation while also questioning the conditions that make those repertoires unequally demanded. It does not reject grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation, genres, reading, writing, listening, or oral interaction, nor does it romanticize teachers' difficulties with English. It asks how such resources can be taught in ways that recognize teachers as knowledgeable subjects, value their existing repertoires, and connect English learning to the practices through which they participate in school life.

This position requires moving away from deficit-oriented understandings of language learning. If the course is organized around an idealized model of fluent, accurate, native-like English, teachers may experience the formation as another space in which their linguistic histories are judged as insufficient. Flores and Rosa's (2015) critique of appropriateness-based pedagogies is useful here because it warns against educational projects that ask differently positioned speakers to adjust to dominant norms without questioning the structures that define what counts as legitimate language. A critical language education project must interrupt this logic by treating teachers' partial knowledge, accents, hesitations, translinguaging practices, professional vocabularies, and pedagogical expertise as part of the learning process, not as evidence of failure.

Linguistic social justice is located in the tension between access and critique. Access to English matters because English has become part of participation in many internationalized school contexts. Refusing to teach English in the name of critique could leave teachers more exposed to demands that continue to operate with or without critical reflection. At the same time, teaching English as a neutral resource for adaptation would naturalize the conditions that produce the inequality. Linguistic social justice, therefore, asks how access to English can be organized without reinforcing the hierarchies that make English a privileged condition of professional legitimacy.

In this article, linguistic social justice involves three interconnected dimensions: access, recognition, and institutional responsibility. Access means meaningful opportunities to appropriate English in relation to the professional practices teachers are expected to inhabit. Recognition means that teachers' existing repertoires, histories, accents, partial knowledges, translanguaging practices, and pedagogical expertise are understood as resources for course design. Institutional responsibility means that schools that demand English-mediated participation need to create fairer conditions for that participation instead of treating linguistic vulnerability as an individual failure. These dimensions avoid two simplifications: celebrating English access as inherently emancipatory or treating English only as domination. English is part of the problem, but it may also become part of a situated response when taught through a critical, relational, and justice-oriented education.

A language course committed to linguistic social justice cannot begin from a generic syllabus detached from teachers' professional lives. It needs to begin from the practices through which teachers are addressed by the internationalized institution: genres, oral interactions, documents, concepts, insecurities, and repertoires already mobilized to make sense of these demands. Such questions shift the course from a proficiency-centered model to a participation-centered model.

This orientation reframes the role of Portuguese, translanguaging, and oral production. Portuguese cannot be treated merely as interference or as a temporary support to be eliminated. It is part of how teachers think educationally, interpret institutional demands, compare concepts, negotiate meanings, and construct professional authorship. Translanguaging perspectives challenge monolingual assumptions about language learning and invite educators to consider how speakers draw on their full linguistic repertoires to make meaning (García & Li, 2014). Similarly, oral participation cannot be reduced to fluency, accuracy, or pronunciation. In a justice-oriented course, voice is also the possibility of narrating one's trajectory, explaining one's classroom, asking questions, mediating concepts, and being heard as a legitimate teacher while English is still being learned.

The previous face-to-face course already contained elements of this orientation, although they now need to be more explicitly theorized and redesigned. Its materials invited teachers to introduce themselves professionally, narrate significant moments in their teaching lives,

describe school routines, discuss classroom language, reflect on teaching cultures, engage with sustainability-related themes, and experiment with oral presentations. The challenge is not to abandon the previous experience, but to reread it critically: what did it make possible, what did it leave underdeveloped, and what could an online redesign expand, slow down, redistribute, or make more accessible?

These notions prepare the methodological and analytical work of the article: to revisit the previous face-to-face course, examine its educational artifacts, and identify principles for an online redesign that treats English as a contested repertoire through which teachers may participate, question, and author their place in internationalized school life.

4. Methodological path: a situated qualitative study of course redesign as an educational process

This article derives from a broader research project concerned with the redesign of an English course for Brazilian Basic Education teachers in a context of school internationalization. Its focus, however, is deliberately specific: it examines the movement from a previous face-to-face course to the principles that may guide its online redesign, treating this movement as an educational process rather than as a technical or instructional adjustment. The face-to-face course is approached as an educational and empirical archive: a set of materials, tasks, records, and formative decisions through which it becomes possible to understand how English-mediated institutional demands were translated into language education for teachers.

Methodologically, the study is qualitative, interpretive, and situated. This orientation is aligned with qualitative inquiry traditions that understand educational phenomena as situated meaning-making processes rather than variables to be isolated from their contexts (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). The study does not aim to measure language gains, compare proficiency levels, or generalize outcomes across school contexts. It seeks to understand how language demands, teacher trajectories, course materials, and institutional conditions became meaningful in a particular educational setting. It is closer to a case-oriented logic in which the value of a situated case lies not in statistical generalization, but in the analytical insight it can produce (Flyvbjerg, 2006).

The broader project under which this article was developed was approved by the Brazilian Research Ethics System under CAAE 87689625.7.0000.8142, with informed consent procedures established through the approved consent form. The approved project is titled “Ensino de inglês em ambientes virtuais para professores: uma proposta de justiça social linguística no âmbito da internacionalização da Educação Básica.” In the present article, ethical care is reflected in the decision not to reproduce names, images, institutional identifiers, personal details, or identifiable teacher productions. The analysis does not evaluate individual participants’ language performance. Teacher-produced materials are discussed only through anonymized descriptions of patterns, tasks, and educational movements.

The empirical corpus was organized into four groups: course materials designed for the face-to-face course; anonymized teacher-produced artifacts and reflective records; research diary and planning records; and institutional documents related to the school internationalization process. These materials included the main coursebook, weekly slide presentations, language practice worksheets, oral presentation prompts, classroom language activities, tasks related to Sustainable Development Goals, CLIL-oriented materials, and planning documents connected to the online course. They are treated as course materials and educational artifacts, not only for their linguistic content, but for the ways in which they organize participation, construct teachers as language learners and professionals, select relevant practices of English, and mediate the relationship between language learning and school internationalization.

The materials were organized through an interpretive matrix derived from the theoretical framework of the article. The matrix did not function as a coding scheme for quantification, but as an analytical grid for relating course materials to the educational problem under investigation. It connected course themes, tasks, genres, and forms of participation to three dimensions of linguistic social justice: access, recognition, and institutional responsibility. Table 1 summarizes the matrix used to examine the face-to-face course materials and to generate principles for the online redesign.

Table 1

Interpretive matrix for the analysis of course materials and online redesign

Analytical dimension	Guiding question	Evidence examined in the face-to-face course	Implication for online redesign
Access	What conditions did the course create for teachers to engage	Activities involving professional self-presentation, school routines, classroom	Redistribution of time, exposure, rehearsal, multimodal access,

	with English in relation to their work?	language, oral presentations, reflective writing, and sustainability-related tasks.	asynchronous participation, and gradual oral production.
Recognition	How did the materials value teachers' professional histories, repertoires, and educational knowledge?	Tasks involving teaching trajectories, old/current/new stories of learning, names in education, local educational references, and Portuguese-mediated meaning-making.	Teacher-authored portfolios, bilingual mediation, local educational references, translanguaging practices, and English-mediated professional authorship.
Institutional responsibility	How did the course respond to English-mediated demands produced by school internationalization?	Course materials connected to documents, curriculum language, classroom practices, CLIL-oriented tasks, and professional participation in an internationalized school context.	Mapping of English-mediated institutional demands, glossary building, collaborative mediation, and feedback to institutional planning.

Source: Author's own elaboration, based on the theoretical framework and the corpus analyzed in the study.

The analytical procedure involved three related operations. First, the materials were reconstructed as an educational architecture, with attention to themes, tasks, genres, language practices, and forms of participation. Second, they were interpreted through the matrix, asking how they created conditions for access, recognition, and institutional responsibility. Third, the interpretation was projected into design principles for the online course, identifying what should be preserved, expanded, slowed down, redistributed, or transformed in a virtual environment. This procedure helped prevent the materials from being read only in terms of content coverage or language progression.

At the time of writing, the online course is in the design phase and has not yet been implemented. The article therefore does not evaluate online learning outcomes. It analyzes the face-to-face experience and uses that analysis to formulate the instructional and educational architecture of the planned online course. The findings should be understood as situated and generative rather than generalizable. They do not offer a universal model for English courses for teachers in internationalized schools. Instead, they offer a theoretically informed reading of one formative experience and propose design principles that may resonate with contexts in which English becomes a condition for professional participation.

5. Revisiting the face-to-face course: course materials, teacher participation, and educational redesign

The face-to-face course analyzed in this article can be read as an educational attempt to respond to English-mediated institutional demands without reducing teachers to a deficit position. Its relevance lies in the way its materials translated a broader institutional problem into situated language education. The course did not begin from a generic syllabus organized

primarily around grammatical progression. It began from teachers' professional contexts, routines, classrooms, educational histories, oral participation, and need to inhabit school spaces increasingly mediated by English. Its materials can therefore be read as an educational archive of partial responses that now need to be made more explicit through critical redesign.

The main coursebook provides the clearest evidence of this orientation. Its organization moved from an introductory reflection on English learning to units focused on professional context, teaching routines, teaching cultures, approaches to learning, approaches to teaching, review moments, and portfolio construction. The opening question, "Why do some people learn English easily and others don't?", is especially important. It does not immediately translate difference into failure. Instead, it opens space for teachers to recognize that adult relationships with English are shaped by histories of schooling, access, exposure, confidence, interruption, and affect.

Professional self-presentation also occupied a central place in the early part of the course. Teachers described the Brazilian Basic Education system, talked about their students, stated how long they had been teaching, and prepared short self-introductions. These tasks may appear introductory in terms of language level, but they positioned teachers not as beginners without knowledge, but as professionals who already had something meaningful to say. English became a medium for narrating professional trajectories rather than merely performing structures.

The course also connected English to the material organization of teachers' work. Units and weekly presentations on routines, schedules, school hours, school spaces, classroom design, and classroom language invited teachers to describe how school life is organized. These tasks may seem modest if read only as language-level activities. From the perspective of critical language education, however, they connect English to the temporal and spatial structures through which teachers inhabit the institution. They also reveal a limit of the face-to-face experience: the descriptions could have been more explicitly connected to the internationalization process itself, including the meetings, platforms, documents, and routines that produce confidence or vulnerability.

Teachers' educational memories and cultures of teaching became part of the course through the old/current/new stories of learning. On the surface, this sequence may be read as a way of

practicing verb tenses, adjectives, and sentence organization. Yet it invited teachers to use English to revisit schooling as memory, interpret the present as a changing educational condition, and imagine teaching otherwise. Words such as welcoming, strict, challenging, unfair, inspiring, participatory, or authoritarian do more than expand vocabulary. They offer a language for judgment.

Oral participation appeared in self-introductions, short dialogues, presentations of professional context, descriptions of routines and classrooms, oral practice with songs and nursery rhymes, and teacher-produced presentations. One activity invited teachers to prepare oral presentations about significant names in education. The task required teachers to select an educational figure, organize information, write a short text, prepare slides, and speak to colleagues about a meaningful educational subject. Teachers were not asked to perform English for its own sake. They were invited to speak from within education. Voice became linked to authorship, not merely to accuracy.

The activity on names in education also contributes to the cultural and ethical localization of English. The materials mobilized Brazilian educational references, local school history, national educational statistics, classroom situations, and figures from different educational traditions. English could therefore become a language through which teachers speak about public education, inclusion, literacy, childhood, critical pedagogy, and Brazilian educational memory. This choice resists the idea that learning English requires teachers to abandon their own educational references in order to approximate an external cultural model.

The incorporation of broader educational themes, especially sustainability, citizenship, and CLIL-oriented practices, expanded the course's possibilities for curriculum mediation. These materials are relevant because teachers in internationalized contexts may be expected to understand, explain, and adapt pedagogical concepts that travel across languages and educational traditions. The online redesign, however, should avoid treating such themes as ready-made topics for vocabulary practice. It should invite teachers to ask how these themes are translated into their own school context, what tensions they produce, whose voices they include or exclude, and how English mediates their circulation.

Table 2

Analytical anchors from the face-to-face course

Course material or task	Analytical reading	Redesign implication
Opening question: “Why do some people learn English easily and others don’t?”	Opens space to discuss unequal histories of access, confidence, and affect in adult English learning.	Begin the online course with a diagnostic and reflective module on English trajectories.
Professional self-presentation tasks	Positions teachers as professionals with something meaningful to say, rather than as deficient beginners.	Develop multimodal professional profiles and teacher-authored introductions.
Old/current/new stories of learning	Connects grammar, memory, critique, and educational imagination.	Transform the activity into a digital journal with bilingual drafting and optional audio reflection.
Names in education oral presentation	Links oral English production to educational knowledge and professional authorship.	Redesign oral work through gradual publicness: private rehearsal, peer sharing, revised recording, and optional public presentation.
Sustainability and CLIL-oriented tasks	Connects English to curriculum mediation and internationalized educational discourses.	Develop modules that help teachers interpret, translate, and critically mediate travelling educational concepts.

Source: Author’s own elaboration, based on the analysis of the face-to-face English course materials.

Across the materials, the face-to-face course created conditions for access and recognition, but its relation to institutional responsibility remained less explicit. It offered teachers meaningful opportunities to use English in relation to professional practices that mattered in their work and valued them as professionals with histories, memories, educational references, and knowledge about schooling. However, the course could have gone further in making the institutional dimension of the problem visible: why English had become necessary, how teachers were differently positioned before this demand, and what forms of support were required for participation to become more equitable.

The analytical value of revisiting the face-to-face course is therefore not to celebrate it as an already just or complete experience. It is to understand it as an educational archive of partial responses to teacher linguistic inequality. The course placed teachers’ professional lives at the center, created opportunities for oral and written authorship, and connected English to school routines, educational reflection, and broader themes. Its redesign requires making these orientations more flexible, more explicit, and more critically aligned with linguistic social justice.

6. Online redesign as an educational response

At the time of writing, the online course is in the design phase and has not yet been implemented. The discussion that follows therefore does not evaluate online learning

outcomes. It formulates the instructional and educational architecture of the course on the basis of the analysis of the face-to-face experience. The proposed design is organized around five core elements: diagnostic mapping of English-mediated institutional demands; modular activities connected to teachers' professional practices; translanguaging mediation through Portuguese-English comparison and glossary building; oral work organized through gradual publicness; and a teacher-authored portfolio documenting changes in participation.

The online redesign is not justified by the assumption that digital mediation is automatically more inclusive, flexible, or innovative. The relevant issue is what the online environment makes possible when the educational problem is teacher linguistic inequality. In this sense, the redesign responds to four tensions identified in the previous analysis: time, exposure, authorship, and institutional responsibility.

Time is one of the most important educational dimensions of the redesign. In the face-to-face course, teachers were invited to speak, write, describe, narrate, and reflect in English within the rhythm of collective meetings. For adult teachers whose relationship with English may be marked by interrupted learning, embarrassment, comparison, or fear of public inadequacy, time is not a neutral condition. The online course can respond by redistributing time rather than merely offering flexibility. Redistribution means designing tasks in which teachers can pause, return, rehearse, draft, listen again, revise, and decide when and how to make parts of their production visible.

This gradual movement from private preparation to shared participation can be understood as gradual publicness. The term avoids treating oral participation as a binary between silence and performance. It recognizes that speaking in English involves degrees of exposure, especially for teachers who have experienced unequal access to the language. The online redesign can create intermediate spaces through notes, bilingual drafts, audio fragments, peer exchanges, narrated slides, small-group recordings, and more formal presentations. These layers create conditions for voice to emerge without demanding immediate performance as proof of learning.

Authorship is another central dimension of the redesign. The face-to-face materials already suggested that English could become a language for narrating professional life, rather than only a system to be mastered. The online course can deepen this orientation by treating

teachers as producers of English-mediated interpretations of their own educational worlds. This means organizing the course around forms of meaning teachers may need to author, such as professional profiles, classroom descriptions, teaching memories, explanations of educational concepts, narrated presentations, bilingual glossaries, portfolio entries, and critical readings of institutional terms.

This emphasis on authorship helps avoid a common risk in courses designed for professional purposes. When language teaching is organized only around institutional adaptation, learners may be trained to repeat the vocabulary of the organization without interpreting it. In an internationalized school context, teachers may be asked to use terms associated with curriculum, assessment, inquiry, learner profile, international-mindedness, global citizenship, sustainability, feedback, scaffolding, or classroom management as if these terms were transparent. A critical online course needs to slow down this circulation and create opportunities for teachers to ask what these terms mean, how they travel, how they are translated, and how they relate to local educational histories and practices.

For this reason, translanguaging mediation becomes part of the educational architecture of the course, not a compensatory strategy. Portuguese and English can work together as resources for institutional translation. Teachers may compare curriculum terms across languages, build bilingual glossaries from documents they encounter, discuss why some terms are difficult to translate, and identify what is gained or lost when a concept circulates in English. This work is interpretive and political. It allows teachers to appropriate English-mediated discourse without treating it as self-evident.

Generative AI may be incorporated into the online course as a mediated support layer, not as an autonomous teaching or assessment mechanism. Possible uses include draft examples for professional genres, bilingual glossary expansion, comparison of alternative translations for institutional terms, oral rehearsal prompts, and feedback on preliminary drafts. These uses would require teacher mediation, transparency with participants, and protection of identifiable school or teacher data. AI-generated outputs would not be used to evaluate teachers' proficiency or replace human feedback; they would function as resources for rehearsal, comparison, revision, and critical discussion.

The most original responsibility of the online redesign lies in making institutional language demands visible. A course committed to linguistic social justice cannot stop at supporting individual teachers. It also needs to reveal the conditions that make support necessary. The online environment can include tasks in which teachers map where English appears in their work: documents, platforms, meetings, training sessions, assessment language, family communication, curriculum planning, classroom resources, and professional development. Such mapping transforms the course into more than a learning path. It becomes a diagnostic space for understanding the linguistic conditions of participation in the school.

This diagnostic dimension is crucial because institutional responsibility cannot remain an abstract ethical claim. If the course reveals that teachers repeatedly struggle with specific documents, platforms, acronyms, rubrics, or training materials, this information can inform institutional decisions about translation, mediation, mentoring, time allocation, collaborative planning, and professional development. The course does not merely help teachers adapt to internationalization. It produces knowledge about how internationalization is being linguistically experienced by teachers and may reposition linguistic vulnerability as an institutional question.

Assessment also needs to be redesigned through this lens. A conventional model would risk reintroducing comparison, inadequacy, and deficit into a course that aims to interrupt those logics. The online course therefore requires assessment that documents changing participation rather than only measuring correctness. A portfolio is particularly meaningful here as evidence of an educational trajectory. It can show how teachers name English-mediated demands, build repertoires, revise oral and written productions, negotiate Portuguese-English mediation, interpret institutional terms, and gradually expand their participation.

This understanding prevents critical language education from becoming an additional theme or final discussion topic. Criticality is an orientation that shapes the way language tasks are selected, sequenced, mediated, and assessed. A vocabulary activity becomes critical when it helps teachers interpret terms that organize institutional participation. A grammar task becomes critical when it supports the production of a genre teachers need in their professional lives. An oral activity becomes critical when it creates conditions for teachers to speak from their educational knowledge rather than perform inadequacy. This is consistent with a multiliteracies understanding of design as the transformation of available resources into new

possibilities for meaning-making and participation (The New London Group, 1996; Cope & Kalantzis, 2000).

The principles proposed here emerge from the situated analysis of the face-to-face course rather than from a general model of online language education. Access becomes the redistribution of time, exposure, mediation, and participation. Recognition becomes the possibility of authoring English-mediated meanings from teachers' professional histories, local educational references, Portuguese-mediated reasoning, and partial repertoires. Institutional responsibility becomes the explicit mapping of the English-mediated demands produced by internationalization and the refusal to treat adaptation as an individual burden.

The online redesign is the educational response through which the face-to-face experience can be reread, deepened, and transformed. It preserves the strongest orientation of the previous materials, the connection between English and teachers' professional lives, while making that orientation more critical, flexible, and institutionally aware. In doing so, the course may help teachers inhabit internationalized school spaces with greater linguistic confidence and professional agency, without naturalizing the unequal conditions that made such a course necessary.

7. Final considerations

The discomfort that opens this article reveals how school internationalization may operate through language demands that appear natural, desirable, or inevitable, while unevenly repositioning teachers before the conditions of participation that such demands create. In the context analyzed here, English became part of the institutional texture of internationalization: documents, curriculum language, professional development, digital platforms, educational concepts, and expectations of readiness. This texture needs to be read as a problem for Applied Linguistics because it reorganizes how teachers participate, how they are recognized, and how professional legitimacy is linguistically mediated.

The category teacher linguistic inequality helps analyze situations in which teachers who are pedagogically experienced, professionally committed, and institutionally recognized may become vulnerable when English-mediated repertoires acquire new value in school life. The category shifts the analysis from individual competence to the relation between institutional

demands and unequal histories of access to language education. When English becomes a tacit condition for participation, the absence of institutional mediation may transform a socially produced inequality into an individual burden.

The analysis of the face-to-face course showed that placing teachers' professional lives at the center of language learning already interrupted part of this deficit logic. At the same time, contextualizing English in teachers' work is not yet the same as developing critical language education. The critical movement requires teachers and institutions to ask why English has become necessary, how such necessity is unevenly experienced, what forms of mediation are required, and how participation can be made more equitable.

The contribution of the redesign lies in translating linguistic social justice into educational decisions. Access becomes the redistribution of time, exposure, rehearsal, mediation, and participation. Recognition becomes the possibility for teachers to author English-mediated meanings from their professional histories, local educational references, Portuguese-mediated reasoning, and partial repertoires. Institutional responsibility becomes the explicit mapping of the English-mediated demands produced by internationalization, so that linguistic vulnerability is not treated as a private difficulty to be solved by individual effort. The course can work both as a formative space and as a diagnostic space: it supports teachers while also revealing where internationalization becomes linguistically opaque, demanding, or exclusionary.

The limits of the study are part of its contribution. The analysis derives from a situated experience and focuses on the movement from face-to-face course to online redesign, rather than on full implementation. Its relevance lies in the interpretive grammar it offers: a way of reading school internationalization through teacher linguistic inequality and of designing language education through access, recognition, and institutional responsibility.

For Applied Linguistics, this means that school internationalization should not remain outside the field as a matter of curriculum management, institutional branding, or educational innovation. It needs to be examined as a language-mediated process that affects teachers' conditions of work, belonging, and agency. Offering English to teachers is not enough if the course merely trains them to adapt to demands whose social and institutional production remains unquestioned. The challenge, therefore, is not simply to help teachers learn the

English required by internationalization, but to redesign the educational conditions under which such requirements become livable, discussable, and open to transformation.

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Use of generative AI tools

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Conflict of interests

The author declares no conflict of interests.

Author contribution

Eduardo Fernando Francini: Conceptualization, Data curation, Formal analysis, Investigation, Methodology, Project administration, Resources, Writing, and Writing Review.

Ethical approval

This research was approved by the Research Ethics Committee responsible for the project at Universidade Estadual de Campinas, under CAAE No. 87689625.7.0000.8142, as part of the project “Ensino de inglês em ambientes virtuais para professores: uma proposta de justiça social linguística no âmbito da internacionalização da Educação Básica.” All procedures involving participants followed the approved informed consent protocol. In this article, ethical care is reflected in the decision not to reproduce names, images, institutional identifiers, personal details, or identifiable teacher productions. The analysis does not evaluate individual participants’ language performance. Teacher-produced materials are discussed only through anonymized descriptions of patterns, tasks, and educational movements.

Data availability statement

The data analyzed in this article are not publicly available in full due to ethical and confidentiality restrictions involving participants and an identifiable institutional context. The manuscript presents anonymized descriptions of course materials, tasks, and educational movements. Additional anonymized materials may be made available to reviewers upon justified request, when compatible with ethical and confidentiality criteria.

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